



What do you feed a caveman? The answer to that question involves looking at your own diet. Our bodies are the evolutionary masterpiece of a lifeform designed to survive the very harsh and unforgiving world of 50,000 years ago. And wow, we nailed it! However, the modern world is far different than those prehistoric days. The magnificent brain we developed has stripped away the challenges and dangers of our ancient life. And this has cost us very dearly.

If you want to stop a person in their tracks, ask them what's worse about their life than the life of an ancestor 8,000 generations back. They'll be hard pressed to answer and most likely make the claim everything is better now – completely ignoring the problems of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, bone density, and mental health. These issues have become so common that NOT having them is the more remarkable state. Why is this?

Going back to the prehistoric world – we spent our life traversing uneven, slippery ground as we constantly scanned with all five senses our surroundings for threats and resources while carrying loads of water, wood, meat, or fellow cavemen. But our bones were dense, our muscles were strong, our blood vessels clear, and our brains worked with true clarity because every minute of our lives was a CrossFit workout coupled with intense stimulation of the brain. If it weren't for infections and occasional starvation, we were generally in much better health then than now!

Of course, very few people want to return to that lifestyle, even if blessed with a steel knife and cooking pot – but there are things you can do to recreate some of the caveman activities that our body craves at a genetic level.

At the top of the list is to start foraging – seeking out and utilizing the edible and medicinal plants around you! In addition to the nutritional benefits of eating ancestral foods, there are other benefits that come from the hunt and harvest itself, such as:

1. Improved sense of balance and core muscle strength from walking on uneven ground
2. Enhanced mood, memory, cognition, and focus from stimulation of senses

3. Stronger immune system which occurs naturally when out in nature
4. Reduced blood pressure from both exercise and stress reduction
5. Increased muscle density from walking and carrying things

It seems almost too good to be true, doesn't it? Of course, you do have to follow local foraging laws, learn the edible & medicinal plants, and spend a few hours every week doing it. But would you rather go for a walk in the wild or use a gym's weight machine covered in someone else's sweat? Like anything of value, learning the skill of foraging requires investing time – but it's easier nowadays than you think! Let me end with a few tips on how to learn the useful wild (and landscaping!) plants around you.

Start by identifying the trees around you. Most plant ID photo apps are pretty bad except for when identifying trees. Double-check against some other information source what the apps says the tree is, but once you are confident the tree has been identified, Google its edible and medicinal properties. You'll be surprised what they are capable of!

Next, identify your landscaping plants. If you didn't plant it, take a picture of it and show it to a local plant nursery. They'll tell you what it is. Then Google the uses of those plants! Follow that with yard weeds and then do the same with the plants in yards of friends, coworkers, church, workplace, etc. Soon you'll know the uses of the plants around you while also sharpening your plant identification skills. You'll be exercising your muscles and brain while doing so.

We are an ancient body living in a modern world. By taking the best parts of both, we can become the healthiest humans possible!
Go wild, get healthy.

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