

Type 2 diabetes, pre-diabetes: Reverse, don't treat! March 2020



Miles Hassell MD and Shelly Johnson, RNC after their joint Grand Rounds presentation on Type 2 Diabetes Reversal on January 21st.

Reversing type 2, pre-, and gestational diabetes beats managing with medications

Want to go straight to the how-to part? Sign up for our 2-part diabetes reversal class series beginning Wednesday, July 15th. (Details further on.)

Type 2 diabetes and pre-diabetes can lead to a cascade of complications harming almost every organ system: heart attacks, strokes, cancer, nerve damage, and loss of vision, just to name a few. Diabetes in pregnancy (gestational diabetes) also can bring a broad range of problems for mother *and* baby. Yet our expensive (and sometimes harmful) medications do little to prevent these complications; the very best diabetes management does not reduce the risk of complications to anything *near* the risk seen in someone without diabetes. For example, a person with well-controlled diabetes has a stroke and heart disease risk at least 2–4 times higher than someone without diabetes. But is type 2 diabetes preventable? Yes, as shown by studies such as the *Diabetes Prevention Project* and the *Finnish Diabetes Prevention Study*. (See page 80 in the 4th edition of *Good Food, Great Medicine* for more details.)

Studies support type 2 diabetes reversal even when diagnoses are established

People diagnosed with type 2 diabetes are often under the impression that it is an unalterable life sentence. Fortunately, we have dozens of studies that support the reversibility of type 2 diabetes. One of the most recent of these is the *DiRECT study*¹, a randomized and controlled

diet and weight loss study which followed people with type 2 diabetes for two years: the study showed a 70% reversal for those who were the most successful at weight loss, and 36% reversal in the participants overall! These results are consistent with our own clinic findings: about 70% of patients who enroll in our 1-year diabetes reversal program lower their blood sugars to non-diabetic levels with a combination of diet, exercise and weight loss, and *without* blood sugar medications.

The “downstream” benefits of reversing type 2 diabetes

People who reverse their type 2 diabetes are not only able to have their doctor deprescribe their diabetes medications, they will usually also enjoy vastly improved blood pressure and cholesterol levels, lower risk of heart disease and stroke, and improved markers for cancer and dementia risk. Arguably as significant is their self-reported improvement in energy, mood, and overall well-being. What a bonus!

Let's talk about medication side effects

There's an added consideration rarely discussed enough: How safe are the pharmaceutical combinations routinely found on the medication lists of people being treated with drugs for blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure? The potential effects of these combinations have generally not been studied rigorously. If you are finding yourself on a rising number of medications, it's time to think more seriously about lifestyle change; apart from the known (and unknown) side effects, people almost always feel much better when they can stop medications. They save money, too!

Toolbox for type 2 diabetes reversal

- **Read** the first 110 pages of *Good Food, Great Medicine*
- **Attend** one or both of our upcoming seminars in March and April (details of the 2020 class series further on)
- **Schedule** a consultation to explore your own health trajectory with Dr. Hassell or Dr. Ellis
- **Enroll** in a 1-year or 6-month Health Transformation Plan, a one-on-one doctor-patient partnership providing support, accountability, encouragement, and dietary counsel. Common targets include:
 - diabetes prevention and reversal
 - sustainable weight loss
 - cancer prevention and survivorship
 - lowering heart disease and stroke risk factors
 - reduced depression and anxiety

¹ Lean, M.E. et al. *Lancet Diab Endocrin* 2019:344-55

Have any concerns about cold and flu symptoms? Read our [Cold and Flu](#) handout at goodfoodgreatmedicine.com and our [blog post](#) on coronavirus (COVID-19). Below are also a couple of recipes from the handout that might help ease your symptoms if you *do* find yourself getting sick. . .

Hot Lemon and Honey Soother

Instead of commercial cough syrup, try making your own. Some soother users claim to enjoy up to four hours of relief from coughing or sore throat with this tonic. The lemon peel contributes therapeutic benefit as well as another flavor dimension.

1. Wash and thinly slice one fresh lemon, including peel.
2. Place slices in a jug or thermos and add 4 cups of boiling water.
3. Add 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) of honey and stir until honey is dissolved. (It may taste too sweet, but the honey plays an important role in the soothing.)
4. Store in a thermos and sip as needed.

Note:

- The longer the mixture sits, the more the flavor of the peel will intensify.
- If you don't have access to a lemon, ½ cup of apple cider vinegar can substitute.

A Simple, Soothing Chicken Soup

Chicken soup seems to be effective for reducing cold symptoms, but it's important what is actually *in* the soup. Make it from scratch! The vegetables reduce by half after they're cooked, by the way, and are important for fiber and immune-boosting nutrients. (For a more substantial soup that is just as comforting but definitely more exciting, try *Chicken Soup, Mexican Style*, on page 233 of *Good Food, Great Medicine*, 4th edition.)

(Makes about 2 servings)

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups onion in ¼-inch dice
- 2 cups celery in ¼-inch dice
- 1 tablespoon freshly crushed garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ¼-½ teaspoon Tabasco sauce (optional)
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups shredded cooked chicken

1. Heat oil in a heavy 5-quart pot over medium-high heat. Add onions and celery and sauté 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Add garlic and sauté another 15 seconds. Add salt, pepper, Tabasco, and stock. Bring to a simmer.
3. Add chicken and continue cooking at a bare simmer for 10 minutes. Serve it forth!

Good Food, Great Medicine 2-part classes: A two-part class series to target weight loss, diabetes reversal, and inflammation The classes are based on *Good Food, Great Medicine*, which each participant will receive at the first class.

Good Food, Great Medicine class (part 1):

- Review inter-relationship of excess waistline and weight, insulin resistance (common to most cases of type 2 diabetes), and common chronic diseases.
- Discuss the role of the “key four” – a whole food Mediterranean diet; minimal sweeteners, refined grains and starches; daily activity; and enough sleep.
- Work through the 14 simple steps that target your risk factors and produce effective, lasting changes to your waistline, blood sugar, and other health risks.

Good Food, Great Medicine class (part 2):

- Explore practical application of whole food choices and menu planning. See demos of foundational recipes from *Good Food, Great Medicine*. Review progress, find solutions to challenges, and fine-tune personal plans.

Time: 6 – 8 pm Wednesday
Dates: 7/15/2020 (Part 1) and 7/22/2020 (Part 2)
Location: Providence St. Vincent Medical Center
Cost: \$100 (2-class series)
Registration: Call 503.291.1777 to reserve a place

Speaking events and classes

3/30/2020 – Stress, Depression, and Anxiety: The Most Effective Lifestyle Choices for More Optimism and Resilience: CANCELLED – to be rescheduled.

4/28/2020 – Cancer Survivorship and Prevention: CANCELLED – to be rescheduled.

7/15/2020 and 7/22/2020 – Good Food, Great Medicine TYPE 2 DIABETES REVERSAL and SUSTAINABLE WEIGHT LOSS 2-PART LIFESTYLE CHANGE CLASS SERIES:

Portland, OR. Call our office at 503.291.1777 to register.

10/1/2020 – 10/22/2020 Providence Heart Institute BASECAMP Cardiac Prevention + Wellness 4-part Series:

Good Food, Great Medicine: Portland, OR. Call the Providence Resource Line at 503.574.6595 to register or find *Good Food, Great Medicine* in the class catalog at providence.org/classes

Sign up for this free monthly medical + lifestyle newsletter at Goodfoodgreatmedicine.com

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

1 Thessalonians 5:21 (KJV)