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# Ask the Naturopath: Change Your Blood Sugar, Naturally!

In college, I would fall asleep during lectures, scratching my arms to stay awake. Once, I even caught the gaze of a handsome young man only to find I had been drooling between my 30 seconds of conscious exhaustion and near coma experience. It was my mother, a natural health educator, who pointed out that my food habits since starting college were not very impressive compared to her home-cooked meals. She explained hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) to me, and I was a perfect match.

Mother was also wise enough to inform me that, if things didn't change, eventually the problem would become more serious, one of high blood sugar. After growing up on garden foods, whole grain casseroles, and something called bear mush for breakfast, switching over to fast food, tacos, pizza, unlimited pop and ice cream was not the healthiest expression of independence. She recommended a few herbs like Licorice root and Horseradish. I took them, cut back on processed foods, and within a few months, my energy returned. By the way, I stopped drooling, especially around men: not a very good first impression.

Never forgetting how miserable it felt to be hypoglycemic, my practice in natural health allowed me to encourage others with blood sugar imbalances. Some of the simple truths we've come to understand have caused clients to wonder, why doesn't everyone know this stuff? One client was so upset by the simplicity of how he regained his health that he thought I should turn my whole practice over to helping people with diabetes.

Here are a few things you should know: Sugar may not be your friend, but artificial sugar is one of the fastest ways to ruin your health. This is well stated by a wonderful Naturopathic Doctor and Mt. Pleasant native, Kendra Pearsall, in her book "Sweet Deception." There are natural sugar alternatives that the major food industry does not want you to know about. For example, the herb Stevia is 30 times sweeter than sugar and is high in the mineral chromium that helps to nourish the pancreas, your blood sugar-regulating gland. Also, consider Agave, a sweet natural syrup that does not cause a rise in your blood sugar.

Through experience, the greatest problem for most Americans is our overconsumption of wheat products. Originally, wheat was a great grain full of nutrients and very digestible. Because we use hybrids for greater crop yields and, now, genetic modifications for pest control, wheat is no longer a friend to the human digestive tract. This is especially true for those with allergies and bowel troubles, and it's even more of a problem for those with blood sugar issues.

Let's get down to the cell level to understand what is happening. Foods are broken down to glucose, the fuel that runs every cell in your body. In order for the cell to be fed, the glucose needs a key to "unlock" the cell receptor site for this transaction to occur. That key is insulin. We are finding that insulin, for many people, is being made by the pancreas but, for some reason, is ineffective at delivering glucose to the cell.

Here is what has happened. Each cell receptor site is a unique configuration. One site serves to dock estrogen and another progesterone. Some cell receptor sites receive calcium, and so on. With over 60,000 cell receptor sites, it's like watching a science fiction movie about a deep space station with all the transport ships coming and going to their specific docks. When the insulin attempts to dock the glucose with the thousand or more dock sites available just for insulin, it can't because the modified wheat protein now fits or gums up the site intended for the insulin. This was not a problem until wheat was modified. With insulin being ineffective at all the gummed-up sites, the cells do not get fed, and the sugar (glucose) stays in the blood; now, it's called high blood sugar. The starving cells die, and the person suffers from poor circulation, eye, kidney, and reproductive dysfunctions.

Although many people feel hopeless to live with their degenerating situation, we feel, from experience, there is plenty of hope. Work to remove all wheat from the diet; this includes pasta, cereal, bread, flour, and many sauces that are surprisingly made with wheat. Replace the wheat with non-modified wheat products like Ezekiel bread; use the grain spelt, which is grown abundantly in Michigan and is similar in taste to wheat. Introduce grains like millet and quinoa, which help repair and clean up the gummed cells. There are products that specifically clean the cells, like herbs and essential oils, for those who need to experience fast results.

Here's a challenge for you: remove wheat for 90 days and see how you feel. Typical results: significant reduction in abdominal bloating, more energy, less inflammation of joints, reduced body aches, weight release, and a better balance of blood sugar. At some point, each of us must become responsible for our own health. Focus on the benefits of feeling good; it can be tough, and yet, there are people who are ready to help you.