

Naomi Whittel:

Getting your body into a place where you're using fat for fuel and you're really in a consistent state of nutritional ketosis is the one thing that's going to make the biggest difference once you start to incorporate the fiber. Because your system, your metabolism is working so much more effectively and you're able to utilize the benefits of that fiber more effectively.

Announcer:

Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave Asprey:

You're listening to Bulletproof radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is that drinking coffee or even its weaker cousin mate tea might keep your weight in check. Now you're hearing me say this going, "Dave, duh. I've read the Bulletproof diet. You've talked a lot about caffeine in ketosis." However, this is a new study in rats and yes we do have some metabolic similarities to rats being mammals and yes there are other differences. However, those studies are a lot better than no studies and so they can illustrate a lot, but the study in rats from the University of Illinois suggests that caffeine can offset some of the negative effects of an obesogenic diet. Caffeine reduces the storage of lipids in fat cells by limiting weight gain and their production of triglycerides. Okay, this isn't coffee, this is just caffeine. Now coffee may have its own set of superpowers separate from caffeine, but what they did in this study is for four weeks rats got caffeine equal to a human drinking about four cups of coffee a day.

Dave Asprey:

Why didn't they just use coffee to get the full set of benefits, I don't really know. But at the end of the time, scientists found that rats that consumed caffeine from mate tea, coffee or synthetic sources accumulated less body fat than rats who didn't get caffeine. In other words, could come from anywhere but this is a caffeine specific effect. Rats that have caffeine from mate tea gained 16% less weight and 22% less fat than rats who got caffeine free tea. And mate tea is an herbal beverage that is a stimulant in Southeastern Latin American countries and it's got about half as much caffeine as a typical cup of coffee. And what's interesting is they found the accumulation of lipids and fat cells is really closely tied with weight gain and increased body fat in rats. And they said regardless of its source, caffeine decreased the accumulation of lipids and fat cells by 20 to 41%.

Dave Asprey:

So in true academic results here's what they said. Study authors say, "The results of this research could be scaled to humans to understand the roles of mate tea and caffeine as potential strategies to prevent overweight and obesity." Now I'm just going to be a little bit more straightforward because I don't have to worry about academic tenure, we now have more evidence than we did before that having some caffeine but not too much every day is probably damn good for you. And if you're not drinking coffee, it's because you're weak or maybe you don't metabolize caffeine well, but that doesn't mean you're weak it just means that you're probably a bad person. All right, just kidding. On that note, seriously at this point the evidence is in, caffeine from all sources in small amounts before 2 p.m. for most people's biologies is a really good idea for a huge variety of reasons and this is just one more little drop of coffee in the giant coffee cups worth of evidence that says that this is good for you.

Dave Asprey:

And if you're one of those weird people says, "I'm going to give up coffee because I don't want to be addicted to anything." I would ask you to ask yourself if you do something every day that makes you feel really good does it mean you're addicted to it? Because if so I'm talking about exercise, you need to quit that too. Now I will get off my soap box and they are, "Good God, is Dave talking about rats? or he's talking about caffeine, mate, what is he going to talk about here?" And here's the deal. None of the above. I completely broke my foreshadowing habits as part of my new year's resolution and today we are going to have someone back on the show who cracked the top 10 all-time favorite Bulletproof Radio episodes and has been there since her 2018 interview. I'm talking about interview number 477 Glow From The Inside Out: Autophagy and Women and today's guest is Naomi Whittel.

Dave Asprey:

She's an entrepreneur leading nutritional expert and New York Times bestselling author for the first time with her book Glow 15 and someone who if you heard the last episode has this amazing background of just growing up in a super healthy household and still having a bunch of health problems. And she like me has been looking at the ketogenic diet since the early days and there are problems. Problems you've probably read about if you're a longtime reader of my blog saying problems with intermittent fasting in women or problems with Keto in women. Well Naomi, if you can't tell is a woman and she has written a whole book about, "Hey, here's what's going on with women and ketosis." Her new book is called The High Fiber Keto and it is completely in alignment with what I have found, even some of the products that I've been making with Bulletproof. So Naomi's going to come onto the show today and she's going to tell us about keto and women and fiber and stuff that you haven't heard. And we're going to completely just destroy the dirty keto cult that has been forming around the Bulletproof principles and things like that. And I would say perverting them with that intro. Naomi, welcome to the show.

Naomi Whittel:

Oh my Dave, it's so awesome to be here and I have been waiting for this day really since we did our last show. I just absolutely loved it and I'm really excited to be here.

Dave Asprey:

You have such an amazing background in nutrition because you've started several of your own companies, you were CEO of Twin Lab, which is a very well-known supplement company. So you've really spent a long time figuring out what people are doing and sort of the dirty backrooms of the food industry and because you've seen it firsthand and you've also experienced it as someone who has been unwell and used nutrition to restore yourself. So I just love it that you've been working on all these levels for so long and now what is the latest thing you're doing as an entrepreneur? Because I mean you keep starting stuff. What's your latest gig before we get into your new book?

Naomi Whittel:

Well, I just in the past couple of months got out of my four year noncompete. So I had four years where I couldn't do what I naturally have been doing honestly for about 25 years. So what I'm doing right now is really truly focusing on the areas of my health and that of so many other women specifically to help us adjust to this environment that we're living in. So there are macro trends that are going on right now and one of them has to do with safety. We are very serious as a society about safety and we live in this fight or flight state we talk it about it all the time and that is affecting the way that we perceive our environment, the way that we experience our family and our own health. So I've put a lot of time over

the past several years into learning about what it is that creates a feeling of true safety inside of our bodies, being in that parasympathetic state, what gets us there and not judging that process.

Naomi Whittel:

So I've been doing a lot of that and that involves getting deeper sleep, staying in a REM state for longer different forms of brainwaves. Children are constantly in a state of meditation or their theta brainwave state and so spending time with my little... I have four children so spending time with my little kids and just learning and feeling that is a big part of what I've been doing. I've also been really focused on the concept of what true relaxation is and how you can move your body into that state. If it's through a flotation tank or whatever state we're playing in and then this feeling of being truly calm. Again, they sort of all fit together, but safety, relaxation and calmness and how we can experience that not just physically but with our emotions.

Naomi Whittel:

So moving away from this process of over-consuming thoughts if we're having 60, 70,000 thoughts in a day and it's just moving very quickly and getting down to a deeper level of okay, these are the emotions that I'm experiencing and how do I really create the states that will allow me to experience the most wellbeing. And so this process of writing High Fiber Keto was exactly that and just looking at these three sort of states from a nutritional perspective.

Dave Asprey:

It's amazing that you're saying, "Oh, what am I doing as an entrepreneur? Oh, I'm working on making my biology work better." I've said for a long time when I go on a business podcast or something, your company is a reflection of your own energy state. And if you're not managing your stress and you're not managing your biological integrity it'll show up somewhere in your life or your company. And a lot of the 40 years of Zen work is around that sense of safety. And what you find is a lot of entrepreneurs are actually outperforming as entrepreneurs because they don't feel safe. So it's like, "I was bullied in seventh grade so now I'm going to be a mixed martial artist and I'm going to be an online bully and I'm going to start a company and I'm going to dominate the world."

Dave Asprey:

Maybe you should just get a good night's sleep and then go start a company and help the world. It's a very different mindset but I see it all the time. And so you're taking it from your perspective and saying, "All right, how do I work on that front?" And writing books is meditative because it makes it really go deep, but what you're talking about is fascinating because in the Bulletproof sort of teachings, the stuff I came down to there's these three things, and longtime listeners already know this if you're a new listener your mind will be blown. There's fear. So our bodies will do stuff to keep us alive from things that we think are going to kill us. Then there's food because we're worried about famines and then is reproduction because if we don't reproduce the species we all die. And then after that is friends. But your very elegantly in what you just said mixing together the fear thing and the food thing. Because if we feel like we're going to starve that triggers, "Oh my God, I'm going to die." What is the role of keto in women in modulating sympathetic and parasympathetic balance?

Naomi Whittel:

Oh, such a great question. I think as a woman who was seriously addicted to sugar and would experience my blood sugar going all over the map, insulin spikes and I got there over time, cravings.

What really got me excited about keto two and a half years ago was I am constantly thinking about how my day is being used. So I went to that dialogue about 60, 70,000 thoughts that we have in an average day and I came to the conclusion that a lot of those thoughts were around cravings. I was craving this sugar, I was having these cravings and I without too much judgment, I didn't want to spend my time on craving. And so, I thought if I can try to activate my autophagy with nutritional ketosis because that's how I really got passionate about keto. If I can activate my autophagy by getting into the state of utilizing my ketones and using my own body fat as a source of fuel instead of using the sugar as a source of fuel, how much more free time will I have in the day to be a better thinker? And that's what motivated me. And I would say two and a half years later I've got hours more a day to do what I love.

Dave Asprey:

It's really hard to express and as a former 300 pound guy who weighs about 200 pounds now, you spend stupid amounts of not just time but energy thinking about food. And if you're listening to the show right now, there's a little voice somewhere in your head going, "What's for lunch? Is that a donut over there?" And you're just so used to it that is always there. And then as you get closer to a meal you think, "Oh, I must be hungry." But what's going on is the voice in your head is screaming at you to eat and you think it's hunger. And until I started really getting into okay, understanding does keto do? I'd been a raw vegan for a while, I tried all the different diets. What's the diet that turns off the voice in your head? So when a piece of food is in front of you, you just don't care.

Dave Asprey:

Because all of the electrons, all the energy that the life force that goes into thinking about food when it's not time to eat is completely wasted. And if it returns to you, the number one place it goes, and this comes out of headstrong, it goes into emotional regulation. It lets you act the way you want to act around your kids, around your board of directors, around people in your community. And otherwise if all your energy is going towards your cravings, you're probably more likely to snap at someone or do something that you wish you hadn't done, including eat the donut. is it different for men and women though?

Naomi Whittel:

I think as a woman so much of our emotional needs are being charged up by the food. So men are in general in my impression less concerned about weight for example than women are.

Dave Asprey:

I feel judged when you say that.

Naomi Whittel:

And I'm not saying it to judge you, I'm just saying my observation-

Dave Asprey:

I'm so teasing you.

Naomi Whittel:

My observation is most women are really in a self-conscious place about their bodies and you know my background. You know-

Dave Asprey:

Share with listeners but I actually don't agree with you, but tell us your background and then let's go into this.

Naomi Whittel:

Okay. So yeah, let's totally go there. So for me, I am French and I'm English and I grew up with the French culture because my mother is French and I spent most of my summers I'd be in the South of France with my cousins and with all the kids and that is how I grew up. And as a French woman, we have a very different perception perspective about our body, about beauty, about sexuality, about many facets of romance, love, sex, all of it. When I moved to this country I was about almost 12 years old and I may have told you this but my French grandfather is a quantum physicist and he was teaching at Columbia University and I got out of the car on 116th and Broadway and I looked around as this preteen and I saw how wide the sidewalks were and how tall the buildings were and how big the cars were.

Naomi Whittel:

And in my head, having grown up in the UK where everything is itsy bitsy tiny, I thought, "Wow. I'm going to really make stuff here, I'm going to build things." I didn't know the word entrepreneurship, but I knew that I had an environment where I could expand and I didn't know how big I was going to be able to grow. What shocked me as much as that as this environment of entrepreneurship was the way in which the girls and the women restricted themselves and were so picky about the way they looked or this isn't right or I've got cellulite here or... And it was just such a difference in the way I had grown up to what I was experiencing and I would say I still see that in this country immensely.

Dave Asprey:

So if I paraphrase that there's a French focus on sensuality and feelings and you can have a sexiness that's a felt sense versus an optical, like a how it looks versus how it feels. Am I translating that the right way?

Naomi Whittel:

Beautifully and perfectly.

Dave Asprey:

Now it's stereotypical to say, "Oh, you know guys care less about how they look." And this might've been true in the 1970s when I was born when we had 5% obesity in the country. And I can tell you having been a fat guy, a fat teenager, fat in my 20s every time you wake up and you're, "Oh, here's my 46 inch waist," and you're like "Will these pleats hide the uncomfortable rolls there?" Whether you're single or not you know it when you're fat if you're a guy and you don't like it and if you're like, "I'm married, I have kids whatever. It's less of a priority I don't have to go attract a mate." You still, you want to feel attractive. And I feel like social media and all that sort of stuff is having an effect on guys.

Dave Asprey:

And I tell you, when I wrote The Bulletproof Diet I've had, I don't know, 10,000 people reach out over different channels. Say "Dave, I lost 20, 40, 70 pounds and it didn't hurt and I didn't have cravings all the time and my life has changed because I looked the way I wanted to look and I feel the way I wanted to feel." So it's first for guys I think we care about our energy levels, but it feels really good to look in the

mirror and go, "Wow, I actually have ribs. They don't stick out but I can see them." I remember the first time I saw my ribs and so guys care but we're not supposed to care. So we have an [inaudible 00:18:34] to say we don't care but honestly most guys are like "Hey, do you want to be the weight that you were when you were in high school the way I am or do you want to be that extra 30, 40 pounds but you still look pretty good with your dad bod? Guys don't really want that, we really don't. So give us credit there. We like to look good for our women.

Naomi Whittel:

Well there's a lot of data that talks about the confidence code. There's a book on The Confidence Code, Claire Shipman wrote that, coauthored it and I just find that being able to stop obsessing around food and carbohydrates and getting into this place of keto where my mind was able to focus on things that I really cared about made a huge difference in my personal confidence. But the ketogenic diet I think what you asked about for women is a very different experience. And we have been so trained to think, okay this weight, the weight that I was in high school is the weight that is my best weight potentially and I should stay that way for the rest of my life. And if I'm not meeting that well then there's something that I'm not doing that's right.

Naomi Whittel:

Or I need to eat more low fat or I need to cut my calories and it's all about constricting and saying no and getting more and more strict, which again is a very big difference between my personal upbringing and being a woman that grew up in Europe. So I think more than anything what makes keto hard for us as females is a lot of that negative press that's out there or the confusing messaging around safety. It's not safe, it's not good, this is going to hurt you. And I just think that's all bullshit I really do and I have two and a half years of experiencing this transformation in myself that has allowed me to get rid of those cravings and become a stronger, healthier and much happier version of myself.

Dave Asprey:

My experience of working with women on keto in my first book was on fertility and really went into the details of women's hormones. My wife's a medical doctor and all that so this does come from a position of knowledge, is that women do on a monthly basis have changes in energy demand that are just driven by biology. You have a monthly cycle. So there's times when well it's going to be harder to be in keto or I just need more rest and I've had lots of podcasts with female Olympians and hormone experts and things like that. So energy demand varies pretty substantially for women, more so than men on an average month. So our curve is relatively flat and a woman's curve is more cyclical for how you're going to feel and what energy is demanded, which means women on average are going to notice these changes in the energy more severely than men are.

Dave Asprey:

And when you are on a diet that contains the wrong kind of energy or not enough energy as a woman well, calories are energy. So if you either can't metabolize your energy or you just don't have enough of it because you're eating a vegan low calorie I had some kale today, aren't I a good person kind of diet what you end up with is you end up with a low power woman because that power comes from food and air. That's how it works. And so yes, it is restrictive and it's toxic and if it's I'm judging you because, "Oh, you had 16 grams of carbs today not 15. You're a bad keto girl!" or whatever the voice in your head is telling you. That's also equally toxic because that idea of being nourished and full power and thus being

sexy it is more of a European perspective. What's your take on when you use keto to get abs as a woman? What's that doing for you?

Naomi Whittel:

Uh, I love this question. So I am very excited about becoming a whole woman so how do I optimize my own biology? Every day is a chance to renew and so philosophically I'm of the mindset this daily renewal process, if it's through keto diet, if it's through mindset, if it's through exercise, if it's through love whatever that is this daily renewal, this activation of autophagy, these sort of things are all the different systems. The whole body metabolism. Metabolism is not just about energy in and energy out. There's brain metabolism and you talk about it all the time, there's this whole body and I think I'm aspiring to be a whole woman. And so when I think about my abs and I look at my body's composition keto is about for me becoming strong. And I can just look at keto primarily as a source of energy or I would say a source of fuel.

Naomi Whittel:

So I'm choosing to use nutritional ketosis, the fat that I'm consuming as my primary fuel source and I'm then utilizing the ketones to provide this energy inside of my body. And I'm very passionate about ketone bodies and that science that's really building around them right now. But as it relates to my abs, what I did after about a year of being in keto is I stopped thinking about the number on the scale, I got off my scale. And Dave prior to that, I was in about three or four years of training where my coach had me on the scale every single morning. So once I stopped that, I literally got off the scale. I actually haven't gotten back on it. And I started thinking about what is my body composition? What is that and how much protein do I need to meet this muscular demand?

Naomi Whittel:

Because guess what I'm doing hand stands, I'm doing strength and conditioning three or four, typically four times a week. And I am becoming a whole woman through strength, through muscularity, through utilizing the fat as my primary fuel source so that abs are a side note and the strength is the focus. And I don't get strong unless I make sure that I get enough protein for example. And that has to be balanced with making sure that I'm getting enough of the good fats because we know what can happen with protein.

Dave Asprey:

So do you actually have abs?

Naomi Whittel:

I do. Yeah. I'd be happy to show you.

Dave Asprey:

And you've had four kids?

Naomi Whittel:

So I have four children. I gave birth to the first one. I needed to read [Yowipe 00:25:55] Lana's book very early on. I had trouble conceiving after my first child.

Dave Asprey:

Got it. Okay so, you've had one child though and you still have abs and-

Naomi Whittel:

I'm 46. I'll be 46 in about two months.

Dave Asprey:

Okay. So we're about the same age. Now did those abs... I mean, are they're usually or do they go away some days? Let's be really straight forward because not a lot of women have abs unless they're on restrictive diets. And there's different genotypes and all that stuff, but it feels like if you have enough DHA you might not have abs a lot of them.

Naomi Whittel:

Right. So that's a really good point and a really good question. So I have abs most of the time. I wouldn't that it's all of the time but again by focusing on this daily renewal process, I never restrict myself. I don't believe in it, I believe in strengthening. So if it's making sure that my health is strengthened through the meditation work that I do through the nutrition that I bring in through the right amount of protein I'm consuming over a hundred grams of protein. 110, 120 grams of protein most days and that number changed. It used to be 0.8 grams per kilo, but once you get into your forties as a woman, you're in a different place and in your thirties thinking about your... We need to be thinking about our hormones to your point at a very young age. My daughter's 17 I'm getting her tested this year to see where her hormone levels are at. Will she ever go on the pill? Not on my watch. Those things will not happen but our hormones as a woman and our abs and nutritional ketosis, they all go hand in hand and it's about this holistic 360 approach.

Dave Asprey:

All right. So you have a most of the time, and I see so many women they desperately want abs and actually I don't think that's probably going to go along with the hips and the breasts and the cognitive state that you want because when you get that lean, quite often it's too lean for longevity. And you can surf that line and it can feel really good, but I feel sometimes there's such a focus on that whether it's from keto or some kind of plant based nonfunctional long-term diet they're both nonfunctional. If you're going full keto or full vegan for a year I don't care if you're a man or a woman, you're probably going to hate your life at the end of it because neither one of them works.

Dave Asprey:

In fact that's why I endorsed High Fiber Keto, there's a quote on The Jacket from me because the deal is you've got to have a ton of vegetables and be in keto some of the time that. But walk me through what fiber does both for abs and just for women and for men and why that's a part of keto. And we'll talk about Inner Fuel, probably the fiber supplement that I use.

Naomi Whittel:

I love that. So before we go away from abs, I want to take us to another part of the body and it's the part of the body that I focus on and you're going to giggle when you hear what I call them. So what we're talking about our six pack, we're talking about our abs, blah, blah. What I care about are my cakes and those are my glutes.

Dave Asprey:

Your cakes?

Naomi Whittel:

That's what my coach calls them and she and I like today we were dead lifting in the gym and we were laughing because when our glutes are strong, when they're firing, when you're experiencing that as a woman and your whole post chain is working, it's working, it's firing your body is in such a better place from a hormonal perspective. It's really thinking about where your testosterone levels are as a woman. In my forties, this is a huge focus, we've spoken about it before. But again, I'm not so focused on the abs but I am very much focused on the glutes or the cakes. So I just want to sort of put that out there.

Dave Asprey:

I'm with you there. From a metabolic activation your abs are tiny little muscles and you can really only see them when you're exceptionally lean, but any amount of muscle mass in your butt, whether you're a man or a woman is really important for how you process sugar and ketones and just how you show up in the world, how you're grounded. So more squats for all of us at the end of the day.

Naomi Whittel:

So fiber is a very important piece in the nutritional ketogenic diet because to your point, it's easy to go off track and not support your microbiome the way that we need to. It's easy to have issues with too much acidity in the diet and at the end of the day, my entire life I've eaten mostly vegetables as my main source of nutrition. And I've gotten very excited over the past decade around micro herbs like love broccoli, sprouts because they have the sulfur folinic acid in there and so many of the what I call super herbs. So things like, cilantro, basil, cacao, ginger, turmeric there's a way in my house where we consume for example last night. Almost every single day we're getting super herbs and we're getting them either in my family, in our juices, which we drink in the mornings.

Naomi Whittel:

We get a lot of cilantro, we get parsley, we get a mint, we get basil, we get all different things and/or we're eating a lot of different types of pestos. So getting these super micro nutrients and herbs into our body along with focusing on the fiber rich foods that are not particularly high in the carbohydrates. So my favorite is the artichoke and that's what's on there on the front of my book. And the artichoke is rich in prebiotics and we know that prebiotics are probiotics' favorite food. So if you want to make your microbiome happy, provided it it's favorite food and inulin is just a really powerful prebiotic and fiber. And so avocados, berries, chia seeds, flax seeds, it goes on.

Dave Asprey:

I've got a quick plug I have to put in there.

Naomi Whittel:

You must.

Dave Asprey:

So Bulletproof Collagen Protein Bars.

Naomi Whittel:

I eat them all time.

Dave Asprey:

Now what do you think holds all of that stuff together? Yes, it's inulin. So by design from the beginning it was, "Oh, what's a keto genic fiber that feeds healthy gut bacteria?" So there's inulin, there's cashews for the creaminess and collagen for the protein and there's some Brain Octane or XCT oil in them as well for the ketones. But the fact that I never really talk as much about the probiotic and the fiber side of those in part is because and you know this because you've worked in the supplement business. There are certain things that feed the good bacteria that are ketogenic, that are not actually considered technically a fiber. Even though they function as a fiber where there's actually regulations where they say, "You're not allowed to say that's a fiber. You have to say it's a carb."

Dave Asprey:

You're like but doesn't actually get digested a carb it's ketogenic and you're not allowing me to call it a fiber even though it is a fiber. So as a food manufacturer, you have to dance around what you're allowed to say versus what the truth is. And if you ever turn a package over at a health food store and your like, "Why does it say full of goody yumness?" It's because all of the truthful statements we weren't allowed to say. Thank you first amendment and all that stuff. I can tell you there's a reason inulin is in those bars and there's a reason that you're talking about inulin right now and why you have artichokes on the cover, this precious fiber. So you were saying other sources of inulin, which is one of the types of fiber what are the other places to get them?

Naomi Whittel:

Oh my gosh, I love that you just communicated that because I think everybody who's listening to us today can go into their pantry wherever in their fridge and start seeing inulin in different places and then bringing more insulin into their life, into their diet. And like you said, where you've got the collagen and the MCT, I mean it's just like there's a reason when I eat one of your bars, and by the way they are in my house at all times.

Dave Asprey:

Thank you.

Naomi Whittel:

I feel good. And it's this powerful combination. And so again, I mentioned for me it's about becoming this whole woman and optimizing my own biology. So, as a woman like on the front of my book, I'm juggling some artichokes, but that's to me like a metaphor for a woman in her mid-forties what our life looks like. We're juggling, we've got too much on our plate, there's too much stress, there's a lack of safety, we can't relax. Self-care now is something that we have to do. We have to set aside time for self-care and things like that. And so I'm always looking how can I quickly optimize my day, my own health, my own biology and artichokes that are rich in inulin do that. Avocados that they got the fiber in them. Again, berries with all of the polyphenols and the fiber that's in those. Chia seeds and hemp seeds are another really good source. But I think in general this accumulation of the right types of fiber 90% of us are deficient Dave. We're just not getting the fiber.

Dave Asprey:

And if you're on the keto diet it's probably worse, right?

Naomi Whittel:

Oh, it's so much worse. And so many people think you just don't need it when you're doing the ketogenic diet but I fundamentally disagree. I mean, fiber in the ketogenic diet, they both lower blood sugar, they both lower blood pressure, they decrease weight, they improve our digestion, they support the microbiome. I mean, they work so beautifully synergistically and I think that gives almost a 10X effect to our metabolism.

Dave Asprey:

When I put together The Bulletproof Diet, I mean, keep in mind, this book came out in 2014 and the diet was a couple of years in the making before that and experimenting. I did a three month period where I ate essentially no fiber, I ate one serving of broccoli day and the rest was just meat and fat to get as close to an Eskimo diet as I could reasonably do. And it wrecked my sleep, it wrecked my gut microbiome, it did not do good things for me. And I see all these dirty keto people out there saying, "Just put in some milk protein isolate in whatever kind of stevia soaked NutraSweet whatever." And you're, "It doesn't taste good." And if you do that regularly your gut bacteria doesn't go there. But they're saying, "Wasn't a carb. So I'm a good person." And you take that, it wrecks your gut bacteria.

Dave Asprey:

So then The Bulletproof Diet template is a plate covered in vegetables but non-starchy vegetables most of the time. And you add some ketones with Brain Octane and you put a little bit of grass fed meat on there for your protein and that's sort of the template. But over time I found I could not get enough vegetables when I traveled. I tried to get a plate of artichokes at a restaurant and you get like two of them and it's \$32 and they're dipped in some sort of aioli that's made of soy bean oil and MSG and your like "Gee, thanks." So eventually I just said, okay, I wrote Super Human and looked at what we actually need, did the math behind the amount of fiber and the types of fiber and which ones are ketogenic and what they do and came to the same conclusions you did.

Dave Asprey:

That look, you can't just say I'm keto you have to have the fiber perspective. I ended up making Inner Fuel, I put the stuff in my coffee I put it pretty much every meal. So I'm getting, as I wrote in the last book I'm getting somewhere around 60 to a hundred grams of soluble fiber a day that is fully ketogenic not counting the veggies I eat. And I can do it when I travel now because it's just powder and you can do that and that's what the people live the longest actually do. It's just impossible from normal food. What do you recommend people do when they can't get enough vegetables Because this is a major issue for us?

Naomi Whittel:

Yeah, no it's a major issue with 90% of us not getting enough and enough is 20 to 25 grams. That's just like a baseline. You're in a completely different zone. When I was in Alaska, I sat with a bunch of these Inuit women and I said okay, "What's your favorite food? Talk to me." And they said, "We get our energy from blubber. When it is the coldest time of year we're eating the blubber." And they gave me all these blubber recipes I was like, "Oh my God." But the amount of berries that they consume, the amount of fibrous vegetables that they consume was much higher than I realized just when I started to talk with these women. And it's really to do with the seasons and what they have access to. So I think we're going

to discover to your point when you wrote your book, it's so much about eating the way that we used to and it's so much about getting those prebiotics and feeding our microbiome. And so for me today, the way that we can get fiber is exactly from what you just said, consuming a powdered version is the only way that I can confidently say I'm getting the fiber that I need.

Dave Asprey:

All right, so we're in alignment on that and it's kind of funny because yeah sure I'll eat some coconut oil, but I do take the 5% extract with the most potency. I know how to make as a supplement, that's what's called Brain Octane. Shameless plug. I'm number one selling MCT oil by far because it works differently than normal.

Naomi Whittel:

And by the way guys I want to interrupt you for one second Dave and I want to acknowledge it's the number one MCT oil because you created the category.

Dave Asprey:

Oh well, there's that.

Naomi Whittel:

It's been number one because of who you are and as someone who's been in this industry for 25 years every time I see you I always say to you, "Dave, I have so much respect and admiration for what you're bringing to the health and wellness community." You broke all of the boundaries. For those of you that are not in our industry, we have this big trade show it's called Expo West. It happens once a year. It's an Anaheim, California like 70,000 people show up and for its entire history, the supplement companies are on one side and the food companies are on the other side. Well guess what? In walks Dave and Dave breaks all of the Effing boundaries completely. And we as humans are able to upgrade our health because of your boldness Dave, because of your willingness. So I have to say that. I want people to know who are not necessarily so tapped into our industry as I am that this is the real deal and I'm really psyched and pumped to see you continue to be on the cutting edge and share with us in the ways that you do.

Dave Asprey:

Coming from you with your background and history that's amazing and it's an honor, thank you. And just the idea that sometimes your food won't be enough given the demands of travel and demands of life and all that and that the line between food and supplements is actually non-existent. When you get to a certain level of super food is it really a nutrient source? Are you going to get enough calories from cilantro? No, actually you're not going to get much energy from cilantro. Cilantro is a food, but it's more of a supplement more of a medicine. And of course there are laws that say foods can't be medicines because they're not drugs. You're not allowed to say what foods actually do but that line that says okay, if I'm going to show up all the way, I'm going to need more than just plain food can do for me, especially if I'm going to live an intense life and that that's okay.

Dave Asprey:

So for me, I don't know how to do what I do if I wasn't allowed to cheat and get fiber from stuff that I put together. And I had to get all of my C8 MCT Brain Octane from coconut oil because I would throw up from eating that much coconut. Because it takes 20 pounds of coconut oil to make one pound of Brain

Octane. So it's okay to just say look, we're going to hack or cheat or we're going to do what it takes to show up the way we want to show up. And there are some differences for men and women but they're not that big of a deal. But maybe women need fiber more than men and if that's the case, use a supplement or have 16 salads if that makes you happy. But it's going to take that much lettuce to get your fiber intake up and acknowledge you might not have time and the restaurant might not be willing to bring you two pounds of lettuce. So what are you going to do?

Dave Asprey:

You could just be deficient that day which is what a lot of us have learned to do. Oh, I'll just eat the deep fried brussels sprouts and be done with it. And then you wonder why does my skin look this way? Why do I have these love handles? Why do I feel like a zombie? Why am I yelling at people? That's what happens when humans eat food that's not compatible with their biology. What are the other hacks, the things very specifically for women around fiber? Is there a kind of fiber that's going to make you fart like a machine that probably isn't in alignment with your French upbringing? Are there fibers to avoid? Are there things that are risks? Just give me more details, more nuggets, more actionable stuff for people listening.

Naomi Whittel:

Yeah, no, I think it's a great question. I would say as it relates to fiber depending on how much fiber you're getting in a day, and most people are not getting anything close to what they need you need to make it a slow build. Because all of a sudden if you're okay, I'm going need 25 grams of fiber today, I'm not talking about you Dave, you're up in the three digits there but-

Dave Asprey:

I built up okay.

Naomi Whittel:

You build up right? So again, it's at the beginning as you're adjusting to it, if you have some of that gas, okay. It's part of that process and recognizing that over the course of several weeks, it can take time to get past that place where you're feeling bloated and that's okay too. What I did with High Fiber Keto is a clinical study. We did a clinical study at Jacksonville University and the whole goal of it, it was a 22 day... We actually did it for 22 days but we continued it on for 30 and then it went to 60. But what we wanted to see is within those first 22 days, and it was only done on women. Because in the scientific community you spoke about it earlier because as women we deal with menstrual cycles, we have the hormonal complexities, we are complex. What's happened in the scientific community is women are not included in as many studies because it makes it so much more difficult. And so I would say as a woman in 2020 we're at a place where there's almost a scientific black hole of our health, and that's changing and that will continue to change but we're in the early stages.

Naomi Whittel:

So this study that we did was done just on women and we looked at did they have metabolic syndrome? What were their disadvantages? We didn't provide them with their meals. We said, here are the boundaries we want you to get into nutritional ketosis and then we did a huge gamut of tests. Well only 60% of the women were able to get into traditional ketosis in those 22 days. So I would say as it relates to fiber, and this is fundamentally about nutritional ketosis and fiber goes on top of it. Getting your body into a place where you're using fat for fuel and you're really in a consistent state of nutritional ketosis

for a period of time is the one thing that's going to make the biggest difference once you start to incorporate the fiber. Because your system, your metabolism is working so much more effectively and you're able to utilize the benefits of that fiber more effectively.

Naomi Whittel:

So think about with fiber optimizing your metabolism that's the whole thing in my mind when I look at fiber. And I would also say that the sources that I gave you of the fiber rich foods, I have so many probably over 50 recipes that are fiber rich where you're getting 25 to 35 grams of fiber every single day. Where the fiber is coming from is it soluble or insoluble? The inulin is to me a really big play on it as well. So it's simply adding a teaspoon of chia seeds to your breakfast, we have breakfast puddings that have the chia seeds and things like that. It's just understanding in part what are the vegetables that have a dual action? So a cruciferous vegetable is a super powerful way to get a lot of the good fibers where you wouldn't necessarily think about it.

Naomi Whittel:

It also activates autophagy. When I look at hydration and how that relates to fiber. So when we go into a nutritional ketogenic lifestyle already we're messing with our electrolytes, our sodium levels are usually way off and if you can incorporate the right amount of hydration and I would say it's not from eight glasses of water, it's from gel water. It's from cucumbers and celery and things that have 70% water and you're getting that hydration deep into your cells, that also really helps with utilizing fiber in your diet. So gel waters, super hydration. I know I'm hydrated. I don't count the amount of water I drink every day, I count the amount of times I go pee. And I have to be going at least six times and we talked about that before and then I know that my body is fully hydrated and then I'm always focusing on the right amount of electrolytes. Am I getting the minerals? Celery has a ton of sodium which I'm looking for. We talked about broccoli and the sulfur folinic acids, so it's really complimenting the fiber with these micronutrients and this gel water to incorporate higher levels of hydration.

Dave Asprey:

When you talk about gel water for people listening we're not talking about the electrolyte gels or stinger packs or anything like that we're talking about exclusion-zone water. This is water that would be found inside of vegetable juice and Bulletproof actually funded research with Jerry Pollack from the University of Washington, it was actually a pretty large amount of money by Bulletproof research standards on this new form of water. And what he found was that some of the largest amounts of that gel water to the exclusion-zone water that he's ever seen came from get these small droplets of butterfat i.e. ghee suspended in water. So this is one of the reasons Bulletproof coffee works in my understanding of this. This is why the Tibetans blend their yak butter tea in a butter churn even though they don't even have running water a lot of the time it's because when you get tiny droplets of fat, you make more of the gel waters.

Dave Asprey:

So, I mean, my morning routine I make my Bulletproof Coffee and I put in two big scoops of Inner Fuel. Now I've got a huge amount of exclusion-zone water, I got my polyphenols from the coffee and I've got my Inner Fuel and I just got my fiber up a lot. But here's a question, you might know the answer to this. No one's been able to answer this. I do that. So I know that Bulletproof intermittent fasting still keeps you in a state of autophagy where you have the fats, but you have no protein and no carbs whatsoever. And I've talked to [Sim 00:51:25] Land about it and you get some people who say, Oh, that's not really

fasting, whatever. It is really fasting and it's fasting that doesn't hurt and raises your ketones higher. Different types of fasting, sure. What no one can tell me unless you can, if I add these fibers in the morning, and these are fibers that do not raise insulin fibers that only get eaten by gut bacteria, is that a fast metabolically? Certainly it's not allowing my gut bacteria to chill because they're happy as clams, but is that still a fast?

Naomi Whittel:

So I told you when we first started our conversation I'm here in the Innovation Institute at the University of Florida in Gainesville and the good news is I have a ton of PhDs right around the corners so I will give you that answer from a scientific standpoint after this because I don't know the answer. If you're getting those fibers are you still in a state of [crosstalk 00:52:25]

Dave Asprey:

I don't know but someone's got to know so maybe you can hook me up with the right researcher.

Naomi Whittel:

Yeah. I'm going to get that answer for you. I mean, I think for people like you and me we're much more of the generalist and so we have access to hundreds of researchers, thousands throughout the world that are spending their life dedicated to one specific topic. When I had the privilege of interviewing Yoshinori Ohsumi the Nobel Prize winner for Autophagy, I was in Tokyo and it was the most remarkable day. I've told you how much I love that but he has spent his entire career and he continues to just studying yeast and how autophagy is activated, how it's deactivated and it's only been yeast his entire career.

Naomi Whittel:

And the fact that he has won the Nobel prize for his research and being able to have the privilege that you have, you've interviewed Nobel Prize winners We are very lucky people to have the kind of exposure that we do. And the fact that your mind is wondering [inaudible 00:53:40] what's happening here with fiber, that entrepreneurial spirit is what allows us to basically take our health to the next level. So I'm going to run out of here and find those researchers that will get on the phone with you and give you the answer and you can evolve the answers.

Dave Asprey:

Well I definitely wasn't trying to stump you there, I was hoping you can teach me something there, you often do. But that the point that you've made in your book and this is one of the first books to really make the point very succinctly to the point and whether it's specifically for women or for men is that look if you're going to be on keto for long periods of time I'll tell you straight up do it cyclically and you need more fiber. But I think you dive in on the fiber thing more than anyone else I've seen in the field including my books. I'm saying you need fiber it goes down to anti-aging angle, but in The Bulletproof Diet I was like eat your veggies but I wasn't quantifying it and I wasn't looking at the right types of fiber.

Dave Asprey:

And frankly, if you go back six years ago the research didn't exist that said, this fiber feeds this kind of gut bacteria but you went through all that in your book and you're saying, here's the case, here's what to do and here's how it's going to make you feel and here's the difference between men and women. So all of these were big open spaces in the world of keto in the world of biohacking. So you kind of took

those three of them and put them together into a book that actually added to our sum of knowledge about it. Your website for the book by the way, is highfiberketo.com very easy to remember. And I would just say look, you're listening to this and you haven't experimented with what happens when you manipulate your fiber.

Dave Asprey:

You've probably manipulated your protein because you've eaten less protein or more protein, I've talked about protein fasting et cetera. You've probably manipulated your sugar and your carbs because you know you've done this stuff. But have you looked at the type and composition of the fiber in your diet and seen what that does for you? If you haven't that's probably the missing leg and this is the book you want to read. highfiberketo.com by Naomi Whittel. Naomi, what did I not ask you that I should have asked you in our interview today?

Naomi Whittel:

I think you asked everything. I mean, I would just add one thing. I'm very proud of the fact that both with Glow 15 and with High Fiber Keto I did a clinical study and both of them were done exclusively on women and I fundamentally believe that we as women we need more science, we need more. And I love that you're married to a physician and I think the more we can support women's health and longevity and increasing the level of boldness that we see out there in the world, the better off we are. And I'm excited, I'm just excited for people to start playing with how much fiber do I actually want to be consuming on a daily basis? Do I want to be like Dave? What will that do for my longevity and what will that do for my health?

Dave Asprey:

Just start slow. All right, I'm with you on that mission and the fact that it's a clinical trial is important. The fact that it's for women is important. And I used to get upset now I just kind of roll my eyes where at the end of every year you get the American Diabetic Association, I'm sorry, the American Dietetic Association. I confused them because the American Dietetic people they usually cause diabetes with the recommendations. These are the people who make hospital diets, which are like the worst foods you could ever make. Well they always come out and go, "The keto diets is the worst diet based on nutritionist." I'm like that's funny because the people I know who go on it find that their mood stabilizes, their cravings go away, they lose weight, they feel really good and it's pretty amazing.

Dave Asprey:

And so I just feel like that's just junk and so we can do better than that and I really hope that your book helps people to see that. So the science is behind what you were doing. You did a clinical study, you did it specifically on women and here is the deal, if you go on dirty keto whether you're a man or woman, you will hate your life in 60 days.

Naomi Whittel:

No question.

Dave Asprey:

It's going to happen. If you do cyclical keto, you eat enough veggies, you add your fiber, you can do it for years and you'll look younger, you'll feel younger, you'll look better. Everything gets better. So you can't just say keto, it has to have the nuances. You can't do keto with corn oil and fake sweeteners and pork

rinds and some cream cheese and... It doesn't work. You'll lose half your weight, but then you feel a zombie and you'll have bad skin. I know I've done it. People who've gone down this path have done it but what you've added to the conversation is critically important. You hit the angle for women and you proved it with science and you talked about fiber in a way that really needed to happen. So I appreciate you, I appreciate what you're doing.

Dave Asprey:

This is a meaningful book. Thanks for being on Bulletproof Radio for the second time. Let's hope this one is as popular as your last episode and for people who liked this interview listen to the last one. And I would encourage you to go out there and go on your favorite podcast platform and just subscribe to the podcast. It's easy to do and I'll bring you the best scientists, best research, best authors, and just stuff that's going to give you value. So if you feel like in the last hour, you got more back than you donated in terms of time then subscribe and leave a review. And I appreciate it and while you're at it, pick up a copy of High Fiber Keto because it's worth your time. Thank you for listening.