

America Ranks Third in the World for the Epidemic of Malnutrition: Aka Diabetes. What are we Doing about it?

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When we think of malnutrition, we think of starving children in third-world countries, not something that occurs here in the United States of America. However, America ranks third behind China and India for this epidemiological form of malnutrition, called diabetes. You might be confused by this reference to diabetes as a malnourished state, when the majority of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese, and in no-way resembling the gauntly thin pictures of starving children from third-world countries. But the truth is that the children in America, as well as the adults, are severely malnourished and will succumb to death and disability before their time because of diabetes.

There are two basic types of malnutrition: 1) protein-energy malnutrition, which is usually considered a *lack* of calories and protein, and 2) micronutrient (vitamin and mineral) deficiency malnutrition. In the case of type 2 diabetes in today's America, this definition of malnutrition actually fits perfectly. Although, type 2 diabetes is often considered an overabundance of energy (calories) that has led to becoming overweight and obese, it is nonetheless "energy" malnutrition. The body is severely out-of-balance, contributing to inflammation, insulin resistance and eventual diabetes. But in addition to meeting the requirements for this first type of malnutrition, diabetes also meets the requirements for the second type of malnutrition as well, in that diabetes and its metabolic dysfunction is also linked to micronutrient deficiencies. These micronutrient deficiencies impair cell functioning, and lead to glycemic dysregulation, inflammation and the sequel that follows in diabetes.

This epidemic of malnutrition (aka: diabetes) is huge, with 29.1 million Americans documented to have it according to the 2014 National Diabetes Statistics report, published by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Ninety to 95% of people with diabetes have type 2 diabetes, with 5% to 10% having type 1 diabetes. Overall, 9.3% of the American population (or 1 out of 11 people) have diabetes. Even scarier than this number is that 8.1 million or 27.8% of people with diabetes (1 out of 4) don't even know they have it. Pre-diabetes, considered to occur before the actual diagnosis of type 2 diabetes, affects 86 million people in this country (or 1 out of 3 adults) [1,2]. Nine out of 10 people with pre-diabetes don't even know they have it, and will develop type 2 diabetes within 5 years if lifestyle changes are not made. Both pre-diabetes and diabetes can lead to serious health complications, such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, loss of toes, feet or legs, and a host of other health conditions, including fatty liver, sleep apnea, sexual dysfunction, depression, hearing loss, gum disease and so much more.

This prevalence of malnutrition in the U.S. (aka: diabetes) will continue to escalate until our lifestyles and environment are drastically changed. Diabetes is no longer considered a disease of genetics alone. It used to be thought that diabetes was 70% the result of our genetics and 30% due to environment; however, we now know that it is actually the opposite. Diabetes is attributed 80% by our lifestyle and environment and only 30% due to genetics. Over the years, our environment and lifestyles have changed drastically, with the overabundance of processed, restaurant and fast foods, pesticide-laden produce, meats from institutionalized farming methods, environmental toxins, stressed lives and inactivity.

Although we are a nation of food abundance and overweight, we

are a nation of malnourished people. Our soils are less nutrient-dense to grow nutritious crops that are then sprayed with pesticides that cause the disruption of human cell membranes and cell functioning. Nutrient deficiencies and environmental toxins compromise the ability of our immune system to combat foreign invaders and can lead to conditions of inflammation and even autoimmunity [3]. We know that type 2 diabetes is a disease of inflammation, but it can also be considered a condition caused by autoimmunity, just as type 1 diabetes is, considering all of the foreign toxins and food additives in our food supply that our bodies have to contend with.

Our meat sources are institutionally farmed, fed with Genetically-Modified (GMO) corn (contributing to our elevated blood sugars and insulin resistance) and pumped with hormones to make them bigger and more profitable. In addition, institutionally farmed animals are injected with antibiotics to reduce the infections they get from being in close quarters and the illnesses that result from their unnatural diets. Antibiotic resistance today is rampant in our society, and children are going through puberty sooner (and developing diabetes) - something that was not seen when our meat sources were instead pasteur-raised and their nourishment obtained from naturally green leafy forage, naturally hormone and antibiotic-free.

Our processed, restaurant and fast foods are full of sugar, additives and artificial ingredients that are deficient in micronutrients, harmful to our human cells and promote insulin resistance and inflammation, as well as autoimmunity. And then we add to this processed soup mix, our significantly stressed lives, environmental toxins, poor diets, lack of sleep, overweight and inactivity, and "bon appétit": we have cooked up ourselves an inflammatory stew, wreaking havoc within every cell of our body, leading to inflammatory and autoimmune conditions like diabetes: America's malnutrition.

By the year 2050, 1 out of 3 Americans will have become malnourished and developed diabetes. Will it be you, your friend or loved one? Although we pour tons of money into research to develop new drugs and find new cures, the truth is that the cure is staring us in the face. It's time to wake up America. This lifestyle is not serving us well. We need to get back to the basics - eating real food grown from nurtured soil, pesticide-free, and not from man-made packages and drive-thrus. We need to reduce or eliminate sugar and carbohydrates from our diets and reclaim our taste-buds that were hijacked from us by the food manufacturing companies, who strategically sabotaged them to desire their deadly foods. We need to let-go of our fast-paced busy lives, recapture our family time, play outside with our kids and then

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show them where the kitchen is and teach them how to cook real foods. Perhaps we even need to let go of our expensive toys so that we can better be able to invest our money on necessary health products and other measures that will improve our health. These toys are short-lived and so will we be if our priorities are not changed.

If we are expecting health insurance or Medicare to save us, think again, as neither will keep us healthy or save us money. In fact, health insurance may actually worsen our health if we think these companies are responsible for us. Why wait until becoming sick for insurance companies to pay for doctor visits and medications? They will ultimately put a limit on what they will reimburse for, and then we will be stuck with the remaining balance, which we either can't afford or choose not to afford. So how is that for insuring our health? Only we can insure our health, and that begins with self-respect and self-responsibility in leading a healthy lifestyle.

Diabetes is not my disease, not your disease, but it is our disease. It was a community that created this disease, and it will take a community to demolish it. But before we can socially change our food supply, we can personally make concerted efforts to properly nourish our children and our own body, setting good examples for them. Most people say they know how to eat well and are eating well, yet we are still a country of severely malnourished people. The truth is, we have learner's manuals for our cars, our phones, our computers, yet no manual on how to feed our own body, our most precious gift. In addition, people are confused about the different nutrition messages and who to believe [4]. Nutrition has become like religion and politics - everyone has an opinion and you better not state your opinion unless you want a debate.

The truth is, nutrition is not an opinion-based subject, and there

should be no debate. The body wants what the body wants. Our body tells us how to take care of it and what it needs - nutrition is biochemistry and that is not an opinion that is a fact! It's time we paid attention to the biochemistry of our body and give it what it needs. If we give it garbage in the form of poor food, stressed and sedentary lives, it will give us garbage in return. Garbage in: garbage out. It's time we make a concerted effort to help reduce the garbage and replenish our body and environment with wholesomeness and purity.

As a healthcare provider, my first job is to evaluate my patient's nutritional and environmental health and correct any deficiencies. We all have them - it's just a matter of how to look for them. My second job is teaching them how to care for their precious body (providing them a user's manual) so it can run smoothly and avoid disease. If your physician or healthcare provider is not doing this for you or referring you to a *qualified* "integrative/functional nutrition or medical professional" for a full work-up and plan, you need to make this investment for yourself. Don't think that you know what to do - unless you have training in nutrition or biochemistry. Take these professionals' advice, as it is not opinion. The right nutrition is medicine and it will cure disease. It's time to eliminate diabetes: aka malnutrition. We deserve nothing less!

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