



Staten Island Advance

Can the right foods cure the epidemic of obesity and diabetes?

Zone Diet founder says the problem is caused by hormonal imbalances

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Pasta, bread and cookies, the same foods that encourage type 2 diabetes and obesity when eaten in excess, now are being touted as a cure by Zone Diet founder Dr. Barry Sears.

"One of the great fiscal threats the United States faces in the coming years is this epidemic of diabetes that literally can break the bank of our health care system," Dr. Sears said.

"It's food that got us into this problem and food that can get us out of the problem."

Dr. Sears is promoting a line of prepared foods, Medwell 1-2-3, based on findings by the Joslin Diabetes Center affiliated with Harvard Medical School. The center announced in 2005 that foods with a ratio of 1 gram of fat to 2 grams of protein to 3 grams of carbohydrates is optimal for people with obesity or adult onset diabetes.

People are obese or diabetic mainly due to hormon imbalances, Dr. Sears believes. Their bodies aren't producing enough of the hormones that send messages to the brain that they feel full. Eating foods in the 1-2-3 ratio produces a hormonal response that suppresses hunger for up to six hours. The foods also provide a steady source of energy over several hours to help diabetics avoid sugar highs and lows that prompt unhealthy food choices.

EAT PRODUCE

Dr. Sears recommends that people supplement the 1,000 calories a day of pre-packaged foods with an additional 200 calories of produce, preferably Mediterranean-style vegetables. The saturated fat in the 1-2-3 plan is well below the U.S. dietary maximums.

People with type 2 diabetes may be able to control their illness without medication if they follow the 1-2-3 plan, Dr. Sears said.

The beauty of these foods is that they taste like their high carbohydrate counterparts so people are being offered what they already like to eat.

"People are more likely to change their religion than to change their diet," Dr. Sears said.

A food plan makes sense because from a practical standpoint most people would have to do computations 24/7 to figure out which foods match the 1-2-3 ratio.

WORLD'S FATTEST MAN

Medwell foods are being eaten by Manuel Uribe of Monterrey, Mexico, who once had the dubious distinction of being called the world's fattest man. Uribe has dropped about 450 pounds from his original 1230 in the past 2 1/2 years. He has about five years go to reach his ideal weight of 220 pounds, Dr. Sears said.

Dr. Sears visits Uribe about three times per year in Mexico and said these foods are part of why Uribe now has cholesterol, sugar and blood pressure in the normal range and a "heart rate of a trained athlete."

Uribe does anaerobic exercises such as sit-ups and pull-ups on a railing over his bed, giving him tremendous biceps.

"Manuel is a beacon for millions of others on a worldwide basis," Dr. Sears said. "If this man can lose weight and be this healthy in the process, you can too."

Dr. Sears also pointed out that Uribe has lost more weight than Jared S. Fogle, the guy who went from 425 to 190 pounds by eating Subway sandwiches.

An interesting aspect is that Uribe isn't hungry enough to eat all of the food provided on his 2,000 calories a day diet. Dr. Sears said that's because his prepackaged foods stave off hunger for four to six hours.

Medwell products combine the best of biotechnology with the wisdom of grandmothers a couple of centuries ago: Eat small meals throughout the day; have enough protein at every meal to fit in the palm of the hand; eat vegetables because they're virtually impossible to overeat and they lower blood sugar, and take your fish oil every day.

Dr. Sears is working on a new book, due to be released on Oct. 15, called, "Toxic Fat: When Good Fat Turns Bad."