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## Extreme Food Choices

People have always fixated on the perfect diet. From the food combiners of the early 20th Century to the current focus on the Paleolithic diet, there's always someone touting the best and healthiest way to eat. A lecturer from Australia, Rebecca Charlotte Reynolds, recently wrote an article on food fixations and raised the question of whether the food obsessions might fall into the category of psychological disorders such as anorexia nervosa (1).

She cites three current ways of eating that can take over someone's life in an unhealthy way: raw foods, clean foods, and the Paleolithic diet. I think you're aware of the Paleolithic diet, so I'll focus on the raw food movement that's been around for quite a while.

The objective of the raw food movement is to keep the enzymes alive in vegetables and fruit by not cooking them above 115 degrees or so. The concept is that above that temperature, chemical changes occur in the vegetables and fruits that diminish the health benefits. Think of this as the vegan diet taken to an extreme. The upside is that you'll always get the probiotics and most phytonutrients from all the vegetables, seeds, nuts, and fruits. But no wheat or other grains, eggs, fish, or meat. Even coffee is verboten.

Others take it to even greater extremes, eating only fruit or juices or sprouts. No, I'm not kidding. Sprouts. Better yet, you get to grow the sprouts of raw nuts, seeds, beans, and grains yourself, because sprouts must be eaten very soon after harvesting.

There's nothing wrong with eating primarily raw foods—in fact, that's part of what I mean when I say to eat better. When does it become a problem? When it interferes with your life. Think about all the eating opportunities that occur during your day: what are you going to do at the business lunch? The church pitch-in? What about dinner with friends and relatives who don't share your enthusiasm?



Do you roll with it or obsess about it? That's what makes the difference. We'll finish this up on Saturday by talking about a new term, orthorexia nervosa.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

**Reference:** <http://www.newsweek.com/when-eating-healthily-becomes-fixation-319453>.

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