

## More than just a pain in the neck

October – November 2020



*Dr. Hassell was interviewed by Providence Healthy Bites podcast health coaches Will Bruce and Colleen Kuhn (via Skype – can you see her?) on the subject of maintaining robust immunity during the holidays. Stay tuned for this episode, and see link below to listen to another Providence podcast interview discussing aging gracefully.*

### Dr. Ellis discovered an unusual cause for Steve's severe neck pain

Steve had worsening neck pain that woke him up at night and made him miserable during the day, and the stiffness and intense pain with movement was making him increasingly disabled. When he came to see Dr. Ellis, several subtle features of his neck pain made it stand out from the more typical neck pain commonly caused by osteoarthritis or muscle injury. Suspecting that Steve had something unusual, Dr. Ellis did further specialized testing, and discovered that Steve had “crowned dens syndrome”, a rare inflammatory condition that, if undetected, can cause a broad range of problems, pain, and progressive disability. Fortunately, it responds rapidly to colchicine, a drug more commonly used for gout. Good news – Steve's neck pain has resolved!

### Dr. Hassell and Providence join for podcast

Want some lifestyle tips on aging gracefully as our bodies change? Listen to this discussion between Dr. Hassell and Mary Renouf, host of Providence *Her Health* podcast <https://anchor.fm/future-of-health>. These two 30 minute sessions include information that can change your health trajectory! Learn more about minimizing medications and supplements and improving your muscle mass, bone strength, and immune system to reduce frailty. Hear why using food and activity choices to reduce high blood pressure and blood sugar, abnormal cholesterol, heart disease risk factors, joint pain, chronic fatigue, depression, anxiety, etc. are critical for disease reversal. Listen to Part 1: <https://bit.ly/32albFq> and Part 2: <https://bit.ly/3899SIS>

### Giving thanks for a robust immune system

Don't wait for a COVID-19 vaccine! This virus is no match for a well-tuned immune system, so give yours some attention. Feed it well, take it for a walk every day, and tuck it into bed at night for a good sleep. Now that autumn is here and winter squash has arrived, it would be a good idea to make it a part of your immune enhancement plan – the rich orange meat of squash is bursting with beta-carotene, vitamin C, potassium, and manganese, just to name a few flu fighters. A daily dose of squash is a good start, but we've also included a list of other strategies worth remembering on the next page.

### An accurate diagnosis and custom game plan: a valuable gift for a loved one

The COVID-19 virus largely spares healthy people, yet is devastating for those with risk factors such as obesity and diabetes. This highlights the importance of achieving and maintaining good health while reducing medications. If you know someone who needs help on the road to a robust immune system, consider these options:

**Disease Reversal Plans** are flat-fee, customized 6 month and 1-year intensive care plans for people who need to lose weight and keep it off, reverse diabetes, improve heart disease and stroke risk factors, and assist cancer survivorship. We create a plan and work closely to achieve goals, with appointments typically every 2 weeks.

The 1-year **Health Maintenance Plan** is also a flat-fee plan, designed with the goal of making careful, accurate diagnoses, developing good health practices, finding ways to reduce medications, improving well being, and other primary care needs.

### Flat-rate plans are ideal for people on Medicare

who want same-day access, personal care, and close coordination with other doctors and specialists without uncertainty over what it will cost.

**A consultation visit** can often clarify and even resolve the main problems, and then create an action plan to take back to your primary care and specialist physicians.

**Good Food Great Medicine** is an up-to date guide to the food and lifestyle patterns with the strongest evidence for diabetes reversal, healthy weight loss, cancer survivorship, avoiding heart disease and stroke, and strengthening immunity. **For details, call us at 503.291.1777 or go to: [goodfoodgreatmedicine.com](http://goodfoodgreatmedicine.com).**

## Serve others, live longer!

Are you interested in life extension strategy that doesn't involve drugs, diet, or exercise? Look no further than volunteering! There is a large amount of observational data to suggest that those who volunteer live longer lives than those who don't, lowering their mortality risk by approximately 20%.<sup>1</sup>

While this has been a relatively consistent finding in medical literature, it's based on observational studies, which means that critics point out the many different variables and features of those that volunteer which may account for this difference in mortality risk.

Traditional avenues for volunteering may be limited for the moment, but there are plenty of D-I-Y workarounds: bring a meal to a friend, do yardwork for someone who needs help, offer to take a neighbor's dog for a walk, go shopping for someone who isn't able to, send a cheery note or make a phone call to someone who lives alone...the possibilities are limitless! For more details on this subject check out our blog post:

<https://bit.ly/3cADAif>.

## Zucchini Frittata

Super-basic and simply-flavored enough to make for breakfast while still half asleep. No zucchini? Use a 10-ounce box of frozen chopped spinach (no need to drain) instead. In fact, the only difficult thing about this recipe is remembering whether to put the two t's in the middle or the end of "frittata"! This oven-baked version is even easier than the stovetop version on page 197 of *Good Food, Great Medicine* (4<sup>th</sup> edition).

(Serves about 4)

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2–3 zucchini grated on medium grater (about 4 cups)  
4 eggs, lightly beaten  
½ cup of your favorite cheese, grated  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Mist an 8x8-inch baking dish or 9-inch Pyrex pie plate with non-stick spray.

1. Heat oil in a hot skillet and sauté grated zucchini for 5 minutes or until hot through and beginning to soften.
2. Beat eggs with a fork in a medium mixing bowl. Add cheese, seasoning, and sautéed zucchini; mix well.
3. Pour mixture into baking dish. Bake at 300 degrees for 30 minutes, or until until just set in the center.

<sup>1</sup> Jenkinson C.E. et al. BMC Public Health 2013;13:773

## Immune defense strategies

- Go for a 30 minute walk outside every day; exercise is a broad immune system booster.
- Get 7–9 hours sleep each day – it is an essential nutrient our bodies can't store.
- Eat a whole food Mediterranean-style diet and try to include vegetables and whole fruit with every meal and snack. (Yet another study has surfaced to support this advice: *The Immune Protective Effect of the Mediterranean Diet against Chronic Low-Grade Inflammatory Diseases*.<sup>2</sup>) This approach is discussed in detail in *Good Food, Great Medicine*.
- Eat whole foods with probiotics ("good bugs"). This includes plain yogurt and kefir (flavor them yourself!), **salt cured** sauerkraut such as *Bubbies*. Also, whole foods prepared at home can be sources of probiotics.
- Eat high-quality protein: oil-rich fish (like salmon, tuna, and sardines) and red meat (as a source of iron, zinc, and B12) a couple of times a week.
- Avoid sugars and *refined* grains like, ahem, the plague. (This includes white rice, white flour, ready-to-eat breakfast cereal, etc.) However, *whole* grains are associated with *less* infectious disease and lower total death rates.<sup>3,4</sup>
- There are a few nutritional supplements that might help, and we discuss some of these in our *Cold, Flu and Sinusitis* handout at [goodfoodgreatmedicine.com](http://goodfoodgreatmedicine.com) (under the *resources* tab). A useful supplement is cod liver oil (about 1 tablespoon a day) as a source of omega 3 fats, vitamin D, and vitamin A.

## Subscribe to our YouTube channel!

[youtube.com/c/GoodFoodGreatMedicine](https://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

**10/8/2020 – Pacific University Physician Assistant Program:**  
Miles Hassell MD: Ischemic Heart Disease. Hillsboro, OR  
via Zoom conferencing!

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)*

<sup>2</sup> Casas, R. et al. Endocr Metab Immune Disord Drug Targets 2014 Sep 22

<sup>3</sup> Park, Y. et al. Arch Intern Med 2011;171:1061-8

<sup>4</sup> Li, S. et al. BMJ 2014;348:g2659