

Nutrition Goes Primal with Dr. Paul Saladino and Nora Gedgaudas – #860

Announcer:

Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave Asprey:

Hey guys, the carnivore diet has been all the rage lately so I've got something special for you today. You've been asking for experts who can talk to food that's more in line with the way we evolved as humans. One of my friends and a popular guest is Dr. Paul Saladino, who I occasionally called James for reasons I cannot explain. If I call him James Saladino on social media, you know I'm just messing with him. And he's done extensive research and he can talk about what happens when you eat meat nearly exclusively. And just full disclosure, when he and I talk, I did not have good experience when I tried this, when I was stress testing the edges of the Bulletproof Diet years ago. I did get leaky gut from doing it but I've had many friends, including Steve Omohundro, who was an early guest on the show, a global researcher in AI who cured his almost incurable cancer in his blood doing carnivore. There's something magic happening here and who should do it? For how long? And how much? We're still figuring that out. But this is going to be really cool.

What Paul shares is the benefits of reversing autoimmune issues, decreasing chronic inflammation and making mental health better, 100%. You cut out all the crap, including crap from mother nature in vegetables like kale and you tend to get better. Paul and I talk a lot about carnivore broadly and we talk about plant toxins, organ meats and linoleic acid. This omega-6 fat that you all know is something you should minimize in your diet as much as you can.

And also in the early days of Bulletproof Radio, I interviewed a nutrition specialist and researcher who's one of the, I'll call her the mothers of the paleo diet, Nora Gedgaudas and I interviewed her again later in the show. I've put together the best of both of those interviews here for you so you get the distilled knowledge of one of the masters in our field. She connects the dots of evolutionary physiology, biochemistry, metabolism and nutrition and tells you how they're tied to chronic and degenerative disease. And as you well know, if you want to join me at living to at least a 180, maybe not dying of degenerative disease should be high on your list if you want to live a long time. Just saying. Nora's interesting because she got frustrated with the keto and paleo movements that she was a champion of and developed her own plan that made more sense to her. And she has some choice words about carbs.

You'll get a lot out of these conversations with Paul and Nora. And let me know what you think through the podcast feedback form. You go to daveasprey.com/podcast, there's a form there and you can tell me, "Dave, talk more about this. I want to hear more about this other topic." Or suggest an expert. I am listening to what you say in the reviews. What you tell me on Instagram and Facebook and now even on Telegram, Dave Asprey Official t.me/daveaspreyofficial is my Telegram page. And what you'll find is I'm sharing a little bit more openly on Telegram because it's uncensored and I'm doing my best to stay on Instagram and things like that but wherever you want to share that feedback with me, I'm listening because these episodes are for you. They're meant to give you more value than the hour or so you're going to spend with me now. And if it's not delivering value or it could deliver more value, it's my job to do that for you. Feedback and advice from you about how to improve the show is amazing. Thanks for taking a minute to do that.

Today's guest, Nora Gedgaudas. We're going to talk about a new thing that Nora's been working on called Primalgenic.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Yes. One of the first things I want to comment on is that I wasn't just one of the early adopters of fat based, basically ketogenic approach to ancestral nutrition, I was the first one to write about that in the genre many, many years ago. I think my first book came out in 2009, a self published version of it.

Dave Asprey:

Primal Body, Primal Mind.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Yeah. And then I got approached by the current publisher and they just said, "We love this book. We'd like to do it up right."

Dave Asprey:

Is it that there's these incredible just warfare things online, at both radical ends of the spectrum. If you eat a carb again, you're a bad person. Or if you eat a drop of fat, you're going to die. Where's the anger and the bile coming from?

Nora Gedgaudas:

I can tell you from my more than 20 years of experience in working with the brain and nervous system, and by the way, Portland is number two in the country in terms of being a vegan center. By far the most damaged and tractable brains and nervous systems I have ever worked with have been hardcore vegetarians and especially vegans. We're talking about extremely agitated nervous systems. And once things get past a certain point, we can store maybe five years worth of B12. You deplete that, some of the neurological damage that occurs past a certain point is not necessarily reversible. And so by the time a lot of these people came to me, they were willing to do anything, but it's really, really hard past a certain point to bring somebody back out of neurodegenerative processes.

Dave Asprey:

Sorry Paul, that I called you James.

Paul Saladino:

It's all good, Dave. It's so good to be here. It's been a good laugh for both of us this morning.

Dave Asprey:

Now you're well known now because you've been talking about the carnivore diet, which is something that's intriguing and something that people ask me a lot on the blog now or at least on social. Hey Dave, is the Bulletproof Diet compatible with the carnivore diet? Look on the Bulletproof Diet, look in the green zone. Is grass fed meat there? Yes, it's compatible.

Paul Saladino:

I think that people who've read the book, The Carnivore Code, which I just released, will get a little bit of my story in there, but I've been kind of in medicine for a while. My dad's a doctor, my mom's a nurse. I've always been interested in, what is at the root cause of illness? Which I think is a fascination that both you and I share greatly. This symptom focused pharmaceutical based paradigm in Western medicine is quite detestable to me and has been super frustrating throughout my medical career. As I've

struggled with my own autoimmune issues, my own medical issues, I think this makes the best stories for all of us when we all suffer with something. I had eczema and asthma and they really didn't get a whole lot better until I cut plant out of my diet. And there were a lot of steps in between there. I did a raw vegan diet for seven months about 15 years ago.

Dave Asprey:

You and me were raw vegans together. Well not at the same time. Did that's just trash you?

Paul Saladino:

25 pounds of muscle mass weight lost and the worst gas of my life.

Dave Asprey:

Did it enhance your athletic performance? Did it change your game?

Paul Saladino:

No.

Dave Asprey:

What the hell? You mean it didn't work?

Paul Saladino:

It didn't work.

Dave Asprey:

No. It's the worst idea ever. You want to get old and sore and weak, that diet is the one for you.

Nora Gedgaudas:

I think it's, what's incumbent upon us in the face of so many things we feel like we can't control is to take control of what we can, be aware, understand as much of this as we can and find ways of strategizing our way around the system and develop that firsthand knowing of where your food comes from, as much as humanly possible. And educate yourself and take responsibility for as much as you possibly can.

Dave Asprey:

When you get back to Primalgenics, you talk about these 12 pillars. What's the first one about uncompromised dietary quality? What does that mean?

Nora Gedgaudas:

Uncompromised dietary quality means you're consuming for instance, the animal source foods you're consuming are coming from animals that have been themselves fed a diet that is optimal for them, natural forage. Grass fed and finished naturally or wild caught or hunted or whatever. And also when it comes to your plant based foods, organic, biodynamic. And the more you have a firsthand knowing of where that plant food came from, the better. Our ancestors ate a lot of organ meat and they did bone broths and they ate bone marrow and all of that.

And in fact, we have big brains, well, many of us do anyway. I won't name names to the exceptions but politicians and whatever. It's so important for us to get these foods from the highest quality sources and then understand that we need to develop a taste for things that we've consumed over the last 2.6 million years that now are not so much commonly consumed in the food supply but we have to go a little bit out of our way to find really high quality organ meats and make our own bone broths at home and all that stuff in order to get all of the nutrients that we're supposed to be getting.

Paul Saladino:

Collagen is like animal fiber. These peptides in collagen appear to be able to be fermented by the gut bacteria into short chain, fatty acids. So much of the criticism or the potential criticism of carnivore diets is there's not enough fiber. And there's a whole chapter in my book about debunking all these myths about fiber but we can use animal protein and specifically collagenous proteins from animals, the connective tissue and the bacteria in our gut can use that in the same way they might use plant fiber to make short chain fatty acids, which serve as fuel for the colonic epithelial cells. An time somebody says, "Your carnivore diet is zero fiber." I say, "Well, it's zero plant fiber but I get animal fiber and animal fiber is even better than plant fiber in my opinion." And that's just in addition to all the benefits that having an adequate amount of glycine in your diet to counterbalance the methionine rich muscle meat is how beneficial that is for humans as well.

My ideas with the carnivore diet and The Carnivore Code book are not intended to create an environment in which every person on the planet eats zero plants. The ideas are really aimed at three big things. The first of them is that as we talked about, red meat and organs are central to the human diet for the last millions of years, critical for human evolution, really made us human and are an essential part.

Dave Asprey:

What about fish though? There's pretty good evidence that fish was at least as important in our evolution.

Paul Saladino:

Sure. Some fish occasionally, but there were lots of people who lived inland who maybe didn't get a whole lot of fish as well. I think you can get a lot of the nutrients you get in fish if you eat nose to tail, so we can dig into that as well.

Dave Asprey:

Yeah, you can.

Paul Saladino:

Yeah, yeah. And the second point, and then to just fully elaborate that first point, it's just that, hey, animal meat and organs belong in every healthy human diet. They've been incorrectly vilified for 70 years. Point number two, plants exist on a toxicity spectrum. I think you and I see eye to eye on this. They exist on a toxicity spectrum. They have toxins.

Dave Asprey:

Plants want to kill you. They really do. They hate us.

Paul Saladino:

Exactly. Plants hate us and if we ignore the fact that plants exist on a toxicity spectrum and make plant toxins, which are defend chemicals, we are abandoning a whole bunch of people who could get really well by eliminating the most toxic plants from their diet. Some people like me, like other people you know, do really well with zero plant foods in their diet. Other people can have some plant foods in their diet. It's not that I'm trying to tell everyone to be zero plants. It's that I'm saying, there is a plant toxicity spectrum. Understand what the most toxic plants are for you. Eliminate those. Eat nose to tail with organ meats, with well raised red meat and organs and you will thrive.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Just because again, our ancestors did something is not a good enough reason for me to want to do the exact same thing now.

Dave Asprey:

You don't have a Stonehenge in your backyard?

Nora Gedgaudas:

That would be so cool, wouldn't it?

Dave Asprey:

It would be.

Nora Gedgaudas:

I was just there actually. It was a really neat thing. I will say that, I'm friends with Jeff Leach, you know who he is. And he's said that actually, that for instance, the Hadza, of course, the diet that the Hadza are eating now is not the diet that they always used to eat. They're not able to hunt large animals anymore because the government won't let them anymore. It's small game, whatever and they eat a lot of honey. But they've also developed a genetic polymorphism that allows the bacteria in their gut to metabolize that honey so that it doesn't affect their insulin. It's crazy adaptation but they've developed a specific adaptation to it. I would not expect the average person in our culture to have that same adaptation.

Dave Asprey:

I've seen so many people go on a no carb diet and after a couple months, they really don't like their life especially well.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Well, and it depends on what they're doing with that. It's a trite phrase but it's really true. I do tend to eat more vegetables, fibrous vegetables and greens than most vegetarians and vegans do.

Dave Asprey:

Same here.

Nora Gedgaudas:

I'm an advocate for that but I see it as supplemental, not foundational, not necessarily fundamental but I do think those things are more important to us today than they ever used to be during our long evolutionary history. Just simply because of how embattled our gut biome is in today's world with everything. Chlorinated water, glyphosate, we're surrounded by antibiotics. And so our gut biome is constantly under attack. Anything we can do to prebiotically feed that is great. I will say there are fermentable animal fibers too.

Dave Asprey:

Collagen being the number one of them.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Collagen being very, very high on the list. All kinds of connective tissue and things like that. And an even higher, even more effective as a prebiotic than like fructoligosaccharides might be.

Paul Saladino:

What's very interesting here and I don't think many people have talked about this is that fatty acids can serve as a lipokines in the human body. These are like lipid hormones. We have adipokines, things like lipokalin and adiponectin, which are hormones coming from the adipocytes. But there are also lipokines. And linoleic acid is an 18 carbon omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acid. And what we mean by that, there are 18 carbons, there are multiple unsaturation points, which are double bonds between carbons and to do the nomenclature, the first double bond is six carbons from the end of the molecule. That is an 18 carbon omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acid.

People always ask me about CLA, conjugated linoleic acid. Also an 18 carbon fatty acid that has double bonds in different places. It's not the same molecule. There are many isomers. There is rumenic acid. There are many isomers that can be conjugated linoleic acid. They are not the same molecule. The position of the double bond appears to matter. And the shape of the molecule appears to matter. And the cis versus trans configuration of the hydrogens appears to matter in the way these molecules signal. Most listeners will be familiar with the fact that a lot of signaling in the human body is done by ligands and receptors. One thing binds to another. Conformational structures matter. Conjugated linoleic acid has trans configuration of many of the hydrogens.

Dave Asprey:

That's why the vegans are like, oh, it's bad. It's bad. It's trans.

Paul Saladino:

Exactly.

Dave Asprey:

And you're like, no, it's not. Go deeper on that.

Paul Saladino:

Exactly. If you really look at the literature, trans fats from vegetable foods or plant foods are the only ones that have been associated with harmful effects in humans. Naturally occurring trans fats are okay.

Dave Asprey:

Because plants want to kill you. It just keeps going back to that.

Paul Saladino:

Plants want to kill you. Or if you take a polyunsaturated vegetable oil like linoleic acid from plants and you hydrogenate it at high heat, oxygen, temperature, high temperatures or high oxygen environments, that will form now a trans fat and that looks very harmful or foreign to the human body. But conjugated linoleic acid is a different molecule from linoleic acid. Doesn't have the same signaling properties and doesn't act the same way in the human body. The third one you mentioned is alpha-linolenic acid. That is an omega-3 fatty acid. The double bond is again in the different position on the molecule. Now, different signaling, different molecule completely. Interestingly, ALA alpha-linolenic acid is the omega-3 touted by plant based advocates but as I mentioned in The Carnivore Code, most humans are abysmal at converting it to the actual usable forms.

Dave Asprey:

That's 45 to one ratio, right?

Paul Saladino:

Yeah. Yeah. You can't convert ALA into EPA, DPA or DHA in humans. Basically there are studies that I mention in the book where people are given lots of flaxseed meal, which probably has a lot of oxidized.

Dave Asprey:

That stuff's bad for you. I'm sorry.

Paul Saladino:

Omega-3.

Dave Asprey:

How about if you cook it into a flax cookie, what's that going to do?

Paul Saladino:

That's a great idea. Let's cook omega-3 fatty, let's take the most wildly unstable fats out there and just cook them. That's a horrible idea. You can give you a flaxseed meal and you don't see any rise in EPA or DHA. Getting your omega-3 from ALA, which is the reason we are also told quote, walnuts are good for us. Things like this, that's ALA in nuts. There are not really these EPA, DHA and DPA fats that occur in plant foods. People may say, "Oh, algae," but that's a different story. But generally speaking, we again see the pattern animal foods provide us with the nutrients we need.

Dave Asprey:

Well, you have 12 rules.

Nora Gedgudas:

And we've actually gone through three, inadvertently got to number three, which was the protein moderation thing. Really, this is not a carnivore diet. This is not a high protein diet. This is a very moderate protein diet.

Dave Asprey:

We're not going to get through all 12 of these but I think, there isn't time in the show. I do think though, that that's a really good example. All the principles are very much in alignment with what I've learned and they all make sense. And they're all in your Primalgenic program, which now when you say it's a program, is this an online thing?

Nora Gedgaudas:

Yeah, it's an online thing. There are a number of videos, quite a number of them actually. Right now, at least 16. There are going to be all kinds of additional bonuses and handouts and things like that that you'll be getting and recordings. There'll also be an exclusive forum where people can come on and they'll feel a sense of community. You'll be able to ask questions and all that kind of a thing. There'll be a lot of support around this as well. But this is really kind of a very, very passionate thing that I have created rather painstakingly. And there's nothing superficial or fluff about it.

Dave Asprey:

It's real education.

Nora Gedgaudas:

It is.

Dave Asprey:

Yeah. I'm planning to live an exceptionally long time or at least die trying. How long do you think you can live?

Nora Gedgaudas:

Oh man, I don't know. And actually it doesn't matter to me that much. What matters is not so much the length of time that any of us live, what's the point of living to a 120 if you're on an oxygen tank and limping around and if your mental faculties are gone and your joints are aching and whatever else. It's about the quality of life, not the quantity of life in my mind. Even though part of what I do is I, crosspollinate my ancestral research with human longevity research, which again, just because our ancestors did something is not necessarily a good enough reason for me to want to do the same thing because just because something grew out of the ground and seemed natural and they could shove it in their faces, eat it and not drop dead, doesn't necessarily mean that was health optimizing for them.

I want to know what's optimizing. And so that's my approach. And it seems very puritanical but I've got to tell you that we got no wiggle room today. We do not have the wiggle room of our prehistoric ancestors. We don't even have the wiggle room of her great grandparents or grandparents or even our parents. That we are living in a modern world that is more hostile to our being as, as a human species, than any hostile environment we've ever lived through during our long evolutionary history. Only what we're wired for as a species are tangible threats. There's a saber tooth tiger jumps up from behind a bush chases you around, that's tangible. Cantankerous woolly mammoth, a poisonous snake, a warring tribe, a major storm, a seismic event or even famine, that's tangible.

But today we're all living in these lovely 72 degree, climate controlled environments. We have plenty, we don't have to take more than a couple steps in any direction to grab a handful of something we might want to call as food. And we're sitting on our comfy couches and watching Dancing With the Stars and eating cheesy doodles and thinking we've got it pretty good. We feel like we're sitting in a hot

tub in Vegas but when we're really boiling frogs. And so most of what threatens our survival today as a species are those things that are fundamentally invisible to us. Contaminants in our air, water and food supply. Mycotoxins certainly, EMF and God help us, 5G and radiation contamination. And the sociopathic imaginings of multinational corporate interests and all kinds of things are threatening us in ways that are invisible and therefore we're not wired to know to pay attention to those things and to take action in order to protect ourselves. And so again, we have to take control of what we can because we're being impinged on from every which direction.

Paul Saladino:

Could I just mentioned that the people I work with who eat nose to tail have the highest coenzyme Q10 levels I've ever seen.

Nora Gedgaudas:

I believe it.

Paul Saladino:

And heart, heart is one of the organs in our beef organ supplement. Heart is a fantastic source of coenzyme Q10. And I would encourage you guys to do these tests that Dave and I are talking about. Get a baseline CoQ10 level, eat nose to tail, get liver and heart and pancreas and spleen and then show your cardiologist how much CoQ10 is in your blood. They've never seen a CoQ10 of two or three or four. It's crazy the upper limit. You get these labs from Quest for Cleveland Heart and they say a good coenzyme Q10 is 0.73. I routinely see people with two, three, four, for their CoQ10 levels. It's amazing. And it's just, that is the physiologic level of CoQ10 that humans should have when they are eating an animal based diet. And just like the levels of B12. They're much higher. They're above the reference range. The same should be true for riboflavin and folate, all that stuff. They're so rich in the animal foods.

Dave Asprey:

I think it's because you're not getting the anti versions of those that are blocking things

Paul Saladino:

Possibly.

Dave Asprey:

Yeah, I still think most organs aside from sweetbreads, they pretty much tastes like crap. I would rather take a handful of designated organs than choke down a liver or whatever. My wife's different. She makes these liver pies and she cuts these huge pieces of them and I'm like, man, I'm fasting today. Swedish tastes.

Paul Saladino:

But it's important. This comes up a lot for people. It's almost like we said, if you're going to eat organs, there's a possibility and the physician in me bristles at this because everybody gets worried about food safety. If you're going to eat a lot of these organs, you either want to eat them raw or desiccated. That's the best thing. You don't want to cook the crap out of most of these organs. Just saying. And just like you don't want to, we talked about this on the first podcast. I don't think we want to cook the crap out of any of our foods. You mentioned that you're not a fan of like overly stewed meats. Neither am I.

Dave Asprey:

It's bad for you. You can feel the difference. It really is.

Paul Saladino:

Yeah. I eat most of my meats blanched now. I'll make a bone broth and then just flash cook them in the water for a minute. Less than a minute, they're mostly raw, they're just blanched on the outside. I don't do any cooking in pans anymore. People always say, "Okay, vegetable oils are so bad. What oil can I cook in?" And the answer is, "No, don't cook it in oil."

Dave Asprey:

Nora, thanks for being on Bulletproof Radio.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Appreciate it.

Dave Asprey:

Your website, Primal Body, Primal Mind?

Nora Gedgaudas:

primalbody-primalmind.com. I also have a certification course, 52 weeks worth of in depth material.

Dave Asprey:

Wow.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Yeah. If you go to primalcourses.com, you can learn more about my different programs and learn more about my new Primalgenic Plan Program, which I think is going to be an easy way for people to incorporate these changes into their lives in a way that will make a real difference.

Dave Asprey:

Well, definitely your troll principles are all correct as far as my understanding of the world is and it is not easy to do that. Well executed. Thanks for being a pioneer and a game changer, disruptor in the field.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Yeah. I'm a rabble rouser, that's for sure. Total troublemaker but I'm in good company so there we go.

Dave Asprey:

Yeah, you fit right in. Thank you.

Nora Gedgaudas:

Totally. Thanks Dave. Appreciate it.

Paul Saladino:

I like to think about the nutrients that we need to make testosterone. You need zinc. You need B vitamins. You can even get testosterone and testosterone precursors. And in the future at Heart and Soil, we're going to come out with a desiccated organ supplement that has testicle in it. And so are there peptides contained in testicle? And so eating animals nose to tail, giving your body the nutrients it needs, sleeping enough, getting sunlight, getting exercise that's how we become healthy human sexually and physically. We give our body the precursors it needs to make hormones and it makes hormones. One of those precursors is cholesterol. Don't inhibit the formation of cholesterol. Don't worry about it if your LDL goes high in the setting of a metabolic health condition that you're creating.

Dave Asprey:

Nice. I feel like we could go on for hours and I think we should end this episode. Do you want to drop a code for Heart and Soil supplements? We didn't arrange this ahead of time but if you want to do it, I'm happy to share it with listeners.

Paul Saladino:

Yeah. You want to do dave10? If you guys want to come check out Heart and Soil, we would love to see you over there. You can always email me, drpaul, D-R paul@heartandsoilsupplements.com. The website is heartandsoilsupplements.com. And if you use the code, dave10, you'll get 10% off your first order and we will be so stoked to send it to you. And I think you guys are going to love it. We're making what we believe to be the best quality things we can to really get you back to that kind of ancestral health perspective. We really want you to be able to reclaim your ancestral birthright to radical health. That's what I'm all about.

Dave Asprey:

Paul, thanks for coming back on the show. I will probably only call you James a few more times.

Paul Saladino:

I can't wait.