

# SUMMARY

## THE **P** LANT **P** ARADOX

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STEVEN R. GUNDRY, MD



# **Summary of «The Plant Paradox» by Steven R. Gundry, M.D.**

Written by Lea Schullery

The revolutionary program that cures your body inside-out by identifying and eliminating harmful foods like vegetables and grains from your diet.

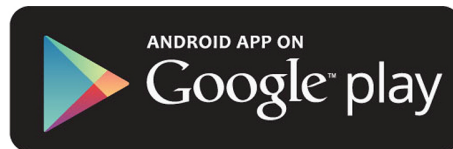
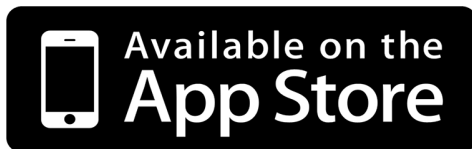


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# Introduction

In *The Plant Paradox*, cardiologist Steven Gundry changes the way we think about plants. What we once thought were healthy foods that help us lose weight and stave off sickness, are actually the culprits that are making us fatter and sicker than ever before. In fact, plants release a highly toxic protein called lectins found in many foods that we consider to be healthy including fruits, grains, vegetables, nuts, beans, and conventional dairy products. By nature, this toxin is released by plants as a defense mechanism against predators from insects and animals, like humans. Once ingested, this toxin begins chemical warfare in our bodies which causes inflammation, weight gain, and serious diseases like Chron's disease, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's just to name a few.

Throughout Dr. Gundry's clinics, he has successfully treated tens of thousands of patients suffering from all kinds of diseases including autoimmune diseases, diabetes, leaky gut syndrome, and heart disease. Now, through his book, Dr. Gundry shares his Plant Paradox Program to teach readers around the world how to identify lectins and learn how they wreak havoc on our bodies. Unfortunately, lectins can be found everywhere, but Dr. Gundry spells it out for you to help you begin your life-changing journey to a healthier life.

# The War Between Plants and Animals

Plants have been regarded for millions of years as food that nourishes the body, right? You consume plants to nourish the body, to provide you with nutrients that allow the body to live and thrive. Plants are healthy and they are packed with numerous vitamins and minerals. But what if I told you that what you think you know about plants is wrong? What if plants are actually our body's enemies? You, like most people, might think that's ridiculous. Plants couldn't possibly be trying to harm our bodies. But that's exactly what Steven Gundry tells us. Plants, like animals, have their own defense mechanisms. Like animals that try to outrun their prey, plants don't just grow out of the ground and accept their fate. No, they resist.

To understand how plants are trying to harm our bodies, you'll need to change your way of thinking. Many people who adopt the Plant Paradox Program surprisingly realize that reducing their consumption of certain fruits and vegetables improved kidney function and cholesterol markers. Society has adopted the notion that plants give sustenance, so they could never be seen as enemies; however, like every living thing, plants possess survival instincts.

Plants have a defense system that "attacks" when they release substances that are harmful to plant-eaters like humans. One great example of this is gluten. Gluten is a plant component that wreaks havoc on the body. It causes health problems for many people who consume it and has even sparked a recent gluten-free movement all over the world.

At the end of the day, plants don't want to get eaten and they negatively affect plant-eaters to prevent themselves from being consumed. Much like humans, their goal is to breed their species so they protect themselves and their offspring from predators. Of course, plants can't just run away from their prey, so instead, many plants have developed other ways to ward off predators. For example, some plants can camouflage and blend in with their surroundings through their color. Some even release sticky substances

like sap or resin to trap insects and some use their natural hard outer coatings as protection like coconuts and artichokes.

All these defense tactics reveal that plants are certainly capable of plotting against their predators and those who threaten their existence. While the idea may seem a bit unbelievable, from an evolutionary and survival standpoint, it makes sense. In fact, research shows that plants produce toxins when they are being eaten to deter their predators and even respond to circadian rhythms. This means the plants release insecticides at a particular time of day that coincides with the time their predator will likely attack. Whether you accept it or not, there is certainly a war among plants and animals, and one of the most lethal weapons is lectins.

## Lectins on the Loose

If you're still wondering what lectins are, don't worry, I'm about to spell it out for you. Discovered in 1884, lectin is simply a protein that is found in many plants and animals, but mostly in legumes, nightshade vegetables, dairy products, and grains like barley and quinoa.

Lectins have yet to achieve the "celebrity status" of its equally notorious sibling, gluten and pose many health risks. When lectins are consumed, they bind to sugar molecules in our brain and nerve endings, preventing our cells and nerves from communicating effectively. Such lack of communication causes a term we refer to as "brain fog" when we experience difficulty in remembering things or have trouble focusing.

However, not only does lectin cause us to experience brain fog, but it also causes us to gain weight, something many humans try to avoid. Carrying wheat germ agglutinin (WGA), this plant protein causes sugar to enter our body's fat cells which then turn into fat, thus causing us to gain weight.

In fact, this has been known since ancient times; however, lectins were only consumed when other food became scarce. For instance, lectins gained traction out of necessity to survive after huge amounts of animals disappeared during the last Ice Age. Grains and legumes then became staples in the human diet since they could be stored for long periods, unlike fruits which have a shorter shelf life. They also provided humans the caloric requirements needed to survive, but they also became harmful to human health.

If you need proof that lectins are harmful to our health, then let's take a look at the mummified remains of Ancient Egyptians. Scientists discovered that not only were they overweight, but they also had clogged arteries and dental problems. If you look at the diet of the Ancient Egyptians, you will see their diet was rich in grains and beans which they consumed to stay alive.

There have been several cataclysmic changes that have happened since the introduction of lectins into the human diet and perhaps one of the biggest changes is the emergence of plants from the New World. That's right, lectin exposure occurred when Europeans reached the Americas and brought food from the New World back to their native countries, thus exposing the world to lectins. Foods like peanuts, cashews, pumpkins, acorn squash, zucchini, chia seeds, and quinoa all contain lectins.

These are all foods that humans have been consuming since the discovery of America, so why is it only now that humans are becoming sensitive to lectins? Well, the innovations of food processing are becoming faster than the body's ability to adapt. In the last five decades, humans have become inundated with lectin-rich foods as well as chemicals found in food additives, herbicides, beauty products, and even skincare products. This overload has disrupted the body's internal messaging system, so it compromises your ability to handle such lectin-bearing foods.

So, now what? With all of this information, it can be confusing to determine which foods are safe and which are not. Even worse, how can you try to change the way you've been eating your entire life? It's not easy and now the definition of healthy foods is more unclear than ever. However, under the Plant Paradox Program, patients removed white foods from their diet including flour, sugar, potatoes, and milk and limited their intake of brown foods such as grains and legumes. While patients under this diet experienced much improvement, those that removed grains completely from their diet saw enormous results. Their autoimmune diseases were cured and their rheumatoid arthritis stopped recurring. It's time to reframe your thinking and limit your consumption of lectin-rich foods.



# Your Gut Under Attack

Did you know that 90% of our body is made up of non-human cells? This means the human body is home to trillions of microbes - bacteria, viruses, molds, fungi, protozoa, and worms. While this doesn't sound extremely pleasant, it means that human health is dependent on tiny microbes, not necessarily the person.

Here's a quick science lesson: Microbes reside in the gut and they function to break down and digest plant cell walls and convert our food into energy. Without them, it would be impossible for us to survive and food would be useless to us! Microbes are essential for our overall health, but it is important that they stay in our gastrointestinal tract and do not penetrate the barrier of our intestines. If the microbes happen to escape the GI tract, our bodies recognize these as foreign invaders which will alert the immune system and begin to attack itself.

So when we eat foods that are high in lectins, the lectins trigger the body to attack itself because the proteins attach themselves to the border of every intestinal cell to prevent nutrients from being absorbed by the body. When this happens, the body's immune system weakens and could potentially fail. This sounds bad, so why do health experts continue to promote diets rich in lectin? Simply put, many are not aware of the true effects that lectins can have on the body.

When we consistently consume these whole-grain foods, we develop a leaky gut which can lead to a number of autoimmune diseases including Crohn's disease, hypothyroidism, lupus, psoriasis, and fibromyalgia, just to name a few. However, no matter the autoimmune disease the patient suffers from, many have been cured by simply addressing their leaky gut and changing their diet.

However, lectins aren't the biggest enemy to your body, in fact, lectins work in tandem with other agitators to make you even more fat and sick. We'll discuss those in the next chapter.

# The Seven Deadly Disruptors

What's a deadly disruptor? Well, it's one of seven things that we as humans consume or expose ourselves to that work with lectins to make us fatter, sicker, and weaker. When lectins and disruptors come together, they become a deadly concoction that makes the body become insulin-resistant and leptin-resistant which makes your body even more vulnerable to malfunctions and breakdowns. So what are these seven disruptors?

The first one is Broad-Spectrum Antibiotics. While medical technologies have improved dramatically over the last 60 years, many risks and dangers come with antibiotics as well. The problem is that antibiotics kill infections without regard to which bacterium was responsible for the infection. Essentially, antibiotics kill both the bad and the good bacteria that your body needs to function properly. Some of these good microbes that are being killed can take up to two years to return while some may never return to the body at all. Even worse, when antibiotics are given to a child, the likelihood for the child to develop an autoimmune disease increases later in life.

The second disruptor is Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs or NSAIDs. NSAIDs have been around since the 1970s and were introduced as an alternative to aspirin, which was said to damage the stomach lining. However, NSAIDs were later discovered to damage small intestines, which creates pathways for harmful microbes to get into causing inflammation and pain.

The third disruptor is stomach-acid blockers. The acid in the stomach is so powerful and potent that bad bacteria should never make it out alive. However, when we ingest acid-blockers, we are creating an environment where the acidity decreases allowing bad bacteria to grow and enter the small intestine where they shouldn't be. When this happens, lectins have access to the circulatory system and the immune system goes into attack-mode causing inflammation. The body then begins to store more fat to fuel the white blood cells causing weight gain or illness.

The fourth disrupter is artificial sweeteners which are big contributors to an imbalance in the gut. Products containing artificial sweeteners like aspartame and sucralose kill off good bacteria and allow bad bacteria to outgrow the good ones. This is the beginning of weight gain and inflammation that people experience. There is nothing more ironic than a product meant to aid in weight loss that can do the complete opposite. However, there are some healthy substitutes like Stevia that should only be used in moderation to prevent further cravings for sweets.

The fifth disruptor is endocrine or hormone disruptors. These substances are chemicals found in plastic, scented cosmetics, sunscreen, and many other products. Prolonged exposure to these can cause a myriad of problems including obesity, reproductive issues, thyroid problems, diabetes, and more. Many people are not aware that they are ingesting these chemicals as they are hidden in highly preserved foods, in plastic bottles, canned goods, and sunscreens or cosmetics. It's important to avoid products that have BHT, BPA, and parabens to ensure your gut stays healthy. Read labels and stay away from highly processed products.

The sixth disrupter is genetically modified foods and herbicides. When exposed to poisons such as herbicides, pesticides, and insecticides your body experiences several problems. One of those is weight gain caused by your body's immune system attempting to prepare your white blood cells for battle. And while you might not think you are ingesting these poisons, many farmers use these chemicals to control weeds and harvest more quickly and efficiently. Therefore, humans are consuming these products and the chemicals are being immediately delivered to the gut, causing the most damage to your body.

The seventh and final disruptor is the constant exposure to blue light. For centuries, humans have been responding to changes in daylight. This simply means that humans are active during the daylight and rest at nighttime. However, modern life no longer adheres to these strict guidelines as humans are exposed to the blue light of technology for prolonged periods. From television, mobile phones, tablets, and even light bulbs, this blue light

interferes with our sleep by suppressing melatonin production. Basically, our bodies think it's summer all year long and must prepare for the upcoming winter by storing more fat which can eventually lead to obesity. Try limiting your exposure to blue light in the evenings to help get back to your normal cycle.

# How the Modern Diet Makes You Fat (and Sick)

Think about what you eat on a daily basis. What type of diet do you have? Perhaps you eat clean but still find yourself struggling to lose weight. That's likely because the modern diet fails to address the harmful lectins that we consume daily, many of which are hidden in foods that we consider clean and healthy. However, changing your diet and lifestyle is the foundation of The Plant Paradox Program and many patients have seen success in losing weight and curing their ailments after adopting the program into their lives. These patients have won the battle going on inside their bodies and have removed the foods that are continuously causing harm to our bodies.

So what are you battling with? In the past decades, Americans have seen an increase in weight gain and autoimmune diseases are becoming more and more prevalent. Today, 70.7 percent of Americans are considered overweight, and 38 percent of those are obese. Even worse, diseases like diabetes, arthritis, cancer, heart disease, Parkinson's disease, dementia, osteoporosis, and asthma have increased rapidly. Either you or someone you know probably suffers from one of these ailments, in fact, one in every four people now suffer from one or more autoimmune diseases. One of the worst culprits? Allergies. Allergies have become so prevalent that adults and children carry around EpiPens because exposure to allergens like peanuts has become life-threatening, while in the 1960s, peanuts posed no danger to people.

But why is that? Our diets. It's no secret the American diet has changed drastically in the last century, and this change is not for the better. Lisa Ann Schelli Gitner sought to explore the link between these changes and the rise in childhood obesity, so she studied the US government's agricultural policies that changed the food supply of an entire generation. US agriculture created a new food group including highly processed and refined foods. Additionally, animals are now being fed to fatten them up versus keeping them healthy. Gitner found these changes drastically affected our bodies by

significantly increasing the BMIs (Body Mass Index) of our children. However, Gitner studied the effect of pizza and chicken in our diets, both of which are filled with lectins. These foods high in lectin are leading to a health crisis, and our bodies are internally at war. We must heal ourselves from the inside out, but it is solely up to you to take back your body and reverse years of neglect.

# Revamp Your Habits

So how can you begin implementing the Plant Paradox Program into your own life? We'll get to that soon. Before you begin this life-changing experience, you'll need to know the four rules that govern the program.

- Rule Number One: What you stop eating has more impact than what you start eating.
  - Completely avoiding foods that are high in lectin is the main reason for adopting the Plant Paradox Program.
- Rule Number Two: Pay attention to the care and feeding of gut bugs.
  - The gut is just a wasteland of antibiotics, antacids, NSAIDs, and high fat and high sugar foods that have been consumed for years. The gut has become overrun by bad bugs that survive and thrive, so it's important to return your gut to the dense rainforest it once was where the good bugs can thrive.
- Rule Number Three: Fruit might as well be candy.
  - Even though fruit has been considered healthy over the years, there are several reasons as to why fruit is no longer what it used to be. First, eating fruit in season once allowed early men to fatten up for winter. But now that fruit can be grown all year long, this change has disrupted the content of fruits which have become just as bad as eating candy.
- Rule Number Four: You are what the thing you are eating ate.
  - In other words, when you eat meat, poultry, eggs, and farm-raised fish, then you are eating the corn and soybeans those animals are fed on a daily basis. Not only are the lectins passed on to the body, but also residues from Roundup and other toxic herbicides are being absorbed into your body as well.

Now that you know the four rules, you can adapt to the program more easily. The end goal is to achieve optimal health results and to manage your weight by eating foods that promote a healthy gut where good bugs can



grow and thrive. To begin your life-changing journey, the Plant Paradox Program is designed in three phases to help you adapt slowly and easily.

# The Three Phases of the Plant Paradox

Before you can begin your life-changing experience, you must prepare your gut for your change in diet. So how do you do this? A three-day cleanse. Phase One is about cleaning and repairing the gut and banishing the bad microbes that reside in your gut. To do this, you must remove all traces of lectins from the foods that you eat, this means removing fruits, legumes, grains, dairy, sugar, seeds, soy, eggs, beef, tomatoes, and root vegetables. Additionally, corn oil, canola, and soy oil are off-limits as well. But don't worry! There are plenty of options to help you get through the cleansing process.

During these three days, meals will consist of vegetables and small amounts of wild-caught fish or pastured chicken. You can also snack on Hass avocados and a combination of approved nuts like macadamia, walnuts, pistachios, pecans, and hazelnuts. Perhaps the most important part of your cleanse is beginning the day with your green smoothie! Consisting of romaine lettuce, baby spinach, mint, avocado, lemon juice, water, and stevia, your morning green smoothie will help cleanse your gut and start your day on the right foot.

By cleansing your gut, you are preparing the soil for planting new crops, so to say. Once you have weeded out the bad toxins inside your gut, you can move on to phase two. Repair and Restore. In the second phase, the elimination process continues by removing all lectins from your diet which will last at least six weeks. This elimination will continue to improve your gut by replacing bad bacteria with the good. While you may experience some common symptoms like headaches, muscle cramps, grouchiness, and depleted energy levels, just remember that these symptoms are only temporary and will take about six weeks for your body to get used to the changes.

When you begin to experience the positive changes in phase two, it's time to shift to phase three of the program. Reap the Rewards. Phase three can be compared to harvest time, where the fruits of your labor become tangible.

The two things you can expect to achieve throughout this phase are ascertaining that the gut is completely healed and testing if certain lectins can be reintroduced into the system. However, it's most important not to rush, if the gut is not ready to reintroduce lectin foods, it will show. One way to know if your body is ready is through blood tests; however, even without sophisticated testing, you will be able to sense the changes yourself. Some questions you can ask yourself to determine if you are ready to reintroduce lectins are:

- Have your bowel movements returned to normal?
- Has your joint pain stopped?
- Has your brain fog cleared?
- Has your skin cleared?
- Has your quality of sleep improved?
- Or has any weight loss or weight gain become noticeable?

If you answer a resounding 'yes' to all these questions, then your body is ready to take in some lectin foods. However, if you answer 'no,' don't be discouraged. Each body is different and you may just need to stay in phase two a bit longer. Once you have entered phase three though, that's it, there is no extended duration because it is a lifestyle. You can now experience a better quality of life, longer life expectancy, and become free of numerous health issues that usually plague the elderly.

Regardless of your reasons for beginning the Plant Paradox Program, you will find exceptional benefits even if you believe you are already healthy! Just remember to drink eight cups of water a day and finish off each meal with coffee, black, or green tea. You'll experience the benefits before you know it and be on your way towards a healthier, brighter future.

# Final Summary

For many years, our bodies have been internally at war. We have consistently been eating foods that have not only changed over the centuries but have begun to harm us. With leaky guts, people have been experiencing more auto-immune diseases, sicknesses, and more weight gain than ever before. We constantly try to better ourselves and eat the foods that we think are healthy, but we have been taught wrong. Plants, like every other living being, want to protect themselves, so how do they do it? They release toxins into our bodies that are making us fatter and sicker. It's time to make a change. By adopting the Plant Paradox Program, you can heal your gut from the inside out and cure yourself of any of the auto-immune diseases that you suffer from. You can reverse the damage in your body after a minimum of six weeks. Just six weeks later, after a lifetime of damage. A small sacrifice can change the trajectory of your life and start you on a new, healthier path for a better future.



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