

*Grain Brain* by David Perlmutter, MD – The Surprising Truth About Wheat, Carbs and Sugar – Your Brain’s Silent Killers, September 2013

It’s quite the book. I read it because my mum and both her sisters had Alzheimer’s and my brother died of a brain tumor. By page 50, I decided to go gluten free: I miss toast, pasta and beer the most. I’m more protein now, back to meat, cheese and eggs. I spent a lot of time reading and checking out Dr Perlmutter’s 17 pages of notes with web sites, papers and journal columns. Here are some selected Dr Perlmutter ideas:

“foods rich in cholesterol, such as eggs...should be considered ‘brain’ food” 92

“it’s critical to obtain cholesterol from dietary sources” 98

‘High cholesterol is associated with better memory function.’ 76

“cholesterol is one of the most important players in maintaining brain health and function” 33 ♣ “LDL is not the enemy.” 77 ♣ “we need saturated fat” 90

“Each meal should contain a source of healthy fat and protein.”

“Carbohydrates – not dietary fats – are the primary cause of weight gain.” 88

“controlling blood sugar reduces dementia risk” 87

“there are things you can do to spur the growth of new brain cells...” 22

“The origin of brain disease is in many cases predominantly dietary” 26

“we can prevent Alzheimer’s just by changing the food we eat” 28, 30

“gluten sensitivity represents the greatest and most under-recognized health threat to humanity” 32

“It’s critical to stay the course once embarking on a gluten-free diet.” 165

There could be a link between gluten and neurological dysfunction. 32

◆ The biggest thing for me was Perlmutter’s ‘attack’ on the lipid hypothesis 82-83.

We have been fed erroneous thinking about cholesterol for decades. It seems to me that, in regard to fats, the French were right. There is no French paradox. And Ancel Keys, it seems, decades ago, adjusted data to show a correlation between calories from fat in our diets and deaths from heart attacks. Not so. “In fact, if you modify the traditional Mediterranean diet by removing all gluten-containing foods and limiting sugary fruits and non-gluten carbs, you have a perfect grain-brain-free diet.” 125

• Take away the bread basket, along with other carbs (Dr Perlmutter’s list of what to clear out of your kitchen is on pages 224 and 225 – eg: all forms of processed carbs, sugar and starch), and replace them with butter, cheese, meat and eggs (and good fats like coconut oil and olive oil) and an abundance of healthful vegetables 36 (his list of good foods on page 226. Also, cut back on high sugar fruit C-7. Dr Perlmutter is quite adamant about reducing surges in blood sugar. These surges have “direct negative effects on the brain that in turn start the inflammatory cycle” 84-85, 106.

• Omega 3 content p75: fish 100%, flax seed 57, walnut 10, canola 9, soy bean 7%.

GREAT FOODS: coconut oil 183, Vitamin D (cold water fish) 192, beta HBA, DHA, resveratrol (red wine YES!) 188, tumeric 189. • Mushrooms are source of Vitamin D.

My little index: Alzheimer’s 32, cholesterol 91+, celiac disease 159+, satins 93-98, ketogenic diet 186, depression C6, gluten 50, 32, exercise twenty minutes a day C-8; “limit the minutes you spend sitting down” 234, ‘insulin resistance’ 30, supplements 223-224, fasting 184, leptin 211-214, ghretin 215, headaches 168-177, recipes 251-285, high-fructose corn syrup 106, fructose 104, Robert Lustig, gluten could trigger dementia 32, good snacks 247 ♣ READ AGAIN: 32-33, 28, 104, 226

DrPerlmutter.com

review by T. Connolly

