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Long-term efficacy of a paleolithic-inspired diet on weight loss in an overweight and obese population: A two-year study in real life setting of the 1, 2, 3 diet

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Background: The paleolithic diet, devoid of food-processing procedure, is more satiating and produces a greater weight loss than recommended diets, but seems impossible to implement in our modern times where refined food is dominant. We investigated in humans whether by excluding only few refined foodstuffs implicated in obesity, it was possible to overcome the limited food choices of the paleolithic diet, but still restore early satiety and the subsequent weight loss.

Methods: In this 2-year prospective study, we assigned 105 overweight subjects (mean age 50, mean BMI 30.5 Kg/m², 39% with type 2 diabetes) to an ad-libitum diet that excludes 6 refined foodstuffs (margarine, vegetable oils, butter, cream, processed meat, and sugary drinks) called the "1,2,3 diet". Professional contact was minimal. The primary outcome was the change in body weight.

Results: At 2 years, participants had lost an average of 4.8 kg ($p < 0.001$), which represents 5.6% of their initial body weight. Among completers (51%), the average weight loss was 5.5 kg ($p < 0.001$), 56% and 22% had a reduction of at least 5% and 10% of their initial body weight respectively. 82% of participants adhered to the diet. Among diabetics, weight loss was similar to non-diabetics, the mean HbA1C level decreased by 1% ($p = 0.001$)

Conclusions: The 1,2,3 diet produces a long-term weight loss similar to high-intensity intervention diets. Avoiding 6 refined food items rather than counting calories, fat, carbohydrate or protein, appears to be a cost-effective approach. Larger controlled studies are required.

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The impact of subtle neuro-developmental difficulties on childhood obesity

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A large number of young people with subtle neuro-developmental difficulties are referred to child and adolescent mental health services each year due to concerns about emotional and behavioural problems. Whilst, they often fail to meet the strict diagnostic criteria for a particular diagnosis, these young people present with substantial elements of ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, OCD and Tics. The difficulties which these young people experience relate predominantly to the way in which they process complex sequences of internal and external information. This includes their processing of somatic sensations including taste. Young people with subtle processing problems therefore often struggle with unhealthy eating and obesity. One difficulty is their tendency to fussy eating. They often have a very limited food repertoire, do not like different food items touching on their plate or having any sauces on their food. The other difficulty is their limited ability to track body sensations including feelings of hunger or satiation. Children with subtle processing problems can therefore be very focussed on specific brands, often foods that are highly processed. They tend to eat impulsively, both in terms of volume and when they want to eat. In addition, as they struggle to conceptualise feelings of fullness, they tend to eat by sight or according to the amount of food available. This paper therefore explores how young people with subtle neuro-developmental difficulties find issues around eating and food confusing and overwhelming, which then acts as a foundation for childhood obesity and lifelong habits of unhealthy eating.

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