

December 2015 Newsletter



Dr. Hassell offers some expert culinary counsel to his sister, Mea, at their Good Food, Great Medicine cooking class for participants in the One-Year Health Intensive Program at [Market of Choice](#) in Beaverton, Oregon this month. Mea advised Miles to stick with his day job.

The must-have gift: better health *and* money saved

Getting someone started on a healthier future is a hard-to-beat gift. It can also be hard to find – but look no further! *Good Food, Great Medicine*, our evidence-based lifestyle guide and cookbook, fits easily under the tree and was recently spotted at Powell's Bookstore on their non-fiction best-seller display. Then there's our gift box, which combines *Good Food, Great Medicine* with a sampling of minimally-processed Oregon-sourced products. Another idea is perhaps a gift card for our two-part small group classes that focus on type 2 diabetes reversal and weight control. For some, the best gift is a medical consultation with Dr. Hassell to clarify diagnostic and treatment options with a blend of conventional and lifestyle approaches. Stubborn health issues may be best managed with a flat-fee One-Year Health Intensive Program, a gift that can give for a lifetime! (See details on back page.)

Don't just treat it, defeat it!

Drugs can and do save lives, but they are rarely a simple solution. (Read any inserts lately?) Drugs could be aptly described as toxins with potentially beneficial side effects. In most cases, too, treating common diseases with drugs or other conventional therapies simply isn't as effective as treating disease with lifestyle. Evidence-based lifestyle medicine fulfills the Hippocratic Oath ("First, do no harm") and certainly deserves to be considered first line therapy. Here are two examples:

1. Drugs drop blood pressure but risk is *still* high

People with normal blood pressure have a much lower risk of heart attack and stroke. However, a 2015 study shows that those whose high blood pressure is lowered to "normal" with medication(s) have 2–3 times higher risk of stroke and heart attack than if they achieved the same pressure *without* medications.¹ So although treating high blood pressure reduces the risk of stroke a small amount, pharmaceutical treatment does not even come *close* to lowering the risk to normal. Simply put, the more blood pressure medicines you take, the higher your risk of stroke. **Lifestyle medicine approach:** Vigorously treat high blood pressure with a whole food Mediterranean diet, weight loss (if needed), and daily exercise to reduce or remove the need for medications *and* lower the risk for most other diseases. (See pages 83-84 in *Good Food, Great Medicine* for more detail.)

The blood pressure study we just referred to points out the fact that, although it is well documented that lifestyle choices are effective, they are often not prescribed because it is difficult to get patients to follow them. However, when those choices are clearly explained and food is as satisfying, simple, and unrestricted as the whole food Mediterranean-style approach presented in *Good Food, Great Medicine*, lifestyle change can be enjoyable, affordable, sustainable, and doable. (For complex cases requiring more medical oversight and counselling, a consultation with Dr. Hassell and coordination with the rest of your medical team may be a critical part of the plan.)

2. Insulin for type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes, even when treated, can damage the brain, eyes, heart, kidney, liver, pancreas, joints, and nerves, and may double your risk of getting cancer. Although some need insulin for adequate control, consider this statistic: in a large 2015 British Journal of Cancer study, people with type 2 diabetes treated with insulin had a dramatically higher risk of pancreatic cancer.² **Lifestyle medicine approach:** Include a whole food Mediterranean diet, probiotic foods, weight loss, and daily exercise to reverse (or prevent) type 2 diabetes and reduce or eliminate the need for insulin. (For a recent example of someone who did this in real life, see our June 2015 newsletter. For more details on

¹ Howard, G. et al. *Stroke* 2015;46:1595-1600

² Lu, Y. et al. *Br J Cancer* 2015;113:1607-14 (1,574,768 person years follow-up)

reversing insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes, see pages 61-65 in *Good Food, Great Medicine*.)

Use lifestyle medicine to save money

One of the less obvious benefits of using a mix of conventional and lifestyle approaches is that patients end up spending *less* money over time while gaining better health. They spend less time in doctor's offices and less money on medications and tests. A good example of this is a patient whose out-of-pocket costs to treat her diabetes and high blood pressure dropped from \$1,400 to \$40 monthly when she improved her food choices and exercise habits. Even more important – she is also much healthier.

How to jump start a health revolution. . .

For someone who could use a jump start to drive down their risk factors, our book *Good Food, Great Medicine* may be just what the doctor ordered. Some other ideas:

- **Gift box** – lifestyle starter kit (see details below).
- **Small group classes** – our interactive two-part class is based on the Risk Reduction Action Plan in *Good Food, Great Medicine*. (Class details further on.)
- **Individual consultation** – a one-on-one visit with Dr. Hassell to create an effective treatment plan which includes both conventional and lifestyle elements, or to pursue an elusive diagnosis.
- **One-Year Health Intensive Program** – a single flat fee for a year of intensive lifestyle medicine with the education, accountability, and follow-up resources to transform health for a lifetime.

Good Food, Great Medicine gift box

An Oregon-sourced and minimally-processed lifestyle starter kit. (Cost is \$60; shipping available.)

■ **Good Food, Great Medicine** – This popular cookbook and evidence-based lifestyle guide is a fun read whether you are a seasoned cook or a self-professed non-cook. This is the third edition by Dr. Hassell and his sister, Mea.



■ Oregon Olive Mill

Extra-virgin olive oil – This is a superbly smooth extra-virgin olive oil estate-milled by Oregon Olive Mill at Red Ridge Farms in Dayton, and it received a silver award at the 2014 New York International Olive Oil Competition.

■ **Raw local blackberry honey** – unfiltered raw honey from blackberry nectar harvested by skilled bees at Depot Slough apiary near Toledo, Oregon. This is a truly unrefined sweetener, rich in antioxidants, local pollen, and the occasional bee's knee.

■ **Dr. Hassell's CrackPot Cereal** – one of his favorite breakfasts! A combination of intact whole grains – oat groats, whole barley, and rye berries from Bob's Red Mill – is transformed into a hot, fragrant, fully-cooked breakfast overnight in a crock pot while you sleep.

Good Food, Great Medicine classes

The 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 3rd edition of *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 three” – a whole food Mediterranean diet, daily activity, and enough sleep.
- Work through the 14 simple steps that target your risk factors and produce effective, lasting change in 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. Review progress, find solutions to challenges, and fine-tune personal action plans.

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| Time: | 6 – 8 pm Wednesday |
| Dates: | 2/3/16 (Part 1) and 2/10/16 (Part 2) |
| Location: | Providence St. Vincent Medical Center |
| Cost: | \$100 (2-class series) |
| Registration: | Call 503.291.1777 to reserve a spot |

Dr. Hassell's speaking events

1/7/2016 – Alaska Tanker Company: *How to Nourish Our Immune Systems During the Winter Months.* Beaverton, OR.

1/21/2016 – Claremont Golf Club: *The Lifestyle Prescription for Graceful Aging.* Portland, OR.

2/3/2016 and 2/10/2016 – Good Food, Great Medicine 2-part Lifestyle Change Class Series: Portland, OR. For registration information call our office at 503.291.1777.

Sign up for this free monthly food and lifestyle newsletter at Goodfoodgreatmedicine.com

“For unto you is born this day... a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:11 (KJV)