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Life Extension Update Exclusive

Diet plus exercise reverses metabolic syndrome in three weeks

A study published online on January 9 2005 in *The Journal of Applied Physiology* found that just three weeks of a high-fiber low fat diet combined with an exercise program reversed metabolic syndrome in half the participants who tried it. Metabolic syndrome is characterized by excessive abdominal fat, insulin resistance, high triglyceride levels and/or low high density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, and is frequently a precursor of type 2 diabetes.

Researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and Irvine enrolled 31 obese men for the current study. Thirteen subjects were diabetic, 15 had metabolic syndrome, and 3 men had neither, but were overweight or obese. Participants took part in a twenty-one day residential program at the Pritikin Longevity Center, where they were allowed unlimited amounts of low-fat natural foods. Protein was restricted to 15 to 20 percent of caloric intake, and was limited to plant, non-fat dairy, fish and poultry sources. The men spent 45 to 60 minutes per day exercising on a treadmill.

After three weeks on the program, the men were found to have lost two to three pounds per week, although they were still considered obese. Significant reductions in serum lipids, insulin, oxidative stress, inflammation, and leukocyte-endothelial interactions and adhesions were observed, with the percentage of men with metabolic syndrome decreasing from 48 to 19 percent, and the percentage of those with type 2 diabetes decreasing from 42 to 23 percent.

Lead researcher Christian Roberts of UCLA explained the findings: "The study shows, contrary to common belief, that Type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome can be reversed solely through lifestyle changes. This regimen reversed a clinical diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes or metabolic syndrome in about half the participants who had either of those conditions . . . The diet, combined with moderate exercise, improved many factors that contribute to heart disease and that are indirect measures of plaque progression in the arteries, including insulin resistance, high cholesterol, and markers of developing atherosclerosis."

"The results are all the more interesting because the changes occurred in the absence of major weight loss, challenging the commonly held belief that individuals must normalize their weight before achieving health benefits," Dr Roberts added.

The next step is to determine whether long-term lifestyle changes can halt or even reverse the end-organ damage so often seen with diabetes.

Protocol

Diabetes type II and the syndrome X connection

Some conditions are better managed with conventional medicine, and others have a better success rate using a natural approach. Type II diabetes appears to have an affinity for the natural, with remarkable gains reported. However, natural methods have little chance of succeeding without patient participation. This means the patient must refuse inappropriate foodstuffs, make time for exercise, and maintain weight within healthy standards. Diabetics should never blame themselves for their illness, but when the condition becomes manageable, the patient can justifiably claim much of the credit.

Results of the Finnish Diabetes Prevention Study (presented at the American Diabetes Association's 60th Annual Scientific Session in June 2000) illustrate the patient principle, i.e., the patient accepting much of the responsibility for the outcome of the disease process. The study showed that lifestyle modification (a structured dietary and exercise program) reduced the incidence of Type II diabetes by 58% in people at high risk for the disease.

It is difficult to overstate the benefits garnered from fiber in regard to blood glucose control. Eating a diet rich in high fiber foods has spared countless individuals the risks imposed by chronically elevated blood glucose and the rigors of aggressive antidiabetic therapy.

A study reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* involved diabetic patients consuming a diet supplying 25 grams of soluble fiber and 25 grams of insoluble. (This amount is about double the amount that is currently recommended by the ADA.) The fiber was derived from foodstuffs, with no emphasis placed on special or unusual fiber-fortified foods or fiber supplements. After 6 weeks, tests revealed that the high fiber diet had reduced blood glucose levels by an average of 10%; equally important, levels of circulating insulin were also reduced (Chandalia et al. 2000).

Fiber is also valuable to persons on diets because it produces a feeling of satiety, negating the desire to overeat.

<http://www.lef.org/protocols/prtcl-042.shtml>

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High blood sugar is implicated in the development of health problems. Few people realize, however, that even health conscious adults can experience higher than desired blood sugar levels as they age.

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Michael Ozner, MD, a cardiologist devoted to preventing heart disease, by Sue Kovach

Dr. Michael Ozner is somewhat of an iconoclast in the field of cardiology. His practice in Miami, FL, is dedicated exclusively to cardiovascular disease prevention, eschewing intervention procedures such as stents and coronary bypass surgery. His prescription for cardiac wellness and prevention is quite simple: "Eat a delicious meal of fish, whole grains, and fresh vegetables. Drink a glass of red wine. Take a nice walk, then take a nap. Relax with your family and friends. Do it all again tomorrow, and the next day, and the next, for the rest of your life."

The lifestyle prescription Dr. Ozner describes sounds like a vacation. Yet it is indeed a lifestyle and a prescription, one that has been shown to decrease the risk of cardiac events, control weight, and make life less stressful for those who choose to follow it.

http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2006/jan2006_profile_ozner_01.htm

If you have questions or comments concerning this issue or past issues of Life Extension Update, send them to ddye@lifeextension.com or call 954 202 7716.

For longer life,



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