



**Great Lakes
Naturopathic Centre**

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Wellness

REVIEW

Diabetes – The New Health Epidemic

Type 2 diabetes has become a worldwide health problem. There are approximately 890,000 Australians and 270,000 New Zealanders currently diagnosed with diabetes. In addition to these numbers, it is also predicted that there are thousands of people with undiagnosed diabetes. Type 2 diabetes was once only seen in adults over 40 years of age, however, it is now more and more common in younger people.

High Blood Sugar Levels: Too Much of a Good Thing!

Diabetes is a condition related to problems with blood sugar levels (also called blood glucose levels) and insulin levels. For proper bodily functioning, you need to be able to convert glucose (i.e. sugar) from your food into energy. The hormone that is required for glucose to enter into cells to be broken down is called insulin. Diabetic patients have problems with their insulin production, so when a diabetic patient eats sugar (e.g. from sweets, breads, cakes, biscuits, cereals) it cannot be converted into energy and stays in the blood, causing high blood glucose levels. Having high levels of glucose in your blood for prolonged periods of time can cause blindness, kidney problems, cardiovascular issues, and many other health complications.

The good news is that diabetes is avoidable if you focus on having a healthy diet and exercising regularly.

Risk Factors for Developing Diabetes

To find out if you are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you overweight?
- Do you have a family history of diabetes?
- Does your daily diet contain high amounts of sugars and/or refined carbohydrates?
- Do you have a sedentary lifestyle and lack regular exercise?

As well as these recognised risk factors, some early warning signs that may indicate your blood sugar levels could be a problem in the future include:

- Frequent sugar cravings.
- 2 to 4pm energy slump.
- Constant fatigue.
- Frequent urination and/or recurrent urinary tract infections.
- Trouble losing weight – especially weight around your waist.

If you answered 'YES' to any of these questions, or experience any of these early warning signs, speak to Tony today about how we can help you to prevent or manage diabetes.

Herbs and Nutrients Can Help

Natural Medicine may help with managing and preventing diabetes, by focusing on the main causes such as diet and lifestyle. If you are at risk of developing diabetes the following herbs and nutrients may also assist.

- Cinnamon (Cinnamomum cassia) - Cinnamon is commonly known as a spice used in cooking, however it is also a beneficial herbal medicine used to maintain normal healthy blood sugar levels by enhancing the function of the insulin made by your body.
- Korean Ginseng (Panax ginseng) - Korean Ginseng is a herb that may help to balance your blood sugar levels and boost energy production at the same time.
- Caiapo root (Ipomoea batatas) - Caiapo root is a whitesweet potato which is traditionally used in Japanese and Brazilian medicine for the maintenance of healthy blood sugar levels.
- Hops (Humulus lupulus) and Acacia (Acacia arabica) - Together these herbs may help control blood sugar levels.
- Chromium - Chromium is an important mineral that can help to regulate blood sugar levels. Having a deficiency in chromium may contribute to blood sugar problems.

Speak to Tony today about which herbs and nutrients may be beneficial for you.

Diet and Lifestyle Tips

As well as taking some of the Natural Medicines mentioned here, you can reduce your risk of developing diabetes by also implementing some dietary and lifestyle changes.

- Maintain a healthy weight. If you would like to lose some weight, ask us about the professional weight management program we offer.
- Eat small, regular meals containing protein rich foods such as fish, lean meat, legumes, nuts, and eggs to keep your blood sugar levels stable.
- Include plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds in your daily diet.
- Avoid eating too many overly processed and sugar containing foods – especially high carbohydrate foods like breads, cakes, biscuits and pastries. Save these foods for special occasions only.
- Limit alcohol consumption. Aim for a moderate intake of alcohol and have at least two alcohol free days per week.
- Include regular exercise into your lifestyle for healthy weight maintenance.

Take Control of Your Health Now!

By making some simple changes to your diet and lifestyle, and by taking the appropriate supplements, you may be able to prevent diabetes or better manage your existing diabetes.

Talk to Tony today to make an appointment and start to feel the health benefits!

