

## DEFY YOUR DIAGNOSIS!

May 2018



*Dr. Hassell's yard guy, 9-year-old Tor, battling an outbreak of spring while working on his deltoids, quadriceps, and cardiovascular fitness.*

### **One year ago Bruce was in the ICU with congestive heart failure, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and kidney failure**

Look where Bruce is today! He is ex-diabetic and has normal kidney function, improved blood pressure, fewer medications, and there's no sign of heart failure.

#### **Choose treatment options that produce exceptional outcomes, not typical results!**

One of the traps about which I warn patients – those with chronic conditions particularly – is the tragedy of low expectations. If we don't believe a good alternative treatment path is available, we ignore options that could transform our health trajectory. It's easy to assume that our doctor has tried every reasonable option, but the fact is that the food and activity choices we choose determine the direction of our health more than our medical care – and can decide even whether we become an invalid or take up playing tennis.

After his discharge from the hospital, Bruce decided he needed to make better health decisions. He realized that, at 51 years old, simply managing his multiple diagnoses with steadily increasing medications was not the best plan for a high quality of life in 10 years. He needed to *reverse* his diabetes and high blood pressure, and help his heart and kidneys recover. He recognized that the health crisis that landed him in the intensive care unit was the perfect opportunity to start applying the lifestyle choices he had heard about when he attended the *Good Food, Great Medicine* class series.

So, in addition to the care he was getting from his medical team, he signed up for the One-Year Plan, a health transformation program providing partnership and accountability (one-on-one visits with Dr Hassell every 2 weeks) as well as support, encouragement, and the tools to achieve the goals Bruce set for himself:

- Reverse diabetes and kidney failure
- Reduce blood pressure and medications
- Improve his food and activity choices
- Lose weight

Not only did Bruce achieve his goals, he also reduced a whole spectrum of future risks including cancer, stroke, and dementia, and he's tapering off his antidepressant. All of this could ONLY have been achieved with prudent, targeted, evidence-based lifestyle changes; the best medical interventions fail to achieve those objectives. (It should be added that these lifestyle changes involve choices that all of us are capable of making. Some are more difficult than others, but all are doable. See pages 69–92 in *Good Food, Great Medicine*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.)

### **Treatment options to help us avoid the ICU**

Here are some suggestions for making positive changes to our health trajectory. Ready to wage all-out war against type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer risk, and excess weight?

1. **Schedule a consultation** with Dr. Hassell for evaluation, diagnosis, second opinion, or treatment plan, especially for difficult or persistent problems.
2. **Download *An Evidence-based Guide to Successful Waist Loss and Preventing or Reversing Insulin Resistance and Type 2 Diabetes* [handout on the resources tab @ goodfoodgreatmedicine.com](http://goodfoodgreatmedicine.com).** *Fat is Good, Bagels are Bad - some (Mediterranean) principles to eat by* is another great resource.
3. **Read the first 126 pages of *Good Food, Great Medicine* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), especially the 14-step *Risk Reduction Action Plan* beginning on page 69.**
4. **Join a *Good Food, Great Medicine* class series.** (See newsletter for more details.)
5. **Sign up for a health transformation program**, a one-year or six-month one-on-one doctor-patient partnership providing support, accountability, and dietary counsel using a whole food Mediterranean model for people with specific objectives such as weight loss or reversing type 2 diabetes.

## A timely tip for Mother's Day

Mothers are a lot like the rest of us: they generally love desserts. Most would also admit that they would be wise to forgo dessert. When offering something sweet we suggest observing three guidelines:

1. **Make it yourself:** not only is it a gesture loved by mothers everywhere, but it delivers better ingredients than a store-bought dessert
2. **Include good fat:** desserts generally contain significant sugar, and the presence of good fat helps blunt the body's insulin response
3. **Keep it for special occasions:** this allows us to celebrate the positive aspects of dessert while limiting the scope of its negative effects

## Butternut Bars

A good dessert can justify its existence by offering real-food benefit while maintaining flagrant in-your-face decadence. There are serious bonus points if the ingredients are standard items we regularly have on hand, sugar and flour are minimal, and directions are simple enough to complete while the oven preheats. These bars deliver 2 cups of nuts and decadence!

*(Makes about 20 bars, ½ inch thick)*

1 stick (½ cup) butter  
½ cup dark brown sugar, packed  
½ teaspoon salt

1 egg

*Optional:* 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

⅓ cup whole wheat flour

2 cups raw walnut and/or pecan pieces

*Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line bottom of 8x8-inch pan with parchment and mist with non-stick spray.*

1. Melt butter over medium heat in a 1½ quart saucepan. (I use the same pan to combine all the ingredients. Only one dish to clean!)
2. Add sugar and salt, and stir with a whisk over heat until completely blended and barely beginning to bubble, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat to cool slightly, about 10 minutes.
3. Add egg and vanilla and beat with an electric mixer until well blended. Add flour and beat until smooth. Add nuts and mix thoroughly with spatula.
4. Scrape mixture into pan and spread evenly. (The mixture will be thick and nutty, and it may initially seem like there's not enough to cover the bottom.)
5. Bake about 18 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Don't overbake! It's okay if it looks a bit underdone; the bars are more luscious that way. Loosen sides with spatula and cool in pan.

## 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.

*"I've bounced around for decades trying to find an eating style that is sustainable. I'm very susceptible to simple carbs and will spiral into heroin-strength addiction. I want to function without being hungry [and] adherence to the Mediterranean diet works best. . . your approach is common sense AND evidence-based! Bravo!" Joan B, MD/MSPH*

**Time:** 6 – 8 pm Wednesday

**Dates:** 7/11/2018 (Part 1) and 7/18/2018 (Part 2)

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

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

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

## Dr. Hassell's speaking events

**5/17/2018 – Providence St. Vincent Medical Center Breast Conference: Breast Cancer Survivorship.** Portland, OR.

**7/11/2018 and 7/18/2018 – 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.

**\*COMING SOON Fall 2018\* – 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 join the waiting list or find *Good Food, Great Medicine* (waiting list) in the class catalog at [providence.org/classes](http://providence.org/classes).

Sign up for this free monthly medical + lifestyle newsletter at [Goodfoodgreatmedicine.com](http://Goodfoodgreatmedicine.com)

*"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."*

*1 Thessalonians 5:21 (KJV)*

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