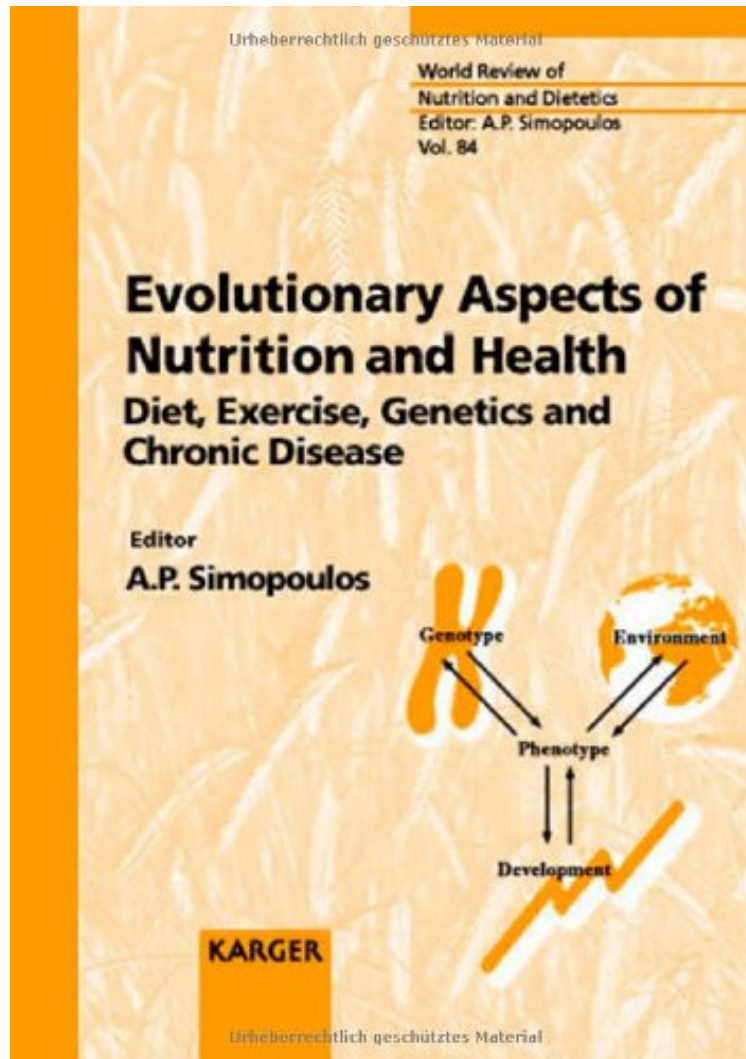


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## Evolutionary Aspects of Nutrition and Health: Diet, Exercise, Genetics and Chronic Diseases (World Review of Nutrition and Dietetics, Vol. 84) (v. 84)

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The issues treated in this publication are brought together in this way for the first time. For many of the chronic diseases, familial predispositions are well established, and there is good evidence for true genetic predisposition. When *Homo erectus* emerged 1.7 million years ago, humans existed as non-cereal-eating hunter-gatherers. It is on this basis that, according to the hypothesis of the carnivore connection, an insulin-resistant genotype evolved to provide survival and reproductive advantages to populations adapted to a high meat, low plant food (low carbohydrate) nutritional environment. Cereal became the major source of calories and protein in the human diet only about 10,000 years ago. Humankind has thus had little evolutionary experience to adapt to this new food type, maladaptation being the consequence. Moreover, studies comparing energy expenditure in Western societies and during the Paleolithic period indicate a low level of physical activity not previously encountered in human history, a state to which humans are not genetically adapted. Together with the dietary changes, this has led to a modern environment in which a number of individuals are prone to chronic diseases, causing increases in non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, hypertension, coronary artery disease, cancer and obesity. As a consequence, the lifestyle approach for the prevention and management of these diseases is essential, varying with national dietary patterns and national economy. This publication will be of special interest to physicians, geneticists, nutritionists, dieticians, anthropologists, food technologists, food-policy-makers and individuals interested in personal and family health.