

Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



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Top 20 Diabetes Questions Answered



Confusion, misinformation, and unanswered questions can make it difficult to take charge of your blood sugar. But a better understanding of the triggers and remedies can pave the way to success.

Over the years, I've been asked many questions by my patients about type 2 diabetes. I've also given educational presentations to other health professionals and, perhaps surprisingly, some of them have asked me some of the same questions. In this issue, I'm answering the most common questions I've been asked.

Some of my answers cover basic principles that can enable you to reverse — and prevent — type 2 diabetes. Others address very specific items, such as alcoholic drinks or red meat. Misinformation about these can cause confusion or become stumbling blocks when you start making changes to enhance your health.

Altogether, I hope my answers help to fill in some gaps in the information you have about the diet and lifestyle approach I recommend. It's an approach that has helped so many diabetics regain control of

their blood sugar and live a healthier life, and has helped others to avoid the disease.

We're continually bombarded with dietary advice, so much so that it can become overwhelming. And often, data from different sources is conflicting.

To help you make sense of things for yourself, I've also included some questions as food for thought, so to speak. Why the French could eat ample saturated fat and have less heart disease than people eating low-fat diets in this country is an example. Understanding these types of things helps to create context for new information we're constantly exposed to.

I've always aimed to help my patients develop some critical

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE:
How to Enhance Your
Health Throughout 2023**

thinking skills so that they can more easily evaluate nutritional information in the world around them. And my intent in including some food-for-thought questions is to help you do the same.

Most of the information about type 2 diabetes in today’s healthcare system is about “managing” the disease. You don’t hear much about reversing it. In fact, many health professionals believe that once a person is diagnosed with type 2 diabetes,

it’s a one-way street to worsening health. But this simply isn’t so.

In case you’re wondering, for anyone who doesn’t have diabetes, the same approach I recommend below will help you steer clear of the disease. I also recommend familiarizing yourself with the earlier issues of this newsletter that are listed in *Related to This Topic* on page 8, for details about my recommended diet.

Now, I’ll cut to the chase and start answering some questions.

1. Can I really fully reverse my diabetes?

There is no medical definition of “reversing” diabetes. So, I want to be really clear about what I mean when I talk about reversing it.

If you think of “reverse” as restoring your blood-sugar metabolism to the way it worked when you were a perfectly healthy child, I don’t think that’s realistic.

However, if you think of “reverse” as getting your blood sugar into a healthy range, without relying on blood-sugar drugs or insulin, this is an achievable goal for many — perhaps even most — people.

It depends on how much damage has been caused. When A1C — the indicator of average blood sugar during the past three months — is above 6.5, type 2 diabetes is causing damage in every capillary and every organ. The longer this has been going on, the more damage has occurred, so it’s harder to reverse. The sooner you take action, the better.

In addition to A1C, fasting blood sugar is also routinely monitored as an indicator of diabetes incidence and progression.

Regardless of how long blood-sugar markers have been elevated, either in a diabetic or prediabetic range, improvement is always possible. If you make dietary and

Dr. Marlene’s NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

Editorial Director Vera Tweed
Art Director Jody Levitan
Copy Editor James Naples

For subscriptions and customer service inquiries:
877-300-7849
support@primalhealthlp.com

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3100 Technology Drive, Suite 200, Plano, Texas 75074

Truly Healthy Blood-Sugar Levels

Below are the two routine measures of blood sugar. For each one, I’ve included what is considered diabetic, prediabetic (at high risk for diabetes), normal per today’s healthcare standards, and what is actually optimal.

Keep in mind that “normal” numbers are based on levels of most people who aren’t prediabetic or diabetic, which is *not* the same as optimal. The person with normal levels simply doesn’t have diabetes at the time of the test. But the one with optimal levels is much less likely to become diabetic in the future. Optimal levels provide some protection against future blood-sugar problems.

Test	Diabetic	Prediabetic	Normal	Optimal
A1C	6.5% or above	5.7 – 6.4%	Below 5.7%	Below 5.5%
Fasting blood glucose	126 mg/dL or above	100–125 mg/dL	99 mg/dL or lower	85–92 mg/dL

What to aim for: The optimal numbers in the far-right column are ideal, but all improvement is beneficial. If your numbers are in the diabetic or prediabetic range and drop to the normal range, recognize that this is an important achievement and strive to reach the optimal levels.

lifestyle changes and the markers I've mentioned drop into normal ranges, damage stops or is reduced, and healing can take place.

This is a practical way to measure reversal. Can it be done? Absolutely! This also holds true for people who are taking diabetes drugs or using insulin. Worst case, they will need only a fraction of the medications or insulin.

Before I move on to the next question, there's some important information I want you to have about what underlies type 2 diabetes.

How Diabetes Develops

It takes at least 20 years for type 2 diabetes to develop. Along the way, there is progressive damage to blood vessels, the brain, the pancreas, and other systems.

As an analogy, think of prediabetes as someone getting close to the edge of a cliff, and diabetes as someone who has fallen over the edge. Reversing the process is like pulling the prediabetic away from the cliff's edge or giving a rope to the diabetic and pulling them back up.

The "rope" is a low-carb diet. The damage that leads to diabetes is caused by an overload of carbohydrates, and there is no substitute for reducing that overload. Exercise and stress management are also essential, and supplements can correct nutritional deficiencies and enhance the results of your efforts.

All these steps will take the pressure off your system and enable repair to take place. The same steps will also correct the basic underlying trigger of type 2 diabetes: insulin resistance.

Insulin is the hormone that enables your body to move glucose

out of the blood and into cells, where it can be used to generate energy. Before blood sugar rises, cells become resistant to insulin. In an effort to overcome this problem, your body produces more and more insulin. This keeps blood-sugar levels low for a while, but eventually they rise. Both high insulin and high blood sugar cause damage in your body.

If your blood sugar is normal and you want it to stay that way, I recommend getting your fasting insulin level tested. This isn't part of a routine health check, but you can request it. An optimal insulin level is under 6 mIU/mL (milli-international units per milliliter).

A study of nearly 1,000 people in Arizona found that significantly higher levels of insulin — around 25 mIU/mL — are common enough to be considered "normal." And the higher levels can make prediabetes five times as likely.¹

If you are taking diabetes medications or using insulin and start a diet and lifestyle program, work with your doctor to reduce doses. Diet and lifestyle changes *do* work, and if drug and insulin doses are not adjusted as you progress, blood sugar can drop too low.

2. Why does my RD not seem to know what you know?

An RD is a registered dietitian who is licensed to provide nutritional counseling in medical and other settings and may also be called a diabetes educator. Doctors often refer diabetic patients to RDs for dietary counseling.

The typical objective of RDs is to manage diabetes rather than to reverse it. Managing the condition

can help to keep diabetics alive, with the use of insulin, which has value. However, it's quite different from restoring health and reversing the disease in the sense that I've described.

Unfortunately, the food industry sponsors a lot of conferences and educational programs for RDs. This affects the type of information that they are exposed to.

Triggers of High Blood Sugar

A low-carb diet of whole foods lays the foundation for healthy blood sugar, and there is no substitute for it. In addition, these other factors can contribute to high blood sugar:

- Stress
- Lack of exercise
- Lack of sleep or poor sleep, especially with untreated sleep apnea
- Medications

There are many medications that may raise blood sugar in some people. These are some widely used ones:

- Corticosteroids for pain, asthma, and allergies
- Beta-blockers for high blood pressure or an irregular heartbeat
- Statins for lowering cholesterol
- Fluoroquinolones (antibiotics) to treat infections
- Antipsychotics for mental illnesses
- Decongestants for colds

If you're struggling with blood sugar and take one of these medications, talk to your doctor about other options. If you take other medications and wonder if they could be affecting your blood sugar, ask your pharmacist.

Through lobbying and funding, the food industry has significantly influenced the development of food guidelines that contribute to diabetes, such as the movement to eat a low-fat diet that is high in carbs.

In a nutshell, the training of RDs is typically based on faulty premises — replacing fat with carbohydrates, for example. This is the approach that got most Americans into an unhealthy state during the past few decades.

3. How come a calorie isn't just a calorie?

Calories from different sources do vastly different things in our bodies. In simple terms, fats make us feel full while carbs make us hungry.

The underlying mechanism is this: Carbs raise blood sugar and stimulate the release of insulin. Eating a lot of carbs stimulates a lot of insulin production, and soon after eating, this causes blood sugar to quickly drop to low levels that make us hungry again. Insulin also promotes storage of calories as fat, instead of being used to produce energy.

If you eat more fat and less carbs, blood sugar doesn't rise as much, less insulin is released, and you feel full and have energy for a longer period of time. You don't soon get cravings or feel "hangry" — irritable or mentally foggy until you eat again.

The high insulin from eating a lot of carbs leads to weight gain and makes it impossible to lose weight. High insulin also stimulates chronic inflammation.

I don't recommend choosing food by calorie count because it makes a 100-calorie packet of

cookies seem like a good snack. But it will stimulate insulin and make you hungry soon afterward. If you eat a snack of fresh, naturally low-carb food (any vegetable, for example) with some fat, it will satisfy you and help to keep your energy stable, so that you don't crave more high-carb food soon afterward.

4. Why are you saying to not eat low-fat?

If you avoid fat, carbs become the default substitute — typically processed, low-fat grain foods. In addition to making you hungry and lacking essential nutrients, those low-fat foods make insulin levels rise too high. This is unhealthy for the reasons I described in question 3.

The only other fat replacement would be extra protein. But if you eat too much protein, it will eventually work internally in the

same way as carbs, triggering high insulin, hunger, and fat storage. Fat doesn't trigger any rise in blood sugar or any insulin production.

What most people don't realize is that before fat was demonized, the average American ate a diet that was 40-percent fat. And we didn't have an epidemic of obesity and diabetes.

5. Why don't you recommend counting net carbs?

The term "net carbs" was invented by the food industry. It led to a whole new category of processed foods that have been heavily marketed to people who are trying to follow low-carb diets.

The underlying premise is that if a food contains fiber, the fiber slows down the digestion of carbs and offsets their effect on blood sugar. Put another way, the claim behind net carbs is that fiber in

About Dr. Marlene

Dr. Marlene Merritt's passion for natural medicine is fueled by her drive to help others and by her own experience of overcoming a debilitating heart condition, diagnosed at the age of 20. A competitive cyclist at the time, she suddenly began experiencing severe chest pains. Forced to quit the sport, she suffered from fatigue and chest pain for another 15 years, despite doing everything that conventional, Western medical doctors told her to do.

And then, the tide turned. A physician trained in naturopathic healing recommended a whole-food vitamin E supplement. A week after starting the supplement regimen, her energy began to return, and the pain began to disappear.

Dr. Marlene is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, has a Master's degree and is board-certified in Nutrition, and is board-certified in Functional Medicine. She is certified in the Bredesen MEND Protocol™, a groundbreaking method of addressing Alzheimer's disease, and is a Proficiency Diplomate in the Shoemaker CIRS protocol for treatment of mold-related illness. She is the author of *Smart Blood Sugar* and *The Blood Pressure Solution*, and co-author of *The Perfect Sleep Solution*. After 31 years in private clinical practice, she now focuses on writing and educating health professionals and consumers to reach more people and positively impact their health.



a food product cancels the effect of some of the carbs, making it possible to eat desserts and other carb-rich foods without suffering the consequences.

This isn't real. Even if a food contains fiber, your body will still react to the carbs and will produce excess blood sugar and insulin.

Before coming to see me, many of my patients had tried to lose weight or reverse diabetes by counting net carbs — and failed. When they reduced total carbs as I recommend, they succeeded.

6. What's the deal with high- and low-glycemic food?

A high-glycemic food raises blood sugar quickly, while a food that is low-glycemic triggers a slower rise. At least that's how it works when individual foods are tested on people in a research lab.

In the real world, this is not a practical way of looking at food because we usually eat a combination of foods, rather than isolated ones, and this changes their effect. The way food is prepared, whether it's more or less ripe, and individual metabolism also influence blood-sugar response. In addition, categorizing food this way ignores the impact of portion size.

Although low-glycemic foods were once touted for diabetics, the American Diabetic Association no longer recommends following this approach.

7. Why do you measure only total carbs and not added sugar?

Surveys of consumers show that avoiding added sugar is one of the most popular ways that people

try to eat in a healthier way. But it isn't enough to look for added sugar on food labels.

Added sugar is not the only culprit that contributes to diabetes and poor health. All carbs do if they're eaten in excess. You could skip added sugar and still get an overload of carbs from starch in grains such as corn, wheat, and rice, and sugar that occurs naturally in fruit, fruit juices, and milk.

8. Why do you say fruit is a problem?

Fruit contains fructose, which turns into body fat faster than

regular table sugar, and large amounts of fructose can damage the liver. It's easy to overeat fruit because it's sweet. But if you eat too much of it, fruit can contribute to weight gain.

"Fruits and vegetables" are often viewed as one category of food but they are not. I've often seen people who don't like vegetables eat too much fruit and wonder why they can't lose weight.

My general guideline is to eat twice as many vegetables as fruit. Berries are especially good because they are lower in carbs than most other types of fruit.

The Best Way to Track Blood Sugar

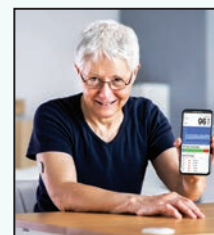
If you want to lower your blood sugar, a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) is by far the most effective tool to help you succeed. CGMs eliminate the need for finger-prick blood tests. Instead, they use a sensor on your body to continually track your blood sugar and show your read-outs on a smartphone. Whenever you want to check your level, just look at your phone.

With the traditional finger-prick method, you get only snapshots of levels each time you test a blood sample. But there is no practical way to see how different aspects of your life influence your blood sugar.

Each of us has unique reactions to different foods, portions, how often and when we eat, physical activity, amount of sleep, medications, and stress. And it's impossible to take and test samples of blood enough times during a day to see all this.

Continuous glucose monitoring gives you a window into the internal working of your metabolism and records your levels, so that you can see your history

and trends on your phone. It's the only way to really experience what is affecting your blood sugar and to monitor the results of changes you make.



What About Cost?

Unfortunately, private or government insurance is not likely to cover the cost for people who are not diabetic and dependent on insulin. If you pay out of pocket, CGMs can be pricey. However, Freestyle Libre is one brand that aims to be affordable. Costs can run less than \$100 a month, and pharmacies in big-box stores may offer deeper discounts. It pays to shop around.

If you're struggling with blood sugar, it makes sense to monitor your levels closely as you take steps to correct the situation. Once you achieve a healthy range and maintain it for a while, you won't need to keep using a CGM forever.

9. What about alcohol?

There's a common misconception that alcohol turns into sugar. It doesn't.

Distilled spirits, such as vodka, whiskey, gin, tequila, brandy, and rum, contain no carbs. A 1.5-ounce shot of any of these contains about 100 calories. But cocktails also contain other ingredients that add carbs. For example, a margarita has about 11 grams of carbs.

A glass of wine can contain about 2 to 4 grams of carbs. A can or bottle of regular beer contains about 13 grams, but there are also many low-carb beers.

In terms of carbs, alcohol doesn't seem that bad. However, a recent Harvard study of 400,000 people found that even moderate drinking is not, in fact, beneficial for our health. The study details are on page 10.

10. What are the best sweeteners?

If you're adding a sweetener to food or drink at home, stevia, monk fruit, or xylitol are my top recommendations. For drinks, liquid stevia is my favorite, as it doesn't have the same aftertaste as other stevia sweeteners.

Liquid stevia can be plain or flavored. You can buy it in small bottles and take it with you when you eat out to add to coffee, tea, or plain sparkling water. I've used SweetLeaf for years but there are many other brands.

Many people think that coconut sugar, honey, agave syrup, fruit concentrates, or other alternatives to plain table sugar are healthy, but they are all rich in carbs — just like plain white sugar.

11. Where do supplements fit in?

Deficiencies of essential vitamins and minerals interfere with the normal conversion of blood sugar into energy and disrupt other processes of healthy metabolism. It isn't realistic or necessary to test levels of every nutrient, but do guard against shortfalls.

B vitamins, for example, are essential for producing energy, which blood sugar is used for. And trace minerals, such as chromium and vanadium, are especially important. Chromium has been shown to improve insulin sensitivity and help to normalize blood sugar.² The best way to guard against a shortfall of these is by taking a multivitamin.

Magnesium, which is used for more than 300 processes in the human body, is typically low in diabetics and in people with elevated blood sugar. I recommend adding a powdered magnesium supplement to a water bottle and sipping it throughout the day. If you get loose stools, it means you've taken too much, so cut back a bit. If that doesn't work for you, try a topical form of magnesium in a skin cream, as it is well absorbed through skin.

Herbs can also help to lower blood sugar. Top ones include gymnema sylvestre, banaba leaf, and white mulberry leaf. For details on how to use these, I recommend checking an earlier issue about supplements for diabetics, listed in the chart on page 8.

When taken in addition to following a healthy diet, supplements can help to speed up beneficial effects. However, they can't replace a healthy, low-carb diet.

12. How come the Japanese can eat rice?

Rice is a staple in Japan, yet obesity and diabetes rates are low. This may seem mysterious until you look at the entire traditional Japanese diet, which contains the least amount of carbs of any industrialized nation. Rice portions are small, eaten only if people are hungry; rice is not used as a plate filler, as it is in this country. People bike and walk a lot. And there is a public health campaign that encourages maintaining a healthy weight.

When Japanese people adopt American eating habits, they gain weight and become more prone to diabetes.

Did You Know?

About half the fat in breast milk is saturated fat. The mammary glands are designed to produce the milk this way.³

13. Why don't you recommend a plant-based diet?

I'm all for a plant-based diet in the literal sense, as I've always recommended eating a lot of (unprocessed) vegetables. However, "plant-based" has come to mean "plant-only," and it isn't necessarily healthy.

Corn and soy are plants, and they are widely used to make junk food. Potato chips, processed grain foods, hard candy, and sodas are made from plants. Table sugar is made from sugarcane or sugar beets, which are plant foods.

Many vegetarians eat a diet of processed, starchy foods instead of fresh vegetables. Marketing plays a big role by promoting highly

processed, high-carbs foods that are made from plants as healthy options, when they aren't.

14. If you do too much dieting, can it harm your thyroid?

Yes. This is especially true if you focus on cutting calories without limiting carbs and not eating enough healthy fats and essential nutrients. Some of the most striking evidence comes from *The Biggest Loser* TV show, in which contestants lost enormous amounts of weight with extreme, low-calorie diets and grueling exercise regimens. After the camera crews left, almost all regained the weight. Some ended up being heavier than they were before the diet.⁴

15. If dairy fat is so bad, why do Scandinavians do well?

Scandinavians and Northern Europeans can thrive on dairy foods because long ago, their ancestors domesticated animals and started drinking milk. And their genes evolved to easily digest dairy. This also happened in some African countries. Today, people who aren't descended from those regions don't have the genetic make-up to digest dairy well.

The fat in dairy is not the cause of the problem. The recommendation for low-fat dairy is part of the low-fat diet theory, which has led to our obesity and diabetes epidemics.

16. If saturated fat is so bad, why do the French have less heart disease?

The French are just one illustration of the fact that saturated fat needs

to be part of a healthy diet. They eat it in butter, cheese, rich sauces, meat and poultry, and pastries.

It's also true that their overall way of eating is different from ours. Harmful hydrogenated fats, and processed foods in general, didn't gain popularity in France. Nor did eating on the go or in front of a TV or computer.

The French prefer fresh food, produced locally rather than on industrial farms, and they take time to prepare delicious dishes for everyday meals.

They eat slowly, with friends or family, at a table, with small portions of a variety of foods. So, the overall quality of their meals is higher. But saturated fat is never shunned. It's the overall French way of eating that makes the difference in their health.

17. If red meat is so bad, how did cultures who ate it survive?

The meat was raised and eaten differently. Before the dawn of factory farms, people hunted and ate free-range bison and deer.

The animals were not kept in pens. They weren't fattened up with hormones and antibiotics. They ate grass instead of today's starchy corn and soy feed grown with pesticides and herbicides that can remain in the animal's fat.

The free-range animals had less body fat, but the fat they did have was of higher quality, with more of the anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats that we now know are beneficial. By today's standards, this meat would be organic and pasture-raised. While meat of this type is

Best and Worst Fats

The best fats are found in nature and are among the essential types of nutrients that our bodies need. They fall into two major categories: liquid fats and solid fats.

- Liquid fats include extra virgin olive oil, avocado oil, other oils from plants, and oil in fish.
- Solid fats are saturated fats, such as butter and coconut oil, and fat in meat and poultry (especially in the skin). They are also found in fish.

We need both solid and liquid fats for different functions in our bodies. Saturated fats are building blocks of every cell membrane. However, we eat too many liquid oils.

What to Do

Replace liquid cooking oils with solid fats such as butter or coconut oil. If you don't like the taste of coconut, use

refined coconut oil, which has a neutral taste. Eat some pasture-raised meat and chicken with the skin.



Hydrogenated Fat: The Worst Type

Hydrogenated fats are liquid plant oils that are chemically altered to become solid. They are used in place of butter, which costs more, in foods such as supermarket baked goods, cake frosting, frozen pie crusts, cookie dough, and ready-to-bake buns and croissants. Vegetable shortening is hydrogenated fat. Hydrogenated fat is typically used to fry food in most restaurants.

What to Look for on Food Labels

Ignore any claims that a food is healthy. Read the ingredients list and if you see the word "hydrogenated," leave the product on the shelf.

available today, it makes up a tiny part of what's sold in stores.

People ate meat differently, too. They ate organs, which are ten times as nutritious as muscle meats. And they didn't eat their meat on a bun made of refined, bleached flour with a sugary drink.

Red meat, as nature made it, is a healthy food. But most of our meat is adulterated and eaten with unhealthy processed carbs and sugary drinks.

18. Can I just take fish oil to make up for unhealthy fats in my diet?

Sorry, no. We need a balance of liquid and solid fats. However, the American diet contains an overload of liquid fats — in processed food and cooking oils in our kitchens — and too few saturated fats. Fish oil is a liquid fat and will add to this imbalance.

That said, the omega-3 fats in

fish oil are anti-inflammatory and help to balance out inflammatory omega-6 fats in refined oils, so it's a good supplement to take. But at the same time, eat less processed food and cook with butter or coconut oil. And maybe eat some real bacon occasionally.

19. Why do men get man boobs and a beer belly?

Their levels of insulin are too high because they eat too many carbs. Excess insulin causes testosterone to be converted into estrogen, which leads to man boobs and belly fat.

In women, high insulin leads to excess testosterone. This can cause male-pattern hair loss and/or PCOS: polycystic ovary syndrome.⁵

In both cases, reducing carbs will lower insulin to healthier levels and will help to reverse the symptoms.

20. Do I have to exercise?

Regular exercise can double the results of a low-carb diet in correcting elevated insulin and blood sugar and reversing diabetes. The best exercise, which is especially effective at reducing blood-sugar levels in diabetics and healthy people, is interval training. It simply means working at high intensity for one or more minutes, followed by low-intensity movement for the same period of time, and repeating that cycle.⁶ You can do it while walking.

Resistance training is also beneficial. It enhances the uptake of blood sugar by muscles, helping to lower levels in the blood. It helps to both prevent and reverse diabetes.⁷

A Final Word

All the things that I've mentioned above have helped my patients to avoid or reverse diabetes and enhance their health in many other ways, such as having more energy, a better mood, less joint pain, and a variety of other improvements.


To succeed in any endeavor to enhance your health, it's vital to understand how different things in life, including diet, affect you. And then, you can take the steps that will bring about the best results for you.

Related to This Topic

These are some earlier issues of this newsletter that address related topics:

Related Topic	Volume	Issue	Title
Blood Sugar	5	6	New Blood Sugar Dangers: What to Do
Interval Training	5	11	Walking: How to Get the Most Benefit (page 10)
Supplements	5	2	How to Use Supplements to Prevent and Reverse Diabetes
Insulin	4	10	Insulin: The Overlooked Health Marker (page 8)
Diabetes	2	4	Type 2 Diabetes: The Roadmap to Recovery
Healthy Fat	4	11	Healthy Fats: Deadly Myths and Life-Saving Facts
Healthy Meat	3	2	The Diabetic's Guide to Eating Meat
Healthy Carbs	3	6	The Diabetic's Guide to Eating Carbs
Multivitamins	2	8	Do You Really Need a Multivitamin?
Stress	4	6	How to Conquer Hidden Stress (page 8)

Access these online by logging in to www.NaturalHealthConnections.com.



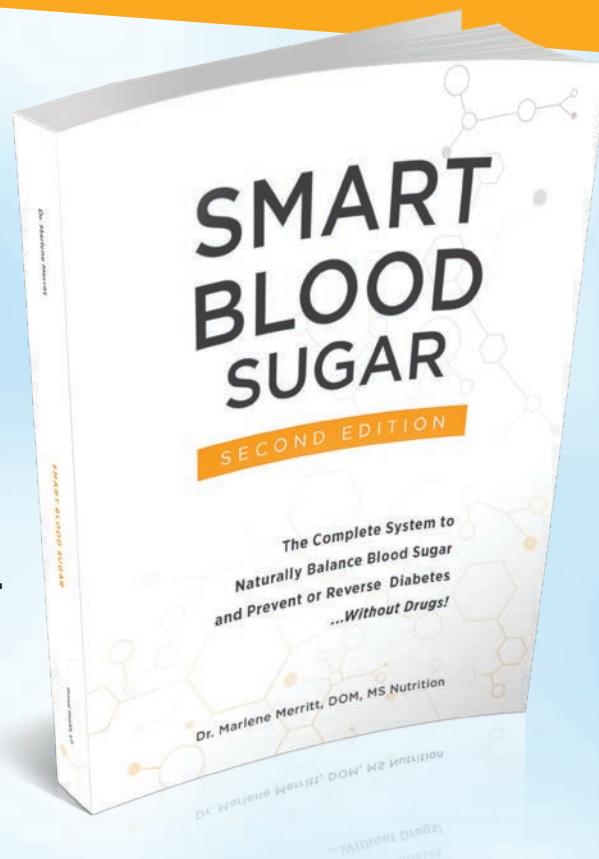
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Dr. Marlene Discovers “Insulin Switch” That Stops Blood Sugar Spikes



This blood sugar “switch” is built into every cell of the body and, when it is flipped “ON”...

- Blood sugar returns to the healthy range
- Weight is shed from belly, neck, arms, and thighs
- Energy levels return to normal
- Sleep becomes easy again



Dr. Marlene has been helping people repair their blood sugar for the last 15 years.

Just like Arthur Mabee, who was suffering from high blood sugar. His insulin levels were so high, the blood vessels in his eyes began bursting. He was severely overweight and suffering from heart problems. Arthur’s doctor wanted to put him on Metformin...

That’s when Arthur discovered Dr. Marlene’s best-selling book, **Smart Blood Sugar**. “I said, ‘Well, I’m going to order this book because this doctor knows exactly what she’s talking about,’” Arthur explained.

In just three days of using Dr. Marlene’s **Smart Blood Sugar** program, Arthur began to feel changes in his body. He gained more energy, his memory improved, he began sleeping 8 to 12 hours per night—and best of all—he lost 118 pounds since reading the book.

“I’ve improved my health 190%... I no longer have diabetes. I no longer have a pre-diabetic condition,” shared Arthur. “My eyes have even cleared up. This has definitely helped me more than anything I’ve ever done in my life.”



Did you see that? Arthur no longer has diabetes. And so can you! Yes—it is possible to reverse type 2 diabetes and maintain blood sugar in the normal range.

Dr. Marlene’s **Smart Blood Sugar** is working for people all across America. And she believes it can work for you, too. Here’s how...

This simple plan works by doing a few simple things that bring blood sugar down while stopping a few things that have been pushing blood sugar up. It’s a combination of these two actions that make the protocol work so well.

Dr. Marlene’s **Smart Blood Sugar** has become a best-selling book because it cuts through all the confusing and contradictory information and zeros in on the exact steps to take right now to heal your blood sugar.

In this easy-to-read, 100-page book, you will find step-by-step guidance, easy tools, and dozens of tips on how to maintain healthy blood sugar levels and repair insulin resistance without wasting a lot of time or money.

“Get this book, sit down, and do the same thing I did. Read it word for word,” Arthur shares with others. “**Smart Blood Sugar** will help you greatly.”

It’s time to bring your blood sugar back in the healthy range. Get your copy of Dr. Marlene’s best-selling book, **Smart Blood Sugar**, today for only \$27!

Order Your Copy Today!
www.SmartBloodSugar.com/Book



Beware of Fake Product Reviews on Amazon

Product reviews can be helpful when shopping on Amazon, but some of them can be fake. Although Amazon prohibits such practices, reviews can be paid for or incentivized by vendors. While this isn't true of most Amazon reviews, it's something to be aware of. It's disappointing if a product has a lot of rave reviews yet falls far short of expectations after you buy it.

A survey by ReviewMeta, a company that analyzes the credibility of Amazon reviews, found that 36 percent of clothing reviews and 25 percent of book reviews were fake. In the supplement category, about

24 percent of reviews of one easy-to-swallow vitamin D supplement were fake, and between 12 percent and 19 percent of some dental cleaning products were fake.

What to Look For ★★★★★?

Based on years of tracking and analysis, ReviewMeta found that these can be signs of fake reviews:

- **Lack of detail:** Many glowing reviews with a single word, such as “great,” or a short phrase, such as “couldn't ask for more,” without any details or information about the reviewer's personal experience with the product.

- **Similarity:** A lot of reviews that are very similar, almost cookie-cutter.
- **Poor English:** Lots of spelling mistakes and bad grammar.
- **All positive:** If none of the reviews mention any downsides or these are rarely noted and quickly brushed aside, it could be a sign of biased or fake reviews. Few products are perfect for everyone who buys them.

To help you screen Amazon reviews, ReviewMeta offers free apps and a free online screening tool at www.reviewmeta.com.

Low-Carb Diets May Eliminate Need for Statins

A recent review of research has concluded that a low-carb diet is the most effective one for a healthy heart, healthy levels of blood sugar, and less diabetes. And it may eliminate the need for cholesterol-lowering statin drugs for many people.¹

This isn't the first study to draw such a conclusion. It certainly isn't news to me and it may not be to you, if you've been reading my books and earlier issues of this newsletter. But many doctors are not aware of all the evidence that shows this.

Elevated insulin and elevated blood sugar lead to unhealthy cholesterol. A low-carb diet can correct this. If you'd like more details, I encourage you to take a look at Volume 1, Issue 4, of this newsletter: *When Statin Drugs Can Harm You More than Cholesterol*.

The review also noted that statin drugs do not benefit healthy people whose “bad” LDL cholesterol is elevated when other blood markers, such as optimal levels of “good” HDL cholesterol and triglycerides, indicate good health and they are following a low-carb diet.

Alcohol Benefits Debunked

For a long time, we've heard that moderate drinking — up to one drink daily for women and two for men — is good for the heart. But this isn't so, according to a Harvard study of more than 371,000 people in the United Kingdom and nearly 31,000 in this country.

Researchers evaluated drinking habits, heart health, and lifestyle

more closely than in past studies. And they found that people with the healthiest hearts were those who didn't drink at all.

Although moderate drinkers did experience good health, the study found that it stemmed from a healthy lifestyle — a healthy diet, regular exercise, and not smoking — rather than their drinking habits.



Having no more than seven drinks per week did not significantly raise health risks. But drinking more than that clearly did increase risk for heart disease, with the greatest risk among those who drank 21 or more drinks per week.²

Bottom line, up to one drink per day can be part of a healthy lifestyle. But alcohol — even if it's red wine — can't substitute for healthy food and exercise.

1 Diamond, D. M., et al. “Statin therapy is not warranted for a person with high LDL-cholesterol on a low-carbohydrate diet.” *Curr Opin Endocrinol Diabetes Obes.* 2022 Oct 1;29(5):497-511.
2 Biddinger, K.J., et al. “Association of Habitual Alcohol Intake With Risk of Cardiovascular Disease.” *JAMA Netw Open.* 2022 Mar 1;5(3):e223849.

HOW TO STOP NERVE DISCOMFORT and Get Normal Feeling in Your Hands and Feet Again



Are you annoyed by occasional nerve discomfort? That's putting it mildly. It's probably driving you crazy – making simple tasks difficult and preventing you from enjoying life.

Well, here's good news, even if you've tried everything and are ready to give up...

The only way to silence nerve discomfort is to actually nourish and repair your nerve network. How? By giving your nerves the exact nutrients they need to thrive.

If you're a gardener, you're no doubt familiar with a product called *Miracle-Gro*®. It provides the precise nutrients that plants need to thrive. And to gardeners who see their plants come alive and stay healthy, it does seem like a miracle.

It's the same for your nerves. If you're suffering occasional nerve discomfort, you need specific nutrients that can bring your network back to good health. Restore that normal feeling. And make life enjoyable again.

How? That's easy. Use Primal Labs' **Advanced Nerve Support**.

Advanced Nerve Support contains a special form of vitamin B1 called Benfotiamine. Studies show **Benfotiamine helped patients feel greater "touch" sensory perception, and a lower level of nerve discomfort.**

Advanced Nerve Support also contains vitamins B6 and B12. **Vitamin B6** ensures the messengers along your nerve network – your neurotransmitters – can communicate properly. Here's how...

Vitamin B6 helps soothe tender nerves by helping them maintain healthy coverings. You see, your nerves are covered by a special material called the myelin sheath. It's like the insulation on electrical wires. If this insulation gets frayed or broken, the signals to the brain will be garbled.

That's when normal sensation is compromised and the feeling can be off, or even the opposite of what it should be. The result is discomfort.

Vitamin B12 aids in the normal repair of the myelin sheath. And it also nourishes the precious nerve fibers inside the sheath. Studies show B12 increases nerve regeneration, while reducing ectopic nerve firings – those acute, random sensations that seem to have no source.

When you combine B-12 with Benfotiamine and vitamin B6, *it's like Miracle-Gro® for your nerves*, helping to bring about rejuvenation and soothing relief. **Advanced Nerve Support** also contains **Acetyl-L-carnitine and Alpha Lipoic Acid** – two more nutrients that nerves need for healthy function.

Studies show that Acetyl-L-Carnitine "promotes a healthy nervous system and normal nerve response." And Alpha Lipoic Acid, taken daily, may significantly reduce nerve discomfort in as little as 3 weeks.

As you can see, **Advanced Nerve Support** has everything you need to soothe your nerves and restore normal feeling.

Advanced Nerve Support contains no egg, milk, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, soy, wheat, gluten, sugar or preservatives.

Ready for relief? Good, because right now you can get 15% off any size order of **Advanced Nerve Support**. Simply visit the URL below to lock in your special savings.

Don't wait. Order now.
Your nerves will be glad you did!



Visit PrimalSpecials.com/Nerve to Save 15% on your order

Q&A

Q: Do you have any ideas about how to treat restless leg syndrome? It really only bothers me at night. I'm 70 and exercise and have healthy eating habits.

— Rod E.

A: Minerals, especially calcium and magnesium, can help to calm nerves and muscles.



You can take a combination supplement with a 2:1 ratio of calcium to magnesium. In addition, I recommend taking a relaxing evening bath with Epsom salts, which contain magnesium that is absorbed through the skin.

Trace minerals, which are found in many multivitamins and in mineral formulas, can also be helpful. I don't know if you eat a lot of vegetables, which are mineral sources, but many are grown in depleted soils and may not provide sufficient amounts.

It's essential to take minerals consistently. If you do this and don't notice any improvement in a few weeks, low stomach acid — a common problem — could be preventing the minerals from being absorbed. A supplement of HCL with betaine, about 600 mg taken with each meal, can enhance stomach acid. But if it makes you feel worse, stop taking it and perhaps get checked for any overlooked digestive issues.

Q: I read your article regarding *The Healthiest Types of Coffee*. There was no mention of Keurig single-serve coffee. How does this compare to brewing coffee with a filter, the type found in drip coffee makers? — Bob K.

A: To the best of my knowledge, studies of brewing methods and health have not included Keurig single-serve K-cups.



However, information from existing research can help to answer your question. (For readers who did not see the earlier story, it is on page 11 of Volume 5, Issue 4, of this newsletter. You can access it by logging in at www.naturalhealthconnections.com.)

In the earlier story, I mentioned research showing that paper filters (used in most drip coffee makers) produce the healthiest coffee because they filter out substances that may raise cholesterol. Cafestol has been identified as the chief cholesterol-raising substance in coffee.

Studies have found that using a paper filter removes most cafestol. Metal mesh filters, which were tested in a French press, left much higher levels of cafestol in the coffee. Espresso had slightly lower levels than a French-press brew. The most cafestol was found in Turkish and Greek coffees, which are brewed by boiling without a filter.

K-cups have a metal mesh filter, much like the filter in a French press, which doesn't do a great job of removing cafestol. But there's a way around this: Use a refillable K-cup with an added paper filter and ground coffee of your choice.

You can buy inexpensive paper filters that are designed to fit the refillable cups.

In addition, refillable K-cups are much better for the environment. The single-serve, pre-filled cups are thrown away after brewing just one cup of coffee. That's a lot of extra plastic and metal in our landfills. And using a refillable K-cup with your own ground coffee costs less.

Studies also show that a fine grind increases the amount of cafestol in coffee, and a dark roast may decrease levels. Some coffee beans naturally contain more cafestol than others, depending on the variety, where they're grown, and the climate during a specific growing season — but there's no way to tell.

Keep in mind that while coffee is carb-free and calorie-free, added creamers, syrups, and most other sweeteners are not. Plain or flavored liquid stevia is an option for adding sweetness and flavor without carbs or calories.

Do you have a question for Dr. Marlene?

Send your health-related questions to drmarlene@naturalhealthconnections.com. Please include your first name and the initial of your last name. Although she cannot answer each question directly, Dr. Marlene will select a few in each newsletter and will address other questions and concerns in articles in future issues. Answers are intended for educational purposes only and should not be viewed as medical advice. If you need help with your subscription or have questions about Primal Health supplements, email support@primalhealthlp.com or call 877-300-7849.