

## February 2015 Newsletter



Dr. Hassell discussing how to reverse some major heartbreakers – insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, and excess weight – during the Good Food, Great Medicine class series. (See class information further on.)

### How much do you love your heart? Let me count the ways. . .

February was declared American Heart Month back in 1964, but we mustn't forget that it belonged to Valentine's Day first. Let's talk about the serious business of love, relationships, and mending hearts.

1. **Get over sugar.** It may be sweet and easy to love, but it will always hurt you. Dump it. In a study following 42,880 people for 14.6 years, those with the highest intake of added sugars quadrupled their risk of dying of heart disease or stroke, and just one 12-ounce soda daily was associated with a 33% higher risk.<sup>1</sup> **Note:** white flour and white rice probably carry the same risk.
2. **Explore deeper relationships with vegetables and whole fruit.** Just not into them? Don't be so shallow. It's what's inside that counts. Eating more vegetables and whole fresh fruit means less risk of cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, or premature death from any cause. The benefit is greater for vegetables than fruit.<sup>2</sup>
3. **Invite beans over for dinner – your heart is crazy about them.** They are rich in protein, antioxidants, iron, folate, B vitamins, and a wide range of soluble and insoluble fiber. They are also impressive and safe lipid-lowering agents; a half-cup daily of cooked pinto or soy beans can lower LDL (bad) cholesterol 8% or more.<sup>3</sup>

4. **Spend time with oil-rich fish.** Start meeting several times a week. Not attracted? Never mind. You'll wake up one day and realize you have a meaningful relationship. People who eat oil-rich fish like salmon and sardines often live over two years longer on average and have 20–30% less heart disease deaths,<sup>4</sup> as well as lower rates of dementia, stroke, depression,<sup>5</sup> and macular degeneration.
5. **Reach out to good fat** – not only for your heart but for your brain, too. As well as the fish we just mentioned, other rich sources of good fat are raw nuts and seeds and extra-virgin olive oil. Remember – eating carbohydrates are more likely to cause weight gain than eating fat.<sup>6</sup>
6. **Take long walks with your heart.** You'll both feel a lot better. Also, the exercise will reduce your overall risk of a heart attack by 47%, lower the risk of premature death if you have heart disease by 26%,<sup>7</sup> improve flexibility in the arterial walls and blood clotting function, and help your heart repair damaged blood vessels and form new arteries when necessary.
7. **Make a date with cultured dairy.** Traditional cultured foods like plain yogurt and kefir always turn up with a helpful crew of friendly bugs, and aged cheeses are better than young ones. Dairy contributes to better weight loss and insulin resistance.<sup>8</sup> Two or three servings a day are a reasonable maximum.
8. **Red meat and eggs (in moderation) can bring a lot to a relationship.** Red meat (unprocessed!) and eggs (with yolks!) are uniquely rich sources of high-quality protein, minerals, and critical B vitamins.
9. **Cook your heart a homemade meal.** Your heart will love you for it. Your valentine will, too. (See recipe for *Chocolate Almond Bites* further on.) Mind you, Valentine's Day is one of those special occasions where a night out may be called for – with a glass of red wine, perhaps.

<sup>1</sup> Yang, Q. et al. JAMA Intern Med 2014;174:516-24

<sup>2</sup> Oyeboode, O. et al. J Epid Comm Health 2014;doi:10.1136

<sup>3</sup> Winham, D.M. et al. JACN 2007;26:243-9

<sup>4</sup> Mozaffarian, D. et al. Ann Intern Med 2013;158:515-25

<sup>5</sup> Cited in BMJ 2014 348:g3036

<sup>6</sup> Cited in BMJ 2013;347:f6873. Swedish Council on Health Technology Assessment. Diet and obesity, a systematic review. Sept 2013

<sup>7</sup> Lawler, P. et al. Am Heart J 2011;162:571-84 (Meta-analysis)

<sup>8</sup> Mozaffarian, D. et al. Ann Intern Med 2010;153:790-9

## Information for life transformation: *Good Food, Great Medicine* classes

The February *Good Food, Great Medicine* classes begin next week. This class series has been an excellent forum for reviewing what we know about health, and translating intentions into actions. Although February is officially designated *American Heart Month*, we think it would be more useful to call it *Insulin Resistance Month* instead. Insulin resistance is the underlying mechanism for most cases of type 2 diabetes and has serious long-term risks of stroke, heart attack, dementia, cancer, and fatty liver, as well as damage to nerves, joints, kidneys, and eyes. In the classes (2/10 and 2/17) we will discuss how to resist insulin resistance.

### Signed up for the 2015 classes yet?

Our two-part class series targets weight loss, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes, and details steps for preventing or reversing them. The classes are based on the new edition of *Good Food, Great Medicine*, which each participant will receive at the first class.

#### Good Food, Great Medicine Part 1:

- Review inter-relationship of excess waistline and weight, insulin resistance (common to most cases of type 2 diabetes), and heart disease and stroke risk.
- Discuss the role of the “key three” – a whole food Mediterranean diet, daily activity, and enough sleep.
- Work through the 14-point *Risk Reduction Action Plan* to target the inter-related factors.

#### Good Food, Great Medicine Part 2:

- Explore practical application of whole food choices and menu planning. Review progress, find solutions to challenges, and fine-tune personal action plans.

**Time:** 6 – 8 pm

**Date:** 2/10/15 (Part 1) and 2/17/15 (Part 2)

**Location:** Providence St. Vincent Medical Center

**Cost:** \$100 (2-class series)

**Registration:** Call 503.291.1777 to reserve a spot

### The practice

If you are looking for a more personal approach to lifestyle change, feel free to call our office to schedule a consultation. In addition to his primary care practice, Dr. Hassell also offers consultation appointments for diagnosis, second opinion, or to develop patient-centered solutions using evidence-based conventional and lifestyle interventions.

## Chocolate Almond Bites

Make your own box of chocolates for Valentine’s Day! These no-cook treats are scrumptious and easy. Try the recipe with the raisins first before experimenting with other dried fruit – there are surprising variations in moisture and sweetness.

*(Makes about 5 dozen bites, ½ x ¾ inch)*

- 1 cup raw whole almonds
- 1 cup raisins
- 3-ounce bar 85% chocolate (approximately)
- 2 tablespoons orange zest
- ⅓ teaspoon salt

1. Place almonds in food processor and process for 1 minute. *(You may want to cover your ears – the noise is deafening for several seconds.)* Scrape down sides.
2. Add raisins, the broken-up chocolate, orange zest, and salt, and process for 1 minute. Scrape down sides and process 1 more minute. The mixture may be lumping together.
3. Line an 8x4-inch bread pan or something similar with a piece of plastic wrap large enough to reach over the sides of the pan. Press the mixture into the pan and pat out evenly with a spatula. (I do a final pat-down with the bottom of another bread pan.) Fold the excess plastic over the top to seal snugly, and chill for a few hours or overnight.
4. Unmold and slice into pieces approximately ½ x ¾-inch. Store in airtight container and keep in refrigerator. Try not to think about them.

## Dr. Hassell’s speaking events

**2/07/2015 – FoodWorx:** *Which Choices Really Matter in Aging Well?* Portland, OR. <http://foodworxconference.com/>

**2/10/2015 and 2/17/2015 – Good Food, Great Medicine 2-part Lifestyle Change Class Series:** Portland, OR. For registration information call our office at 503.291.1777.

**2/11/2015 – Legacy Health System Integrative Oncology Grand Rounds:** *Key Survivorship Choices;* Portland, OR.

**2/28/2015 and 3/1/2015 – Red Ridge Farms:** *2015 Pacific Northwest Cool Climate Extra Virgin Olive Oil Conference;* Dundee, OR. <http://redridgefarms.com/>

**4/01/2015 and 4/08/2015 – Good Food, Great Medicine 2-part Lifestyle Change Class Series:** Portland, OR. For registration information call our office at 503.291.1777.

**4/28/2015 and 5/05/2015 – Good Food, Great Medicine 2-part Lifestyle Change Class Series:** Portland, OR. For registration information call our office at 503.291.1777.

*“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”*  
1 Thessalonians 5:21 (KJV)