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Reversing Type-2 Diabetes

Reverse type-2 Diabetes? This can be reversed without conventional medicine's "take-a-pill-for-life" mentality? YES! With the aim of finding a common thread running throughout both cause and reversal regarding type-2 diabetes and other degenerative diseases, be it cancer, or heart disease, one consistent factor is always prevalent. That being, that **a diet high in animal protein is disastrous to our health, while a plant-based (vegan) diet prevents disease and restores our health.**

This is constantly espoused by many extraordinary doctors and nutritional scientists backing up their words with peer-reviewed science. Even the ultra-conservative American Dietetic Association says: "Vegetarian diets are often associated with a number of health advantages. This includes lower blood cholesterol levels, lower risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure levels, lower risk of hypertension, and lower risk of type-2 diabetes. Also, vegetarians tend to have a lower BMI (body mass index) and lower overall cancer rates".

Understand that diets, not just in the U.S., but worldwide are changing. And type-2 diabetes seems to follow the spread of meaty, high-fat, high cholesterol diets. In Japan, for example, the traditional rice-based diet kept the population generally healthy and thin for many centuries. Up until 1980, only 1-5% of Japanese adults over age 40 had type-2 diabetes. Then the rapid westernization of their diets took place and meat, milk, cheese, and sodas became fashionable. Waistlines expanded, and, by 1990, type-2 diabetes prevalence in Japan had climbed to around 12%.

This same sort of trend has occurred in the U.S. Over the last century, per capita meat consumption increased from about 150 pounds per year in the early 1900's to over 200 pounds today. In other words, the average American now eats 50 pounds more meat every year, compared with a century ago. In the same period, cheese intake rose from less than 4 pounds per person per year to about 32 pounds today. Sugar intake has also gone up too by about 30 pounds a year. So, where are we putting all that extra meat, cheese, and sugar? It contributes to body fat, and type-2 diabetes follows. Today, about 13% of the U.S. adult population has type-2 diabetes, despite many of them not yet aware they have it.

Let's talk about cause. Normally, the cells of the body use simple sugar glucose as fuel, the way a car uses gasoline. Glucose comes from starchy or sweet foods we eat, and the hormone insulin escorts it into the muscle cells to power our movements. Glucose also passes into our brain to power our thoughts. In type-2 diabetes, the cells resist insulin's action, so glucose has trouble getting into the cells. If glucose can't get into the cells, it builds up in the blood. It's as if gasoline coming out of a gas pump somehow can't get into your gas tank, and it ends up spilling over the side of your car, coming in through your car windows and dribbling all over the pavement. It's a dangerous situation. The abnormally high levels of glucose circulating in the bloodstream are toxic to the blood vessels, especially the tiny blood vessels of the eyes, kidneys, extremities, and the heart.

Realistically, on average, a person with diabetes loses more that a decade of life. It is also a leading cause of blindness, amputations, and loss of kidney function. Many drugs are available, from insulin to oral medications and an ever-increasing variety of other meds. In order to protect the heart, many diabetics are put on medications to lower cholesterol and blood pressure and it's not unlikely that those meds will cost anywhere from $3,000 to $5,000 a year. And yet these meds merely slow down the progression of the disease and will produce other serious complications.

If an unhealthy diet is the cause, a better diet can be the answer to the problem. The key is to help the body's insulin to work normally. As long as the body's insulin can get glucose into the cells normally, diabetes will not occur. The resistance to insulin that leads to diabetes is linked to a build-up of fat inside the muscle cells and inside the liver. Look at it this way: You come home from work one day and put your key in the front door lock. But, the key does not turn properly and the door won't open. You look inside the lock and you see that someone crammed chewing gum into the lock. So, if the insulin “key” can't open up the cell to glucose, something is causing an interference. Obviously, it's not chewing gum. The problem is fat. In the same way the chewing gum in the lock makes it hard to open the front door, the fat particles inside the muscle cells interfere with insulin's efforts to open the cells to glucose. And where does the fat come from? It comes from anything that had a face and a mother, dairy products, cooking oils, etc. The answer then is to get rid of these fatty foods. Studies have shown that people who avoid all animal products and minimize their use of cooking oils appear to have much less build-up inside their cells. This makes their risk of diabetes extremely low.

Starchy foods like whole grains, beans, and vegetables are healthful foods and the body is designed to use the glucose that they hold. In type 2 diabetes, the body has lost some of this ability. So, the answer is not to avoid starches, but to restore the body's ability to use them. If you look at the cultures whose diets are traditionally high in carbohydrate - Japan, China, Latin America, etc – they have had very low diabetes rates until flesh foods, cheese, and other fatty foods displaced their healthy carbohydrate-rich diets; only then does diabetes become more common.

The Atkins Diet hype led many people down the road thinking that carbohydrates (starch) were risky. That's akin to telling people that water or oxygen is bad for them. The body needs all those things for good health.

Another misguided idea is the blood-type diet approach. The premise is that people with type A blood should follow a vegetarian diet but that people with type O blood should not. The fact is that people with type O blood do as well as everyone else on a plant-based diet. A vegan diet is helpful and effective, regardless of blood type.

When people begin a healthful diet, most will see big improvements in weight, cholesterol and blood sugar. Their need for medications diminish and some can eliminate all meds. In some cases, you would never know they had diabetes at all.
This is in no way a recommendation to discontinue the use of medications simply because you changed your diet. Change is gradual. In time, as your symptoms decrease your need for medications will decrease as well. Until that day comes, let your doctor monitor your progress. If, however, all your symptoms disappear and your doctor says to stay on your meds, it may be time for a second opinion.

Aloha!