



Legendary Strength Podcast Episode 6

30 Day Raw Vegan Challenge

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Hello, it's Logan Christopher from [Legendary Strength](http://legendarystrength.com) and I'm quite excited about the podcast today because it's something that's been in the works for a while. I've been talking about a little experiment with myself where I changed my diet fairly radically. I ate only raw vegan food for 30 days. Now this is not exactly how I normally eat which is mostly healthy and I do normally eat a good amount of raw food and definitely a whole bunch of fruits and vegetables but I'm also definitely omnivorous. I eat lots of eggs, lots of meat, and have dairy on occasion. We'll start with what first led me to take on this experiment.

If you listened to some of the previous podcasts, I've been going to the [Longevity Now conference](#) for quite some time and a big portion of that conference, a lot of the people there, are raw vegan. That's kind of the genesis where [David Wolfe](#) came from, the whole raw food lifestyle and everything like that. It's definitely grown and incorporates more than just that but that is a portion of it. Having been studying David Wolfe and all his material for quite a few years now, I've definitely incorporated a lot of that into my regular lifestyle. Besides a week that was probably eight years ago or something where went raw vegan, I really hadn't gone all out with it for a period of time so I just decided I just wanted to set up this experiment and see how I felt with it, see what new things I could learn from it, and basically just to run it as an experiment. That's why I started this experiment.

Now if you're not familiar with raw vegan food, raw meaning that nothing is cooked, nothing could go above 118 degrees and the whole reasoning behind raw food is that if you heat things up, you destroy—

the biggest thing would be—the enzymes in the food. We need these enzymes to help with digestion. If you don't get these enzymes with your food, then you're using your body's own stores of enzyme. Eventually, after eating years and years of cooked food, these begin to get depleted and that could lead to health problems. That's one of the biggest things.

Also with cooking food, a lot of times the other nutrients, depending on how you cook it and all that, will get destroyed or chemically changed. It won't be the same. Those are the reasons behind the raw food. Vegan being—some people say animal products and definitely killing animals, all that is bad. So I just decided to run with this experiment.

Let's talk about how I actually went about doing it. Like I said before, I'd definitely incorporated a lot of this in my regular lifestyle. A lot of what I ate during this period were shakes. I make a lot of smoothies and shakes that include a whole bunch of super foods, a whole bunch of raw foods, and also different herbal components combined with that. This wasn't really much of a change for me except I had to focus on making sure that it was all raw ingredients along with that.

Besides that, I actually have a couple but I also purchased a one new one, a raw food preparation book. If you've never experienced raw food before and never been to a restaurant, they can really make all kinds of different foods just using completely raw ingredients. It's pretty amazing when you have a raw food dessert where the crust is made of Brazil nuts and stuff and the whole topping tastes really good. Anyway, I got one of these books and that allowed me to expand more and play with different things rather than just eating salads and smoothies and pieces of fruit all day.

Also luckily where I lived in Santa Cruz, there happens to be one restaurant that has not quite half its menu but it serves a lot of raw food so when I didn't feel like preparing something or just wanted to go and grab something, that was available here. That's not available everywhere. Definitely bigger cities, there are actually a couple of different options like down in L.A. and New York but smaller towns will not have raw food restaurants. That is something that definitely helped me be able to do this because I do tend to eat out a fair amount in my dating life. Me and my girlfriend enjoyed going out.

Besides that, the basic thing in order to actually get through this process if you were to decide you wanting to do it yourself would be to know how you're actually going to go about in doing it. Basically, I had an idea of different meals I could plan throughout the day, different meals I'd have eating just fruit for some meals, eating a very a large salad. Typically for dinner would be some type of raw food that was more prepared. I'll talk about some of the things in there.

If you know how you're actually going to get through it, it's pretty easy to do. This holds true for any sort of diet or change in diet that you're adhering to yourself. One of the biggest things for people is willpower and to be honest, this actually was not an issue at all for me. Let me tell you why that was. It's not because I am so tremendously strong-willed and all that but I think what it comes down to is when I make a decision to do something, I'm going to do it. This wasn't like I was on a whim, *"Oh, yeah. I'm going to that,"* and it wasn't a true commitment. I said, *"Okay, I'm going to do this 30-day raw challenge. I know how I'm going to do it so I'm going to do it."* As soon as I had made that decision, then the thought of just dropping it for whatever reason didn't enter my mind. It wasn't like, *"Oh, it's been one day and it's so hard. I'm just going to go back and scrape everything I did."*

Part of it was making the decision. Also along with that which really again made it super easy for me to go through this whole process was I had said I was going to do this on the podcast before on some other of my online channels. Having that public commitment in there made it, once again, really easy for me to do it because if I wasn't able to follow through on this, then people may say, *"You weren't able to do it. You're weak,"* and all that sort of thing. Just having that, I think I would have done fine with this even without that, but that definitely stack the odds in my favor.

If you're going to make a change for your own life something along these lines, changing your diet, committing yourself publicly can definitely be a useful tool. Now there are some drawbacks to this. Of course if you do fail, then you will face embarrassment but that is why it propels you forward. Really get to the point where if you decide to do something and that's the thing, it's true decision and commitment to do something. It's not something wishy-washy, *"Oh yeah, I'm thinking about doing that."* Had I done that then this definitely would not all have happened.

There were a couple of challenges through the month of June when I did this 30 days of eating raw vegan, the biggest challenge being I was on the road travelling twice, one to attend a workshop up Oregon and the other to put up my own workshop and attend another one down in the LA area. What I typically do when I travel is I don't prepare any food. I just go out and eat or maybe I'll hit up a health food store so I could get some healthy food but I don't worry about it all that much and just end up doing what I feel like doing in the moment. Now being a raw vegan and not being able to go out, for instance, in Medford, Oregon, there definitely aren't any raw food restaurants. I had to prepare food ahead of time so I had stocked an ice chest full of the different foods I needed.

One of the big things with the raw vegan diet is you need to be sure to get enough calories so this was a big issue for me, especially since I'm already something of a small guy so I wasn't seeking to lose weight. I did lose some and we'll talk about that later, but I wasn't trying to lose weight with this diet. I was just seeing how I'd feel on it. I wanted to be sure to bring things that even if I couldn't get any other food, I would be able to get enough calories from my food.

One of the things I like to bring and brought on both these trips was a jar of coconut butter. Now coconut butter is slightly different from the coconut oil. It has the fibers and some of the sugars in with that and it taste really good. It's great to just eat scrape. Coconut oil is great itself but the coconut butter tastes really good. Some of my meals, I would honestly just eat that, just eat a couple of spoonfuls of that. It has the medium-chain triglyceride, the MCTs, which are great for energy. I'd typically have a lot of coconut oil, coconut butter in my regular diet, usually in the form of smoothies but here I was just eating it plain.

I also had a jar of raw honey. Now some people may say, *"Hey, honey's not vegan."* That didn't even occur to me when I started this. I stopped taking fish and all that but even among a lot of vegans, honey is fine to take. So if you want to say it wasn't truly vegan then that's fine but raw vegan with the possible exception of honey in there. Once again, a good quality raw honey has tons of enzymes. Yes, there's a lot of sugar in it but I don't really have a problem with sugar so I was fine and able to eat some tablespoons full of this.

Of course, tons of nuts and seeds. Definitely in the beginning as I was starting this, as my body had to shift from having a lot denser meals with cooked foods and all that, meats and everything, to going over to raw vegan, having a lot of nuts and seeds was instrumental in making that transition. By the end of

the 30 days, I really needed far less with the nuts and seeds. I definitely went overboard in the beginning. I'll talk about one of the symptoms I think I had from that because eating too many nuts and seeds, really heavy, really dense foods, then you probably shouldn't be eating handfuls and handfuls and bags of everything but when I was out and travelling, it was good to do and really good to have those. I'd also go to the store and get a bag of lettuce. I like buying a jar of sauerkraut if I could and then eat half the jar in the evening.

I was able to still keep this up while travelling. Even when I went out with friends or when I was out there on the road going out to eat with other people, I would just have my own thing. I wouldn't eat anything at the restaurant unless we happen to go to a raw food restaurant, which happened one time, besides being on my home town. I would just eat my own thing, either before or after, and then just be able to enjoy the company. I wasn't pressured or anything, I had to explain what I was doing but again, it wasn't much of a challenge to be like, *"Oh, I really want to order something now but I can't because of this."* Once again, it wasn't a challenge. It wasn't an issue of willpower because I had the decision and commitment to follow through with this.

Part of my reason for doing this experiment was to see the new things I would come up with. What could I learn through the process of doing this? Like I said, a lot of things I've done before like shakes and everything, but I did come up with some new things at that, one of which was chia seeds. Now I've definitely been eating chia seeds for a while but I came up with so many more uses and ways to take them in, and now take them a lot more regularly as well.

Chia seeds are phenomenal food. It was also a staple for some of the American cultures because there was so much nutrition in such tiny little seeds and you can eat them. If you read the book, *Born to Run* or something, they talk about that. There are also some other stories about the American peoples, two tablespoons or something that chia seeds they'd say would last a person all day long. I'm not quite there yet but it is a powerful food. It's already really high in omega-3s.

Now with the omega-3s, it's important to note know that there's a difference between omega-3s found in vegetarian sources like the chia seeds, flax seeds, hemp seeds, and that sort of thing, and omega-3s found in, for instance, fish oil. If you have quality grass-fed beef, for instance, gives a higher amount of omega-3s than omega-6s. The difference is that in the vegetarian sources, it's ALA; in the non-vegetarian sources it's EPA and DHA. Those are the really two important once that we need.

Now ALA can convert. It goes down the chain to EPA and then finally to DHA. There's another step in there, DPA, if I'm correct on that one. The problem is most people don't efficiently convert these over. However while I was actually on this experiment, I heard about this study. They were saying that if people don't have any sources of the fish oils, so they're not getting any EPA or DHA in their diet, their body will actually shift over and be able to convert the ALA better into the sources.

What would have been optimal, had I done with this experiment, was get some blood work done before and get blood work done after. However, I didn't want to spend the several hundred dollars it would take to do that so I just am more basing this off how I felt and all that, but it was interesting to note that study came to me or I heard about that as I was doing this process.

One of the symptoms I had while I was going through this, and it was pretty much the one of the only things that happened, was my lips got really chapped. I've noticed this happen before certain times and I

usually equate it when I'm travelling and I don't have enough omega-3s. What was happening was in the start, I didn't have as much of the chia seeds but I notice this happening and said okay, what can I do to do it? I definitely needed to cut down in all the other nuts and seeds because they have a lot of fat in them. Unfortunately, it's mostly omega-6s. So the important thing with omega-6s and omega-3s is the ratio between the two. You want less 6s to 3s. So the lower you can get that ratio down—some people say 3 to 1, 2 to 1, even 1 to 1 is optimal omega-6s to omega-3s. So a 3 to 1 ratio would be you're having three times as many omega-6s in your diet as omega-3s. Now with the standard American diet, it's typically like 20 to 1 which is way far out of whack. There you would definitely want to do something about it, hence supplementing with fish oil and that sort of thing.

So I had these chapped lips and just for whatever reason, I usually equated that to the omega-3 deficiency so I tried cutting down on the other nuts and seeds. For instance, I was eating a lot of almonds and sunflower seeds and I still had a good amount but I really upped what I was taking with chia seeds. I was either blending them in my shakes, I was just mixing them in water and you can make like a chia porridge, which actually tastes really good. You add some fruits and other things with it. Just mix them in water and then drinking it. When chia seeds are in water, they gel up into like a mucilage-type thing. It's really interesting stuff.

Like I was saying, I played around with chia seeds a whole bunch more and by the end, I needed to rely less on the nuts and seeds. I just was regularly having every single day quite a few tablespoons of chia seeds and it seemed to work out real well for me.

Another new thing that I picked up was getting raw nori but they actually have it in those sheets like they use for sushi. Typically, it's toasted in sushi but you can get it raw. Just wrapping up different vegetables or things like avocado or making like a raw pate type of thing and doing all sorts of things with these wraps which actually taste really good is something I plan to do in the future. It's really simple to do but it can taste really good. That was one other new thing that I picked up along.

There are some other small things but those are some of the main things I got. The huge use of chia seeds and the use of the seaweed to make wraps with. You could also use things like huge green leaves like collard leaves and make wraps with that sort of thing. Those were the two main things I'm going to definitely going to continue with as I move forward with my diet. There are many other new meals and new preparations of the food, some of them that work better than others.

Let's talk a bit more about what happened during these 30 days. I already mentioned that my chapped lips would basically be one of the only symptoms I had, if anything. That, really by the end, was something I had taken care of. It was pretty bad during the middle but I started dealing with it and what I thought might help and it seemed to work. So I think that for me, for whatever reason, chapped lips is a sign of omega-3 deficiency and I now know how to work on it even without having fish oil.

Another thing that happened was I lost about eight to ten pounds of weight while on this diet. Once again, I wasn't even trying to lose weight so I was really consuming as much food as I wanted to do but when you cut out a lot of different food groups from your diet, really with any diet if you cut out something, people tend to lose weight. So here I was cutting out all sorts of grains and bread stuff. I was eating raw soaked oats so there was a little bit of grain in my diet but I think the body treats that a little differently than, for instance, eating a piece of bread. I was cutting out all meat, all dairy, so large groups of different food stuff so it was no wonder I did lose weight on it. Now being three days since I have

stopped eating raw vegan, I've gained about two of those pounds back. I figure I'll get back to my normal weight, about 185, in no time. Actually, being down, about 175, is the skinniest I've been for quite some time. That was one thing that happened.

What happens a lot with me is my body, if I don't eat the best foods ever, my body will try to get rid of that sort of thing. Any time I have dairy and also a lot of processed grains like bread and that sort of stuff, my body tends to produce mucus from those foods and then I'm blowing my nose throughout the morning. So not having those foods at all, my body still seemed to get rid of some. I don't know if it was based on certain foods but it tended to clear out all mucus and I wasn't having that happen as much as when I'm eating other not so good foods, what I know my body doesn't like as much.

For the most part, I really felt the same. It really was not a big change in my body. One thing that I tend to notice is that the healthier you are, the less you'll seem to notice things that are healthy for you or that change in a different way, for instance, taking certain herbal products. If you are really—I don't want to say sick but just on the standard American diet, that sort of thing—and you taste something that's so powerful that gives you so much nutrition, you've never had it before, you're likely to feel that.

But if you're generally are doing things like that, like taking a bunch of herbal products like I already am, and you do what should be a fairly dramatic change in diet like switching to raw vegan completely for a month, I really didn't feel much of a difference. My energy was just about the same. It's always pretty high. My workouts were fine. I may have felt a little more fatigued on some of them than others but for the most part, it was really the same. It's hard to say on that one. I'll have to continue experimenting to see if that's the case. Overall, sleep didn't change, bowel movements and all that was good during the entire time. For me, there was really not much of a change when I was doing this. If someone was 100 pounds overweight and eating the standard American diet and switched to a 30-day raw food diet, you can bet they would probably have some more significant symptoms than I have.

After 30 days of this—that was just planned out. I have no intention of continuing this for the long term—I had to then break the diet and having my body just now accustomed to the raw vegan food, I knew I shouldn't just launch into foods that were far different so I broke it in somewhat slowly. The first meal I happened to have, I went to a restaurant and had a Cobb salad. It was, once again, a base of raw salad greens but it had some egg on it, and it had some chicken and bacon. My stomach felt a little weird while I was eating that but at the same time I was kind of craving the meat. It felt like on one side it was a little awkward for it to be digesting that, but on the other side it really wanted to eat a little more. Another meal a little later was a bunch of eggs. Once again, I felt just fine with this one.

A recent thing that I actually ended up having just yesterday which was the first one where I felt really badly afterwards was I had a burger and fries. Now this was a burger joint that has grass fed patties. It's still white bread bun but specifically I felt it with the fries. That seemed to be what affected me more, just the fried food that was really kind of putting a damper of how I felt after that. I even had some ice cream after that and really didn't feel bad so I can eat anything and not have any real ill effects except for that fried food that really didn't work with it.

I'm just continually still experimenting here, three days afterward, but for the most part it wasn't a huge shift and I could pretty easily get back into eating things that—I don't typically eat a lot of fries and ice cream—but just eating out to see how my body would feel from these things.

Going forward, like before, except probably even more so now, I'll continue to do a lot of raw foods. For instance this morning, I made a shake that I typically made while on the diet. Then I just did my workout a little while ago and had another shake. This was once again some raw vegan shake except I also threw in some raw eggs to it, too, which I like to do in my shakes as well. Adding a little bit it was raw vegetarian but not raw vegan, still all raw. It tastes great and I enjoyed it. This is something that has worked really well for me in the past.

Something that for the large part, I plan to do more or less as I go forward is throughout the day, I'll continue to eat basically raw food, not necessarily vegan like with the eggs, but eating raw foods throughout the day and then have a larger meal at night with some cooked food. So usually a salad at night, then some sort of cooked vegetables, then usually I like beef so steak or burgers, something like that. That works out really well for me. That keeps my energy really high.

If you eat a big meal right after lunch, you tend to want to go to sleep after that. I tend to feel that but if I keep my diet fairly light throughout the day with raw foods—raw foods are a great way to keep the diet light—then at night, I am able to do it. It's different than the Warrior diet but in some ways inspired by that. I'm still getting a good amount of calories during the day. I'm definitely upping my insulin from the fruit or honey, different things, in the shake, but it also has a lot of fat and a lot of protein involved with them and once again, all the different components that I tend to put in with my shakes as well. So I'm really packing a whole bunch of things in during the day and then a bigger meal as I go forward.

Something that I happened to do during this experiment was I got my first ever garden set up so I'm growing some vegetables, just some pretty simple stuff right now. I've been able to eat some of the lettuce already and it's great to just be able to go outside, pick some different herbs or some lettuce. We'll have a lot of tomatoes coming in soon. To be able to have really fresh and raw foods straight off the vine or straight off the leaf so I'm going to be able to have more of my own home grown food as I move forward.

I'll definitely be incorporating a lot of the eggs and meat back into my diet. I guess for the most part, I do eat Paleo even I don't think of myself much like that. I probably have more fruit than is typically recommended on a Paleo diet but I know for myself, dairy doesn't work that well for me. Eggs work great. I love eggs. I'll eat them raw. I'll eat them cooked all sorts of different ways, all kinds of different meat, fish, fowl, all that. But breads and that sort of thing, grains, I don't typically eat all that much of. I have no problems if I do. I will have some whole grain breads at certain times, cooked rice, quinoa, that sort of thing, and for me I think that's fine and I plan on continuing doing that but for a large part, I do sort of eat the Paleo way just as a typical diet.

One of the most important things and I do want to make sure you get this too is just how you eat is one part but really including super foods and super herbs, I think, you can take your health to another level. I sincerely believe that especially when you get into the Chinese tonic herbs. There are these similar sorts of tonic herbs in every different herbal system throughout the world, South American, Indian or Ayurvedic, that sort of thing, these really powerful herbs that are for promoting a superior level of health and I think even possibly more so than diet.

My brother was just investigating more into shilajit that we're selling at [Superman Herbs](#), super powerful stuff. His researching was saying that even if you eat crappy food but you take [shilajit](#) with it, the shilajit will help you to actually get the nutrition from that food much better than if you just ate that

food alone. It helps deliver all those things into the cells and mitigate the toxic effects that possibly come with that food. Shilajit by itself makes your diet automatically better, no matter how clean or not clean you are already eating, just important things like that. Why don't you want to be on this number one herb probably in the world and take a good quantity of it? That's something I've been doing both as raw vegan and now as a not so much raw vegan.

I hope you've learned something. I know I definitely did, going through this experiment. In the future, I may be doing some more 30-day diet experiments but right now, I'm just eating whatever I want because I can and I'm enjoying that. I hope you learned a thing or two from this. If you have any more questions specifically on some of the topics or areas I've brought up on this, I'd love to hear them. That's going to wrap it up for this podcast. I'll talk to you on the next one.