

# Dr. Perlmutter, author of “Grain Brain” responds to “meat and cheese may be as bad for you as smoking” study



As you may have heard, University of Southern California researchers recently published a report in the journal *Cell Metabolism* in which they related consumption of higher levels of protein from animal sources to increased mortality risk as well as increased risk for the development of cancer. Interestingly, the same report also revealed that lower levels of protein consumption in elderly people might actually be worse in terms of risk for various health issues. The authors concluded, “These results suggest that low protein intake during middle age followed by moderate to high protein consumption in old adults may optimize healthspan and longevity.”

The study followed 6,381 adults over an 18 year period and collected data revealing what foods were consumed as well as any specific health issues that developed.



Overall, I think the study does provide some very valuable information. If we are to interpret the results with the hope of gaining ideas about our food choices it's important to recognize that the study clearly points a finger at the consumption of meat and dairy products in America. And that's where we need to focus our attention.

More than 90% of the meat consumed in America is grain-fed as are the cows from which our dairy products are derived. And this matters significantly. I have previously written about the profound differences between grain-fed and naturally grass-fed meats and have posted the [research](#).

The take home message is that this study basically uncovers the danger of eating animal products now purveyed in America. Grain-fed animals produce meat and dairy products dramatically higher in dangerous, inflammation producing omega-6 fats while they are deficient in healthful, heart protective, immune enhancing, brain friendly omega-3s. And it's these alterations in fat ratios that relate to the very health issues we fear most, including coronary artery disease, cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's.

In addition, please understand that the vast majority of feed choices given to these animals are now genetically manipulated. We have no sense of what health consequences will manifest with this brand new perversion of our food supply.

This study that caught so much attention in media doesn't reflect in any way the health benefits of food choices like grass-fed beef and dairy products derived from organically raised cows. But leave it to those who write the headlines to draw simplified and biased conclusions with the intent to draw attention to their publications. It boggles the mind that a study such as this would dare to imply that the foods we have eaten for well over a million years are now scientifically determined to be unhealthful. If that were the case, how would we have made it this

far?

The important message revealed by the report was not articulated. What it truly shows is that what now is accepted as food bears little resemblance to anything found in the human diet since the beginning of our existence. And the health consequences of *this* experiment are now palpable.

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