



Emerald
Health and Education
Foundation

Health, Happiness,
Peace of Mind

A Chara:

One of the things relating to health that we are hearing more about is type 2 diabetes. In fact, this is becoming an epidemic in Ireland. While there are no exact figures, it is estimated there are over 200,000 type 2 diabetics in Ireland, with another 100,000 undiagnosed—about one out of every 14 people. This is a huge number, but at current trends of obesity levels, the number is expected to double in the next few years; some dismally predicting by 2010. Some hospitals are reporting a 20% increase per year. We have added a page to our web site (emeraldhef-ie.org) dealing with this subject

The most tragic part of this epidemic is that type 2 diabetes is largely a lifestyle related disease. Unbalanced diet, high in fats and sugars, along with sedentary lifestyle is implicated. Some of us are more prone than others to this condition because of inherited genes; but that is not the total picture.

Diabetes is divided into two categories; type 1 and type 2. Type 1 is a condition where the insulin producing cells in the pancreas are actually destroyed, so the body no longer has the capability of producing this vital hormone, without which the cells cannot absorb the needed glucose, or blood sugar. Currently there is no cure for type 1 diabetes, but there is effective treatment available.

Type 2 is a condition where there is insulin in the blood stream, but the cells become insulin resistant due to unbalanced blood chemistry, high levels of fat being the biggest contributor to this condition. The result of this is a gradual and continuing rise in blood sugar, with many serious complications as the years go on such as blindness, amputation of the feet, kidney failure, heart and blood vessel disease, nerve damage, stomach problems, and sexual impotence in men. It's like a snowball; the bigger the problem gets, the faster it grows.

It has been demonstrated repeatedly through lifestyle management programs that this condition can be contained, and often reversed, by lifestyle change. Often, within thirty days, a drastic change can be accomplished through lifestyle modification. The biggest aspects of this change are:

- 1) Decrease overall fat consumption to below 20% of total intake, greatly reducing or eliminating high fat animal products.
- 2) Increase the amounts of fruits, grains, vegetables and nuts in the diet.
- 3) Develop an ongoing, daily, exercise program.
- 4) Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day and seriously cut down or avoid the use of alcohol.

Serious consequences, like amputations, have been avoided by people who worked to establish and maintain these new lifestyle habits. Developing more healthful habits can and will protect those of us who are not challenged by this condition from developing it in the future, along with other serious disease processes like heart and blood vessel disease and cancer. One of the big benefits of a high fibre, plant based, diet is that it binds and carries many toxins and irritants out of the body quickly, thus protecting from exposure and absorption.

Don't become part of the epidemic! Tell your friends and family and be part of a growing movement toward intentional health and the happier life that goes with it—which is really the best craic!

Sincerely:

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