

Diabetics should be wary of paleo diet, expert warns

August 9 2016, by Elisabeth Lopez



A paleo diet recommends cutting out whole grains and dairy. Credit: Flickr

People with type 2 diabetes should be wary of social media hype about the benefits of going on the paleo diet, a University of Melbourne researcher says.

Writing in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Associate Professor Sof Andrikopoulos says despite dozens of websites urging diabetes sufferers

to go paleo, there have been no trials lasting beyond 12 weeks on type 2 diabetes sufferers.

"There have been only two trials worldwide of people with type 2 diabetes on what looks to be a [paleo diet](#)," said Associate Professor Andrikopoulos, a researcher at the University of Melbourne Department of Medicine, based at the Austin Hospital.

"Both studies had fewer than 20 participants, one had no control diet, and at 12 weeks or less, neither study lasted long enough for us to draw solid conclusions about the impact on weight or [glycemic control](#)."

Associate Professor Andrikopoulos, who is also President of the Australian Diabetes Society, recommended people with type 2 diabetes seek advice from their GPs, registered dietitians and diabetes organisations.

"Most paleo diets insist on avoiding refined sugar and processed food, which is consistent with dietary guidelines worldwide," he said.

"But when you start cutting out whole grains and dairy, which are absent from many forms of the paleo diet, you may forgo important sources of fibre and calcium.

"And high-fat, zero-carb diets promoted by some celebrities make this worse, as they can lead to [rapid weight gain](#), as well as increase your risk of heart disease."

Associate Professor Andrikopoulos says people with diabetes benefited most from regular exercise and the Mediterranean diet—olive oil, fats from fish, legumes and low in refined sugar.

"While it's tempting to emulate celebrities who look great and can spend

a lot of time at the gym, if you're already overweight or you live a sedentary life, it may be quite risky to adopt a high-fat diet... and if you have diabetes, it's downright dangerous.

"The internet is full of testimonials from people saying a particular diet worked for them because they cut calories and lost weight, but people with [diabetes](#) in particular need to approach those claims with caution and seek advice from their health care professional."

Provided by University of Melbourne

Citation: Diabetics should be wary of paleo diet, expert warns (2016, August 9) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-08-diabetics-wary-paleo-diet-expert.html>

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