



Sugar imbalances.

Sadly we live in such a fast paced society that, inevitably, a lot of the foods we eat today are pre-packaged. These pre-packaged foods contain preservatives and additives that may cause negative effects to our general well being. When we look at the salt, sugar and fat content in a lot of the products bought off the shelf, it's no wonder that sugar imbalances in the body are becoming one of the fastest growing health problems of today.

Insulin resistance is a common disorder in which the receptors on the surface of the cells become insensitive to insulin, they become so used to the high levels of insulin that they become desensitised, leading to insufficient uptake of glucose into the cells to be used to give us energy and to support the brain etc. Some of the causes of this disorder are excess refined carbohydrates i.e. white flours, white sugars, lack of exercise and weight excess. Symptoms of fatigue, mental fogginess, shakiness, mood changes and an insatiable hunger for carbohydrates are common in relation to Insulin resistance.

Hypoglycaemia is another disorder that is quite close to my heart. Many years ago I was on holiday with one of my relatives who was having a terrible time with mood fluctuations, tears one minute,

snappy the next. I asked her if she was eating a lot of sugar and of course she said she couldn't get through the day without chocolate. In relation to iridology, orange colour in the iris indicates the genetic potential of sugar imbalances, whether or not this occurs is up to you and how you live your life. In this case, my relative had quite a bit of orange pigment in her iris. So we changed her diet and eventually she became stable again. What is hypoglycaemia? It's when the blood sugar levels are too low and this causes strong cravings for sugar or chocolate for example. Due to the glucose levels being too low, the body starts to pump out hormones to rapidly raise the blood sugar levels and protect the brain's supply of glucose. This in turn may cause shaking, anxiety, palpitations and sweating. Sleep disturbances are common, overwhelming mental and physical fatigue, foggy brain, irritability and rapid mood changes. What can you do to help this? Eat small meals often, and graze though out the day, there are also helpful supplements which I will talk about at the end of this column, sugar needs to be reduced along with replacing the refined carbohydrates with complex carbohydrates.

Lastly I'm going to write about diabetes which is a breakdown in the body's ability to utilise glucose in the blood efficiently. The body fails to produce sufficient levels of the hormone insulin or use the little it does generate. Insulin is needed to carry glucose into the muscles to provide energy. Left untreated, the glucose builds up in the bloodstream, resulting in high blood sugar levels that may cause serious damage to the kidneys, nerves, skin, eyes and increase the risk of heart disease. Type 1 Diabetes is the least common and is usually diagnosed during childhood or early adulthood and must be treated with insulin by injection. Type 2 Diabetes is the most common, and its prevalence increases with age, lack of exercise and excess weight.

What can you do to help? Diet and exercise can have a positive impact on all of the above, aim for a low fat diet, especially avoid saturated fats, increase fibre and reduce salt, with the emphasis on the right carbohydrates and the timing of your intake. Carbohydrate foods vary in their effect on blood glucose, this is measured by the Glycaemic Index, a ranking of foods from 0 to 100 that tells us whether a food will raise blood sugar dramatically, moderately, or just a little, you can get this chart on the net and it can help you plan your meals.

Aim at three meals a day with snacks in between (eating the right things of course) to spread your carbohydrate intake over the entire day. Regular exercise will help make your muscles more sensitive to insulin and improve weight loss. Eat plenty of raw food with meals to increase your fibre, for example the fruit Bitter Melon may reduce excessive blood sugar levels and improve glucose tolerance in type 2 diabetics. The herb *Gymnema sylvestre* may be beneficial to those with elevated blood sugar levels and also reduces cravings for sugar, Cinnamon may also help. Chromium picolinate helps the cells communicate better with insulin, facilitating its uptake into the cells for use and is found in Brewer's yeast and liver.

If feel you need help to balance your glucose metabolism, find a good practitioner to give you the care you need or contact the Diabetic Association of SA, they are a lovely group of people only to pleased to help.

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