

Advice to Tom Hanks

Recently, Tom Hanks grabbed the headlines, not just for his portrayal of Captain Phillips in his latest hit movie, but for his revelation that he is now suffering from type 2 diabetes.

It happened during an interview with David Letterman. Letterman was greeting Hanks, saying how good he looked, when Hanks quickly waved him off and said: "Well, it's not all good news. I just was at the doctor, and the doctor said: 'Congratulations, son, you've just graduated—from pre-diabetes to full-blown diabetes.'"



Can a change in your diet and lifestyle get your blood glucose levels back under control after a type 2 diabetes diagnosis?

Hanks went on to say: "The doctor gave me a choice: Get back to your high school weight or get used to having type 2 diabetes." Hanks paused a beat and then delivered the punch line to Letterman: "So I guess I'll be having type 2 diabetes." Translation: That's soooo NOT happening! Cue audience laughter.

Funny, I guess, but far too complacent for my taste. Hanks was obviously referring to the difficulty of following a stringent diet and lifestyle to re-establish blood sugar control. It's not easy, and it involves major commitment. But it's a routine miracle in my practice if patients put their minds to it with a little coaching from me.

Trouble is, many patients don't get the facts from their doctors. The current dogma is that type 2 diabetes may be preventable, but once it sets in, diet and exercise aren't enough. Patients and medical professionals alike are lulled into resignation by the glowing prospect of relief from the vast arsenal of currently available diabetes drugs. It's a multibillion dollar industry, servicing tens of millions of Americans, and the toll is increasing.

But the drugs, while they appear to "fix" elevated blood sugars, are rife with side effects. Some, such as Avandia and Victoza, now carry ominous "Black Box" warnings about serious potential harms.

Besides, most long-term studies fail to demonstrate that by taking these drugs you avoid premature death. Most type 2 diabetics eventually succumb to accelerated heart disease, which the drugs do little to avert.

Some of the drugs even increase appetite and promote weight gain, which perpetuates the cycle of blood sugar dysregulation.

Of course, doctors pay lip service to "diet," but it's the wrong type of diet, usually low-fat and replete with "healthy" carbs and so doomed to fail in most instances.

So my advice to Tom Hanks is: You CAN do it! Remember all those movie roles where you dropped scads of weight "for art's sake"? Think back to how emaciated you became for *Castaway* where you were stranded on a desert isle trying to catch fish with your bare hands, wrestling with coconuts and swimming madly to escape the

reefs?

Or achieving verisimilitude in *Philadelphia* when you were cast as an AIDS patient wasting away?

Or, to take a more recent example, model yourself after the scruffy, rail-thin Somali pirates who took you captive in *Captain Phillips*. Bet they don't need diabetes meds!

You can do it, Tom! I'd wager if there was an Academy Award waiting in the wings for you for achieving normal blood sugar, you'd probably go for it. Visualize you're the famous actor playing a scene and asking the director: "What's my motivation?"

There's science to back me up on this. Numerous studies are validating the benefits of a very low carbohydrate diet in reversing type 2 diabetes. A recent study showed intermittent fasting—eating very lightly on alternate days of the week or just on weekends—can normalize blood sugar for type 2's.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/04/130426115456.htm>

Then there's exercise. A recent extensive survey of studies on the effects of exercise showed it to be as effective as or even MORE effective than medication in promoting survival in pre-diabetes. <http://www.bmj.com/content/347/bmj.f5577>

And then, of course, there's supplementation. Lately, one of my favorite remedies for insulin resistance is berberine, shown in a head-to-head comparison to be equivalent to the diabetes drug Metformin.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2410097/> In a recent study, berberine produced blood sugar metabolism improvements of 36 percent.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23808999>. My preferred berberine product is CM Core, by Orthomolecular. <http://www.hoffmancenter.com/page.cfm/1002>

Magnesium, vitamin D, omega-3 fish oil, chromium, vanadium, *Gymnema sylvestre*, CoQ10 or ubiquinol and even probiotics have potential benefits for type 2 diabetics.

And, Tom, if at 57 you're experiencing "Low T" that's a frequent accompaniment of type 2 diabetes in the middle-aged men I see, a little testosterone and DHEA will help you get your metabolic groove back!

So you needn't resign yourself to a life of dependency on medications and a cascade of diabetic complications. Become the star of your own epic survival saga and safely and completely reverse your diabetes with natural therapies!