



The Diabetes, Cancer, Alzheimer's and Weight Loss Cure Hidden In Your Cupboard

When Hippocrates came out with the phrase “Your food is your medicine, your medicine is your food” little did he know how profound and relevant his words would be today. In modern society diseases like ***diabetes, obesity, cancer, Alzheimer's and cardiovascular disease*** have a significant affect on our health care system. However they ***have all been proven to be related to poor blood sugar balance and therefore can be prevented and treated with the help of food.***

While most of us realize the foods we eat provide the building blocks for our body, we sometimes forget these nutrients are used to produce hormones, enzymes and neurotransmitters. Therefore they regulate how we think and feel as well as how our body functions. One hormone in particular, which is associated with the development of chronic diseases as well as weight gain, is called insulin. In the body insulin controls blood sugar levels and regulates fat storage and metabolism. Anytime you eat your body secretes insulin, and the amount produced is directly dependant on the type of food consumed.

It is estimated that more than 33% of the population is resistant to insulin. This means their bodies have to produce more insulin than is healthy to maintain regular sugar levels. ***Signs of insulin resistance include; decreased energy, weight gain, mood swings, muscle loss, sugar cravings and increased appetite.*** In 1981 Dr. Jenkins developed a quantitative way of measuring the effect of food intake on insulin and blood sugar levels. The University of Sydney in Australia developed the idea further, put it into tables and the Glycemic Index was born.

What is The Glycemic Index?

Simply put the glycemic index measures how rapidly foods show up as sugar in the blood stream. Foods that result in elevated levels are called high glycemic index foods. These foods cause a corresponding rise in insulin levels, which contributes to abdominal fat, weight gain, sugar cravings, fatigue, increased appetite, mood swings and the chronic diseases previously mentioned. Since consuming low glycemic index foods lowers the amount of insulin produced, these foods help with weight loss and disease prevention.

Some ***low (i.e. good) glycemic index foods include; apples, berries, grapefruit, legumes, nuts, unsweetened oatmeal, green peas and tomatoes.*** ***High (i.e. bad) glycemic index foods include; candy, cookies, juices with***

added sugar, white potatoes, chips (corn and potato), sweetened cereal, sodas, breads and bagels and white rice.

While eating low glycemic index foods is essential in maintaining sugar balance, there are other foods which can also help. According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition eating good quality protein with meals (such as chicken, fish, beans and egg whites) promotes healthy insulin release and decreases rises in sugar after meals. Since fiber (flax seeds, beans, vegetables, psyllium) slows digestion it also can have a similar effect. However be sure to avoid coffee. Not only does it increase sugar and insulin levels, studies have indicated it increases the urge to eat sweets as well.

Vitamins and minerals such as B6, B12 and zinc have been shown to have a beneficial effect in the treatment of insulin resistance. As well herbs such as licorice and cinnamon also contribute to lower insulin levels. Stress relief and exercise are also key components and can have a significant effect on glycemic balance. Always consult your primary health care practitioner before beginning any exercise or nutritional regimen.

References available upon request.

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