

THE DIETARY CURE FOR ACNE

LOREN CORDAIN, PH.D.

SCIENTIFICALLY
PROVEN
TO CLEAR
ACNE

A DIETARY PLAN THAT CAN ACTUALLY
ELIMINATE ACNE

A PROGRAM OF HEALTHY
EATING FOR LIFE

THE NEW SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR
CLEARING UP ACNE WITH DIET

The **DIETARY**
CURE for
ACNE

by

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Author of "*The Paleo Diet*" and
"*The Paleo Diet for Athletes*"

On the web at: www.dietaryacnecure.com

Or at: www.thepaleodiet.com

Notice

This book is intended as a reference volume only, not as a medical manual. The information given here is designed to help you make informed decisions about your health. It is not intended as a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your doctor. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, we urge you to seek competent medical help.

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For more information about the concepts outlined in this book visit www.thedietaryacnecure.com or at www.thepaleodiet.com

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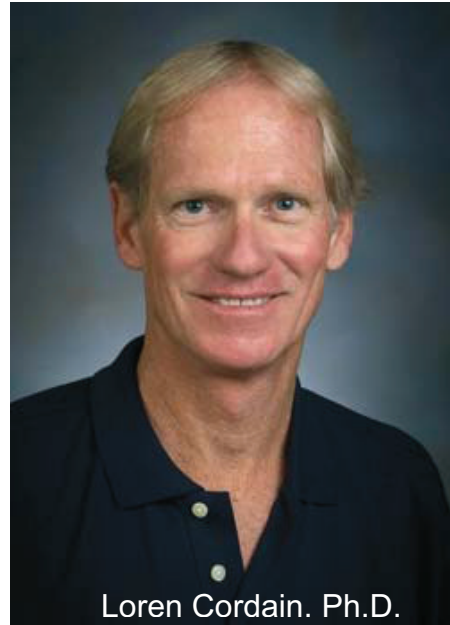
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About the Author and the Book

THE AUTHOR

Dr. Cordain received his Ph.D. in Health from the University of Utah in 1981 and has been employed as a Professor in the Department of Health and Exercise Science at Colorado State University for the past 24 years.

Featured on Dateline NBC, the front page of the Wall Street journal, and the New York Times, Loren Cordain is widely



acknowledged as one of the world's leading experts on the natural human diet of our Stone Age ancestors. He is the author of more than 100 peer-review scientific articles and abstracts. His research into the health benefits of Stone Age Diets for contemporary people has appeared in the world's top scientific journals including the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, the *British Journal of Nutrition*, and the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* among others. Dr. Cordain's popular book, "*The Paleo Diet*" [John Wiley & Sons, 2002], has been widely acclaimed in both the scientific and lay communities and has been translated into both Danish and Swedish language versions. His follow-up book, "*The Paleo Diet for Athletes*" [Rodale Press], was published in November 2005.

Most recently his work has focused upon the harmful health effects of the high dietary glycemic load that is ever-present in the typical western diet and how

it adversely affects skin health. In Dr. Cordain's ground-breaking paper, "*Acne Vulgaris: A Disease of Western Civilization*", which appeared in the prestigious medical journal, "*The Archives of Dermatology*", he was able to show how acne was completely absent in remote societies living and eating in a non-westernized manner. Further, his most recent scientific paper, "*Implications for the Role of Diet in Acne*" outlines the underlying mechanisms of how diet causes acne.

He is the 2002 recipient of the Scholarly Excellence Award at Colorado State University for his contributions into understanding optimal human nutrition. In May of 2004 the American College for Advancement in Medicine (ACAM) recognized him with their annual "Denham Harmon Lecture" for the most significant international medical publication, "*Hyperinsulinemic Diseases of Civilization: More Than Just Syndrome X*". This paper represented the second in a series of his three scientific publications outlining the central role diet plays in causing acne. Dr. Cordain has spoken extensively to both the scientific and lay communities on the underlying role of diet in causing acne including invited lectures to the largest, most prestigious Dermatology Organization in the United States, The Society for Investigative Dermatology (SID) and its equivalent in Europe, The European Society of Dermatology and Venerology (EADV).

THE BOOK

The book is arranged into seven easy-to-read chapters that are fully documented by 174 scientific references. At the end of each chapter is a "**BOTTOM LINE**" section which summarizes the key points.

Chapter 1: Overview of Acne and Diet

WHAT YOUR PHYSICIAN OR DERMATOLOGIST WILL SAY

If you were to walk into your physician's or dermatologist's office today with a full-blown case of blackheads and zits all over your face and ask them what causes this disease, you might be told, *"I don't know"*. I quote a recent (2003) scientific review paper by Drs. Harper and Thiboutot examining the origins of acne: *"despite years of research, the basic cause of acne remains unknown"*. If you were to press your doctor a bit further and ask them if diet causes your bad complexion, most would likely tell you that diet has virtually nothing to do with acne. In the current scientific and medical literature comments such as, *"the association of diet with acne has traditionally been relegated to the category of myth"*, are commonplace.

Let's dig a little bit deeper. Go ahead and ask your dermatologist how they know that diet does not cause acne. They may scratch their heads a bit, rumple their brows and just give you some short answer, or even pull down one of the major textbooks on dermatology and open it up to page so and so and say, "see it says right here in this medical textbook of dermatology that diet doesn't cause acne". For most of us that would clinch it, and we would walk right out of the doctor's office thinking that diet indeed has nothing to do with acne.

THE FIRST CLUE

About 10 years ago, I hadn't really given much thought to whether or not diet could cause acne. I had pretty much assumed the party line (that diet and acne were unrelated) was correct – that is, until the day when I finally got around

to reading an obscure scientific paper written by Dr. Otto Schaefer called, "*When the Eskimo Comes to Town*".

Dr. Schaefer was a frontier physician who treated the Inuit (Eskimo) people in remote villages and outposts from the late 1940s until the early 1970s. During this 30 year span, Dr. Schaefer observed the Inuit as they literally were transformed from the Stone Age to the space age. When he started his practice, most of the Inuit in remote areas lived and ate in the traditional manner of their ancestors dating back thousands of years. Their diet consisted almost entirely of wild animals obtained from hunting and fishing and the few wild plants that were gathered during summer. Processed foods simply didn't exist, or if they did, they were minor components of their diet. As these people altered their native diet and became more and more westernized, their health began to decline, as Dr. Schaefer extensively documented in the medical literature of the time. Here's what Dr. Schaefer had to say about acne in 1971:

"Another condition has become prevalent, one obvious even to the layman: acne vulgaris. The condition used to be unknown among Eskimos, but one can see it readily amongst teenagers on the streets of Inuvik, Frobisher Bay, and Cambridge Bay. It is far less prevalent in the smaller centers. Old North men, such as missionaries, traders, trappers, men of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and others who have known and watched the Eskimos closely for many years, frequently remark to their physician friends on the change in the complexions of the young people. Many Eskimos themselves blame their pimples on the pop, chocolate, and candies the youngsters consume as if addicted. One wonders what these people and the other old Northerners would think if they were to read

some recent medical publications in which dermatologists belittle or deny the role of dietary factors in the pathogenesis of acne vulgaris.”

SCANT EVIDENCE

After having read this paper, I began to think that the real “myth” may have been the notion that diet had nothing to do with acne. One of my first stopping points was the position in the current dermatology textbooks. What was this information based upon? You might think that there was a long and well established trail of scientific literature conclusively demonstrating that diet and acne were unrelated, and that the remarks in the textbooks simply reflected well known facts. Nothing could be further from the truth! The viewpoint penned in these textbooks relied upon only two scientific studies of diet and acne that are now more than 30 years old. But more importantly, both of these dated studies contained fatal flaws in their experimental design which rendered their conclusions (that diet does not cause acne) erroneous.

Here’s a case in point. In the often cited study by Dr. Fulton and colleagues (1969), examining the effect of chocolate consumption upon the development of acne, the authors gave the subjects a placebo (control) candy bar with a sugar content nearly as high as the chocolate bar. If sugar consumption has anything whatsoever to do with causing zits, then the experiment could never isolate this effect, since the treatment and control bars had nearly identical sugar contents.

Until late in 2005, the last dietary intervention concerning acne was published 34 years ago by Dr. Anderson. If the study by Dr. Fulton and

colleagues was fatally flawed, then the study by Dr. Anderson was a complete joke! The subjects' baseline diet was not measured, so there is no way of knowing if the treatment diet differed from the subjects' normal diet. No control group was employed in the experiment, and the data (zit count) were not statistically analyzed, nor was the lesion (zit) count even presented!

Despite the shortcomings of these diet/acne studies from the late 1960's and early 1970's, there is information from an older era that points toward a link between diet and acne. Although these early physicians and dermatologists did not have the advantage of knowing the hormonal, biochemical and molecular underpinnings of acne, they were astute clinicians who carefully examined their patients and recorded detailed patient histories. In the 1920's and 1930's it was not uncommon for physicians to not only make house calls, but to spend an hour or more examining their patients to determine everything they could about lifestyles, environment and diet. After decades of practice, and having examined tens of thousands of patients, these physicians were able to formulate (admittedly non-scientific) informed hypotheses about the causes of acne. Check out this quote from "[*Taylor's Practice of Medicine 15th Edition*](#)" published in 1936 regarding the role of diet and acne:

"The internal treatment of acne vulgaris must depend on the symptoms presented by each individual patient. . . As regards the diet, it is usually important to restrict the amount of carbohydrate and fat, and sweets, cakes, pastries, puddings, jam and marmalade, pig-fat, chocolate . . . Plenty of fresh fruits and green vegetables and lean meat, fish and poultry should be taken."

As you will see in later chapters most of this nearly 70 year old advice is right on target. However, 70 years later it can now be supported from clinical dietary trials that have shown how sugary foods and high glycemic load carbohydrates like those listed above can adversely influence the hormones that are directly involved in causing acne. The recommendation to eat fresh fruits, green vegetables, lean meat, fish and poultry now makes perfect sense with our new understanding of how diet can influence the hormonal, cellular and molecular underpinnings of acne.

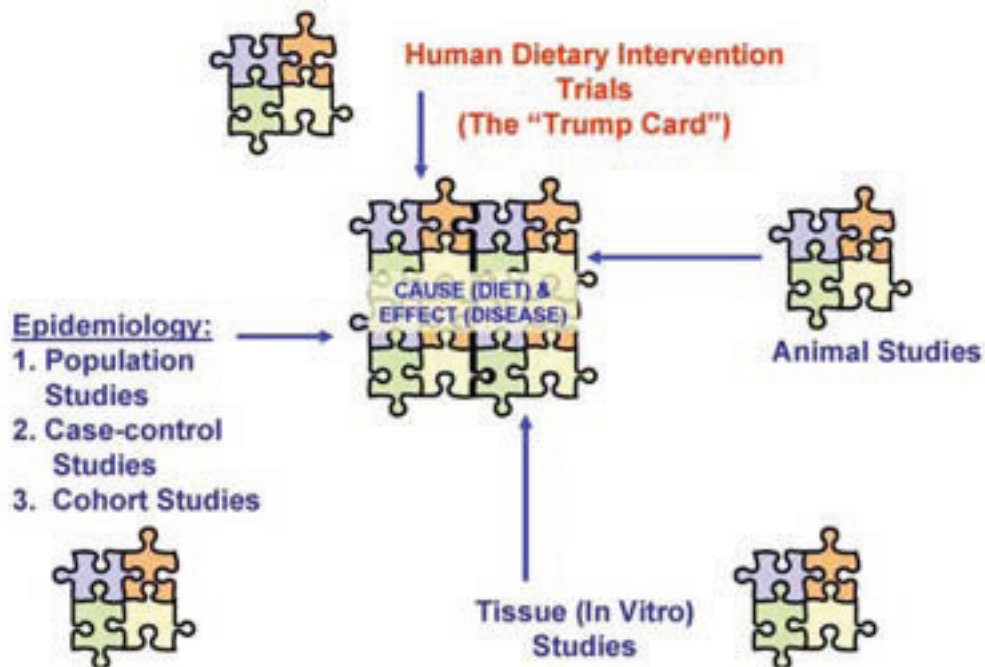
THE TIP OFF

As you can see, the case against the causal link between diet and acne is weak, or non-existent. However, of more importance is the flip side of the coin: how do we know that diet is indeed responsible for acne? In science we use four procedures to establish cause and effect between diet and disease. Figure 1.1 on the next page shows you these four procedures.

In the case of simple diseases like dental cavities, cause and effect are relatively easy to establish, because all four lines of evidence (epidemiological studies, tissue studies, animal studies and human dietary interventions) point in the same direction. With more complex diseases like coronary heart disease (CHD) causality is more difficult to establish because there are so many environmental and genetic factors that operate together to cause the disease.

Frequently, the animal studies may say one thing and the epidemiological studies may say another. When this happens, the results from human dietary interventions represent the trump card, and their results prevail. Human dietary

Figure 1.1. The Four Procedures to Establish Cause and Effect between Diet and Disease.



interventions are the most powerful type of experiments because they can actually determine if a certain element of diet is responsible for eliciting a disease or disease symptom. For instance, if we eliminate vitamin C from a person's diet, they get scurvy. If we put vitamin C back into their diet, scurvy is cured.