

XYNERGY HEALTH INFORMATION

Could a low calorie diet be the answer to Type 2 diabetes?

Researchers from Newcastle University recently published a study indicating that a low calorie diet can remove fat clogging up the pancreas thus allowing normal insulin secretion to be restored.

The trial – funded by Diabetes UK - was carried out on eleven people suffering from Type 2 diabetes. By cutting their food intake back to 600 calories a day for two months, all patients reversed their condition. Three months later, seven people remained diabetes free.

What is Type 2 diabetes? (Extract from Diabetes UK)

Type 2 diabetes develops when the body can still make some insulin, but not enough, or when the insulin that is produced does not work properly (known as insulin resistance).

Insulin acts as a key unlocking the cells, so if there is not enough insulin, or it is not working properly, the cells are only partially unlocked (or not at all) and glucose builds up in the blood.

Type 2 diabetes usually appears in people over the age of 40, though it is South Asian and black people who are at greater risk. But it can often appear from the age of 25. It is also increasingly becoming more common in children, adolescents and young people of all ethnicities.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for between 85 and 95 per cent of all people with diabetes and is treated with a healthy diet and increased physical activity. In addition to this, medication and/or insulin is often required.

Professor Roy Taylor of Newcastle University who led the study, said: "These eleven people were put on a 600-calorie-a-day diet, consisting of liquid diet drinks and non-starchy vegetables. They were monitored alongside a control group of people without diabetes over eight weeks. After just one week, the Newcastle University team found that their pre-breakfast blood sugar levels had returned to normal.

As ever with these studies more research needs to be done but it does hint at a radical departure from the conventional thinking that people with Type 2 diabetes had the condition for life and it would steadily worsen over time. With this research, patients were free from the illness after just eight weeks.

A special MRI scan revealed that the fat levels in the pancreas had returned from an elevated level to normal (from around 8% to 6%). Furthermore, the pancreas regained

the normal ability to make insulin and as a result, blood sugar after meals steadily improved.

When the patients were then followed-up three months later, they had all returned to eating normally but had received advice on portion size and healthy eating. Of the people re-tested, seven remained free from diabetes.

Xynergy comment: Another plus for the diet over drugs debate. 600 calories a day is quite a dietary regime to stick to. No doubt any of the green superfoods – Spirulina, Chlorella, Wheat Grass and Barley Grass - would help as their calorific value is very low yet their nutrient delivery is good. And, they would support energy levels. It is not clear why some people are susceptible to Type 2 diabetes whilst others are not despite high calorie intake. Cutting out the carbs and therefore the calories would probably be a good idea as a preventative measure. Once again, green superfoods should be part of a calorie-reduced diet. Xynergy's selection of green superfoods can be found in the Super Supplements category on the website.