

Use summertime to perk up your immunity!

June - August 2020



Get a workout wherever you can find it! Sometimes the exercise equipment is an axe, a chain saw, and a neighbor's downed tree; Drs Hassell & Ellis spent a Saturday recently stocking up on firewood.

Carla looks healthy and 10 years younger than her age but was feeling terrible: Why?

One of the enjoyable challenges of internal medicine is tracking down hard-to-find diagnoses. In Carla's case, there was no clear diagnosis on which to attach her symptoms: she was uncharacteristically fatigued, achy, and out-of-sorts. Her blood work, routine testing, and a thorough physical exam gave no answers: was it just a transient bug? However, her symptoms continued, and so did our investigation. More clues began to appear, and further digging finally uncovered the diagnosis: it was hyperparathyroidism, a disorder of one of the tiny glands in the neck that can cause big problems, and can masquerade as anything from arthritis or bowel and muscle problems to depression or other psychiatric diseases. Mystery solved! After a 15-minute surgery Carla can expect to return to her normal self. Her experience should remind us to never assume that we have to live with unpleasant symptoms just because there isn't an obvious answer; it should also encourage us to insist on thorough, persistent reevaluation with our medical providers.

Dave reversed his diabetes in 4 months with lifestyle medicine – despite a broken back!

After seeing Dave as a new patient in January 2020, we found previously undiagnosed type 2 diabetes. At that point, he had a choice of two treatment trajectories: a conventional approach with medications to treat his diabetes, or a lifestyle approach using whole food and

exercise to reverse his diabetes. Two disadvantages of the conventional approach are: blood sugar medications fail to either prevent serious risks associated with diabetes (such as stroke, heart disease, and cancer) or reduce risks to the level of someone without diabetes; medications also add *new* risks related to drug side-effects. Another issue is cost; meds can cost as much as \$5,000 per year!

Dave chose to take the lifestyle route, and we worked with him to design a plan that fit with his life. In spite of an accident causing a broken back (!) on only day two of his diabetes reversal plan, he moved ahead and made the necessary changes. Today he no longer has diabetes, and he's thankful to have avoided the handful of medications that usually accompany a diabetes diagnosis, along with associated complications such as high blood pressure. Congratulations, Dave! (See our 14-step diabetes reversal plan on pages 77–110 of *Good Food, Great Medicine* (4th edition) or our diabetes reversal handout on the *resources* tab at goodfoodgreatmedicine.com.)

Do you need COVID-19 testing? We do coronavirus testing in our office, or in your home, if you prefer. Call us at 503.291.1777 for more details or to schedule.

Immunity in the age of COVID-19

Don't let fear of COVID make you unnecessarily anxious! Even when exposed to COVID-19, the vast majority of us do not develop serious illness, and through that exposure we probably achieve some degree of immunity. COVID is likely to be a significant factor for several months, at least; let's start now to work on strengthening our immunity so that if we *do* get exposed, we'll be more likely to have an immune system that can gallop to the rescue. Two places to start are the immune boosting tips on pages 22–23 in *Good Food, Great Medicine* (4th ed) and the *Concerned about coronavirus?* handout on the *resources* tab at goodfoodgreatmedicine.com. There is a great deal we don't know about this virus, but the reality is that any of us may well have a low level exposure regardless of precautions we take, so help your immune system be ready!

Are you waiting for the vaccine? If a safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19 comes along, that will be great. However, we do not have a very good history of developing highly effective influenza vaccines¹, so don't hold your breath. Use this summer to get to work on boosting your immune system!

¹ Anderson, M. et al. Ann Intern Med 2020;172:445-52

Seductive Soybeans

(Recipe from page 210 in *Good Food, Great Medicine*, 4th edition.)

These fresh green soybeans have a nutty, sweet quality and firm texture that some may prefer to the more beany texture of baby green lima beans. The availability of fresh soybeans in supermarket freezer departments is amazingly widespread – in the pod or shelled. This is a simple recipe and a lovely side dish. Leftovers are a fine substitute for lima beans in Succotash Salad (page 211), or added to minestrone soup (page 193).

(Makes about 3 cups)

- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 16-ounce bag frozen shelled green soybeans (see box below)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon freshly crushed garlic
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

1. Bring water to a boil in a 2-quart saucepan and add salt and soybeans. Bring back to a boil, gently shaking the pan to break up any clumps of beans. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 5 minutes. Don't overcook! The soybeans should have a naturally firm texture, almost like a tender peanut.
2. Combine olive oil, vinegar, garlic, salt, and pepper in a mixing bowl.
3. Drain cooked soybeans and add to the oil and vinegar mixture. Toss to thoroughly coat beans. Let sit for 10 minutes, tossing a few times. Served freshly cooked or room temperature.

Soy is just another bean

Traditional and minimally processed soy foods like soybeans and tofu are healthy whole foods. There is likely added benefit from fermented soy foods like miso and tempeh: **HOWEVER**, avoid highly processed and nutrient-depleted products such as packaged soy milk, soy protein powder, soy extract supplements, and chemically-altered soy-based meat substitutes like “soy curls” and textured vegetable protein (TVP). (See page 61 in *Good Food, Great Medicine*, for more information.)

Watch **NEW** Cooking with Mea! video series

Mea Hassell, recipe creator and co-author of *Good Food, Great Medicine*, demonstrates recipes for vinaigrette and a tossed salad on our **NEW** Cooking with Mea! series at: bit.ly/2yIDE1A Subscribe to our YouTube channel, too! youtube.com/c/GoodFoodGreatMedicine

Seriously seeking better health?

Consider a 6-month or 1-year plan

If you or someone you know is struggling with an ongoing health issue or poor health care follow-up from their medical team, consider signing up for a 6-month or one year plan. Dr. Hassell and Dr. Ellis work to pursue the right diagnosis and optimal management to put you in the best health using the most effective of both conventional and lifestyle interventions. Sometimes the most important thing we do is to marshal the efforts of hand-picked great specialists, and then act as your advocate to see that what *should* get done *does* get done. **Individual consultation appointments** are also available; these are particularly useful if you need help to coordinate and facilitate care through the medical team you are already seeing.

Subscribe to our **NEW** YouTube channel!

youtube.com/c/GoodFoodGreatMedicine

Our range of topics is growing: immunity, inflammation, insulin resistance, red meat, salad making – and there's even Dr. Hassell's video on chopping wood with wedges!

Speaking events and classes

9/25/2020 – **Coronary Heart Disease (CHD): Limitations and Lifestyle Opportunities for Cardiology: Providence Heart and Stroke Essentials 2020 Virtual Conference:** Register online, <https://washington.providence.org/nwcme>

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
*Subject to COVID-related restrictions.

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