

The Caveman Diet



Archeology fascinates me and, for diet purposes, through 2024 we have had much more information than ever before!



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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This is roughly the “balanced” diet recommended in 2024. (There are differing charts and percentages, but this is a middle-of-the-road chart.) Some of the items shown above are absolutely unnatural, but we will get into these details later. We will be addressing what is included in the “Caveman” diet, which never included potato chips, margarine, canned fruits or vegetables, etc.

Things are being discovered consistently through archeology, so things may change by 2026 from what is being written, but hopefully the question of the best nutritional information will be answered by then!

Neanderthals have become the archetypal “cavemen.” They are the best known archaic human group and the first group determined as ancient humans and because they lived in caves, instead of creating dwellings and which preserved bones well, allowing a long history of prehistoric exploration. Subsequently, they have become the prototypical “cavemen.”

Prior to roughly 3.5 million years ago, early humans feasted almost entirely on leaves and fruit from trees, bushes and herbs, comparable to modern-day gorillas and chimpanzees. The ancient human diet was predominantly based on low-nutrient-dense plant materials because 1) early humans spent considerable time eating to meet their energy needs and 2) finding or “gathering” both took time and expending energy in locating the amount of food that was needed for myself and children or others they need to gather for. Foraging generally included collecting natural plants such as nuts, leafy vegetables, beans, fruits and fungi (if you like mushrooms – the thought of a “fungus” doesn’t sound good unless you think of mushrooms). Including meat in their diet expended a great deal of energy and meat takes longer to digest and reenergize the body. It only makes sense that hunting and eating meat would be beneficial only when there is little food to find, especially in thinking of in the northern portions of Europe or Asia and especially in winter or during famines. For these reasons, meat only played a secondary role in the “cavemen’s” diets.

The Scientific American ([To Follow the Real Early Human Diet, Eat Everything | Scientific American](#)) has one headline reading “To Follow the Real Early Human Diet, Eat Everything” (June 25, 2024). Most of us are relatively familiar with the Paleo and Keto diets for our most carnivorous and fat-consuming readers. There is the Pritikin diet, on the other end, that still encourages a carnivorous diet, but a very lean diet and avoiding fats. There are vegetarian diets. Diabetic diets that support low-glycemic load and low-glycemic index foods. Other options now are GOLO, Weight Watchers, Nutrisystem and Sugar Detox Cleanse. Of course, there are injections, now, which will be easier.

This blog is intended to research the way that people SHOULD eat based on health and human history, so here we go!

According to my source ([Diets of Human Ancestors Revealed by 780,000-Year-Old Food Remains](#) at [www.msn.com](#) dated 1/8/2025), a study of 780,000-year-old food was found, giving us all insight into what this group of prehistoric human hunter-gatherers consumed. Based on the location (Israel/Middle East) and the timeline (Neanderthals and Modern Humans) and my research, Neanderthals were the earliest human ancestors.

This research has exposed that the humans at the time who lived in what is now Israel probably ate an extensive range of plant-based foods, especially starchy ones, including acorns, cereals, legumes and aquatic plants.

These food remains clearly challenge the Paleo and Keto diets, among others, and the generally accepted belief that the early human diet was focused predominantly or exclusively on animal protein. Plant foods as a primary source of food have often been overlooked in prehistoric diets, in part because their remnants are less visible and quickly disintegrate back into earth, rarely indicated in the archaeological record. Animal remains, which appear in the form of bones and make record cutting sites, leave an archaeological record in multiple sites.

In the most recent study, a team of investigators report finding "starch grains" from various plant sources on basalt tools unearthed at the archaeological site of Gesher Benot Ya'akov, located alongside the Jordan River in what is now Israel. Starch grains are minute elements of starch produced by plant life that can be well-preserved in soils and deposits, including on the surfaces of tools, pottery and other archeological findings. They can be a compelling tool in archaeology, delivering direct proof of prehistoric plant use, diet and agricultural uses.

The starch grains originated from numerous plant traces, such as grass grains, water chestnuts, and yellow water lily rhizomes (a type of underground plant stem), in addition to the acorns, cereals and legumes. These starchy tubers, nuts and roots are rich in carbohydrates, which would have been an essential source of energy for the prehistoric humans who ate them. The complex processes that these early humans processed this plant items, such as basalt tools, including mace-type shards and anvils, would also have been applied to cracking and crushing the plant foods.

In Russian, last year paleoanthropologists found fragments of a date stuck in the teeth of a 40,000-year-old Neanderthal. They absolutely ate fruit! There is evidence that numerous fruits that we enjoy eating today were enjoyed by ancient humans for millennia in essentially the same form.

Archaeologists have discovered proof of 780,000-year-old figs at a site in Northern Israel. Also, from the paleolithic era, they have located olives, plums, and pears. While the fruits 30,000 years ago were not identical to those we eat now, they certainly would have been enjoyable, as well. There were fruits in all areas of the globe, including apple trees that covered Kazakhstan, oranges were commonplace in China, and wild berries produced their fruit all over Europe.

These studies and research effectively debunk the Paleo, Keto and similar diets as "cavemen" diets. It doesn't make sense to make meat, taking longer to locate, obtain, cook and/or actually consume the animal protein, not to mention the time for the body to take to digest the meat and then getting it delivered to the body for energy. Fruit in particular

quickly and effectively gets plenty of energy to the body and it would have been easier to locate and eat again to maintain the body's energy.

(1050 words)