

A Guide to Wellness

HOLISTIC NUTRITION BY BONNIE FISK-HAYDEN, M.S., NUTRITION CONSULTANT

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ANNOUNCING OFFICE HOURS IN LARKSPUR

I will now be offering office hours in Larkspur near Marin General Hospital. Days of the week and hours are flexible. Please call my regular number to schedule appointments at either office. The address in Larkspur is 5 Bon Air Road, Building C, Suite 116.

IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD SUGAR BALANCE

Metabolic Syndrome is a relatively new term referring to a group of conditions that often lead to Type II Diabetes. These may include excess weight around the middle (apple-shape); elevated blood sugar; elevated insulin; food cravings, particularly carbohydrates; high triglycerides and low HDL cholesterol; depressed metabolism; and low fat-free mass, especially muscle mass.

The causes of Metabolic Syndrome and weight-loss resistance are many and complex, and include:

- Diet
- Genetics
- Lack of exercise
- Glandular imbalance, especially the thyroid and adrenals
- Chronic low calorie dieting
- Food sensitivities and allergies
- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome
- Imbalance of gut organisms/compromised digestion
- Neurotransmitter imbalance
- Chronic sleep deficits
- Toxins the body is unable to excrete
- Chronic stress.

Weight-loss resistance is a crucial component to Metabolic Syndrome as excess weight can cause high blood glucose levels.

One of the main reasons Metabolic Syndrome is so prevalent in this country is that the American food supply is contaminated with high fructose corn syrup in almost every packaged food product found on the supermarket shelf, from catsup to crackers to sodas. Another culprit in the food supply is hydrogenated fats (also called trans fats), again found in most packaged foods. Many people do not fully realize that what they eat is what runs their body (or not)! Wise food choices can make a large difference in how one feels and functions throughout the day.

The brain is the master organ that runs everything else in the body. If your brain is not receiving the nutrients it needs, your body is not going to function in an optimal manner, and blood sugar control and weight-loss resistance are symptoms of that deficit. Food cravings are another legacy of not giving the brain the nutrients it requires.

Exercise is also very important in boosting the metabolism, but it must be the right kind of exercise in the right amount. Too much of the wrong kind can sabotage the weight-loss process. It is also important to build muscle as it burns more calories than fat, even at rest.

Eating the right foods in the right order can go a long way to balancing blood sugar. Protein is key to building more muscle and slowing down the insulin/

blood sugar rush. It does not have to be eaten in huge quantities to do the job, but it does need to be eaten throughout the day to help repair a damaged metabolism.

Good fats are another essential ingredient in a healthy diet. The body needs a certain amount of fat every day in order to burn fat. The brain needs them and so does every cell in the body. Good fats to choose from are flax seeds and oil, fish oil, coconut milk and oil, olives and their oil and avocados.

Carbohydrates have gotten a bad rap recently, but it is not that they are all bad—just the wrong kinds. It is the highly processed carbs that ruin healthy metabolism—the white flour, sugar, white rice and potatoes that cause problems. The best carbs are fruits (in moderation—one serving per day if blood sugar is already high) and lots of vegetables, especially the dark green, leafy kind. Whole, unprocessed grains and legumes in moderation add healthy fiber to the

diet, and create a feeling of fullness. They also slow down the release of insulin and glucose into the bloodstream.

There are numerous supplements that can help to repair a damaged metabolism and bring blood sugar levels under control. They should be used under the supervision of an experienced health care professional who can guide a client through the process of identifying the problem areas for that individual and recommending an appropriate course of action.

A person who already has high blood sugar should check with their primary health care provider before making any changes to diet, exercise or supplement programs, and have that person monitor their progress. Any of the suggestions in this newsletter could lower blood sugar. A person must test blood sugar frequently to track any changes and have their primary physician recommend a medication-adjustment plan **before** beginning any new diet or supplement regimen.

Any dietary or supplemental suggestions made in this Newsletter are entirely nutritional in nature and are not intended as a diagnosis, cure, or treatment for any disease or ailment. Your physician is your primary health care provider who is responsible for supervising all changes in diet and nutrient intake that you make.

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Bonnie Fisk-Hayden has been an informal student of health and nutrition for 12 years, and a formal student of holistic nutrition for almost five years. She has a BA from U.C. Berkeley and a Masters Degree in Holistic Nutrition from Clayton College of Natural Health.

Bonnie listens carefully to her clients, and after reviewing a comprehensive health history, assesses their overall health picture before recommending a particular protocol. With nutrition-based treatment it is important to identify the cause of underlying problems, rather than simply treating the symptoms. The goal is for the body to reach balance in all systems, because if one system is out of balance, then it will throw others off as they try to compensate for the first one. Bonnie specializes in helping clients with joint pain, blood sugar imbalances and food cravings.

The first step in the process is the client filling out a questionnaire with a three-day diet journal. Once that is evaluated we meet for an initial consult that usually lasts 1-1.5 hours. This can be done in person or over the phone. The client receives a protocol for diet, lifestyle changes and supplements if indicated to start off. This is the beginning of an ongoing relationship where Bonnie keeps tabs on the client's progress with follow up visits or calls, and makes changes to the recommendations as they go forward and improve. She keeps track of the client's overall health picture, always striving to guide them towards balance and optimum wellbeing.