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April 2001

THE Whittier Diabetes REPORT

A Family Touched by Diabetes

New Diabetes Resource Center

Gender and Insulin Resistance

Vichyssoise in a Spud Bowl



Scripps Whittier Diabetes Program

Scripps/UCSD/Whittier Diabetes Research Program

*Project Dulce – a program in partnership with
Community Health Improvement Partners
and the Council of Community Clinics*

The Whittier Institute for Diabetes, a subsidiary of Scripps, is dedicated to diabetes research, education and patient care through a collaborative program with the University of California, San Diego.

Maire Robacker
is a Certified
Diabetes Educator
with the Scripps
Whittier Diabetes
Program



Many Resources Available for Diabetes Management

Diabetes is a disease that requires self-management. Research shows that people with diabetes or their immediate families provide 95 to 99 percent of their diabetes care, and long-term outcomes largely reflect the quality of care received. Taking control of diabetes is not easy, but with the assistance of a physician, a diabetes care team, and a large selection of resources, you can empower yourself with the knowledge and tools needed to manage diabetes.

Many variables, including personal beliefs and attitude, influence how people view management of their diabetes. There are also many myths associated with diabetes. For example, I still frequently hear patients say their diabetes is not serious because they “have Type 2 and not Type 1” diabetes, or they “only have borderline diabetes.” This simply is not true – all types of diabetes need to be

taken seriously. Working on behavior modification and learning new ways of dealing with problem areas will improve not only diabetes, but also overall health.

Educating yourself on the facts and keeping updated on trends and research results can greatly help to dispel myths. By developing knowledge, skill and personal responsibility to make changes, you can improve your health. There are many more tools and products on the market today to assist you in taking better care of yourself. Thanks to technology, research and education, it is possible to do what you love and live a full and normal life.

Diabetes is a complex disease and there is still much to learn. To be recognized by The American Diabetes Association (ADA), an education program must address 10 major areas of information. These include: the diabetes disease process; nutrition; exercise; blood glucose monitoring and management; medications; acute and chronic complications; psychological adjustment; goal setting and problem-solving; and diabetes and pregnancy.

In spite of the high incidence of diabetes, many people with diabetes never attend a diabetes self-management education program. There are many excellent resources available to further your education. These include diabetes support groups, ADA-recognized diabetes self-management education classes and magazines such as *Diabetes Forecast*, *Diabetes Self-Management* and *Diabetes Interview*. On-line information is available at www.diabetes.org, www.diabetes-self-mgmt.com and www.diabetesinterview.com. The Whittier Institute for Diabetes is also developing a new website that will provide a wide range of diabetes information and will be available soon.

Studies Compare Gender Differences in Susceptibility to Insulin Resistance

There are clearly many differences between men and women. So, why assume research results apply to both sexes? As part of her research through the Scripps/UCSD/Whittier Diabetes Research Program, Yolanta Kruszynska focuses on gender differences as applied to insulin resistance. And some of her recent study findings show that men and women can react very differently to the same experiments.

For some time now, there has been much interest in the possibility that elevated fat levels in the blood and high dietary fat consumption may contribute to the pathogenesis of insulin resistance in Type 2 diabetes and obesity. Indeed, epidemiological data show that in certain populations, people with impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) who eat a high-fat diet are more likely to develop diabetes than people with IGT who consume a healthy, low-fat diet. Additionally, there have been many acute studies in which insulin resistance was induced in people by infusing lipid intravenously to raise free fatty acid levels in the blood. The only hitch is that almost all previous studies were done in men.

The research team, consisting of Bernadette Serrano, Jachelle Ofrecio, Jerrold Olefsky and Yolanta Kruszynska,

Yolanta Kruszynska, M.D., is an Associate Adjunct Professor of Medicine, Department of Medicine, Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism, University of California, San Diego. As a visiting scholar, she is supported by philanthropic funds provided by the Whittier's Intramural Research Grant Program.

decided to test the hypothesis that women may be less susceptible to fatty acid induced insulin resistance than men. A healthy group of men and women were matched for age, BMI and physical activity, then underwent the same protocol. Results confirmed that elevation of fatty acid levels for several hours caused insulin resistance in men. However, in pre-menopausal women, it was found that the same elevation of fatty acid levels, for the same duration of time, did not cause insulin resistance. Clearly, these were striking findings since Type 2 diabetes is equally prevalent in men and women.

Because Type 2 diabetes tends to appear later in life, the research team decided to test older age groups as well. Currently, studies of post-menopausal women are in progress to determine if women lose that “protection” as they age. Preliminary data suggests that may well be the case. So far, six post-menopausal women who were not on any hormone replacement therapy all behaved just like the men when they became insulin resistant upon elevation of their blood fatty acid levels. The study was expanded to include women who were on hormonal replacement therapy, and interestingly, three



Yolanta Kruszynska, M.D. in the lab

out of four subjects showed the same results as pre-menopausal women when they did not develop insulin resistance. The next step is to address the mechanisms underlying the gender differences in response to elevated fatty acid levels and the role of hormonal replacement therapy in postmenopausal women.

It is widely accepted within the scientific community that elevated fats cause insulin resistance, but these studies suggest this may not be the case for the whole population, and there are clearly differences between individuals in how susceptible they are – whether it's genetic makeup, hormonal status or ethnicity. Future studies should shed more light on these issues.



Calculated Cooking
by Jeanne Jones

Vichyssoise in a Spud Bowl

This vichyssoise recipe is an easy to make variation of the popular French soup, which is a recycled version of leek and potato soup. The leftover soup is blended with heavy cream and served cold. This vichyssoise recipe is made with onions and potatoes rather than leeks, and derives its creaminess from nonfat milk and light sour cream rather than heavy cream. It is equally delicious and infinitely more nutritious. For a more unusual presentation, serve this vichyssoise in a spud bowl, which is easily made from the shell of the baked potato used for making the soup.

Ingredients you'll need:

- 6 (12 ounce) baking potatoes
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 3/4 cup fat free chicken stock
- 1/4 cup nonfat milk
- 1/4 cup light sour cream
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (omit if using salted stock)
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- Chopped chives, for garnish (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F. Wash the potatoes well and dry thoroughly. Pierce each with the tines of a fork to keep the skins from bursting. Bake 1 hour, then cool on a rack until comfortable to handle.
 2. Cut a thin slice lengthwise from the top of each potato. Remove the pulp, being careful not to tear the shells. Dice the potato pulp and set aside.
 3. Combine the potato pulp, chopped onion, and chicken stock in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for ten minutes.
 4. Spoon the mixture into a blender container or food processor, add all remaining ingredients except the chopped chives and potato shells, and blend until smooth. Cover and refrigerate until cold.
 5. Pour 1/3 cup soup into each potato "bowl" and garnish with chopped chives.
- Makes 6 servings

Each 1 cup serving contains approximately:

Calories: 100, Grams of fat: Negligible, Cholesterol: 1 mg, Sodium: 154 mg, Carbohydrates: 22 grams, Protein: 3 grams, Fiber: 2 gram

Diabetic Exchange:

1-1/2 carbohydrates, 1/2 protein

Researcher Honored: Dr. Jerrold Olefsky, scientific director of Scripps/UCSD/Whittier Diabetes Research Program, was recently elected to the prestigious Institute of Medicine (IOM). The achievement award was given in recognition of Olefsky's professional contributions in diabetes research, which included an instrumental role in the development of insulin sensitizing drugs that are now standard therapies for Type 2 diabetes.

New Faces at The Whittier Institute



Drs. Dailey, Sandler, Einhorn and Philis-Tsimikas (left to right).

Physician Leaders Join Diabetes Team

The Whittier Institute for Diabetes has expanded its physician leadership team for the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Program and Project Dulce. Drs. George Dailey, Daniel Einhorn and Jeffrey Sandler join Athena Philis-Tsimikas in The Whittier's dedication to providing the quality physician leadership necessary to fulfill its mission of assisting diabetes patients.

"In conjunction with the expansion of Scripps Whittier Diabetes Program and Project Dulce, this team of nationally recognized endocrinologists will be the cornerstone of our clinical programs and the champions of our goal to provide a program recognized for its excellence in the assessment and management of diabetes," said

John Engle, CEO of The Whittier Institute for Diabetes.

Dr. Dailey will oversee the creation of a regional diabetes registry and the diabetes program at Scripps Clinic. Dr. Einhorn will oversee clinical programs

in San Diego County's north coastal area, while Dr. Sandler will focus on central and south bay facilities. Dr. Philis-Tsimikas will lead the regional effort through Project Dulce.

Board Update

New Chairman of the Board: The Whittier Institute Board of Trustees has appointed Gobind Sahney as its chairman. Mr. Sahney has been involved with the Whittier since the early 90s. His new position took effect as of January 2001.

New Board Member:

David J. Winkler recently joined The Whittier Institute Board of Trustees and attended his first meeting in January.

Mr. Winkler is an attorney and real estate broker who has focused his skills and attention on building biomedical research facilities through Del Mar Partnership, Inc. and its affiliates.

Having lived with diabetes for the last 41 years, Winkler has been an active voice in the diabetes community. He served as past chairman of the San Diego Chapter of the American Diabetes Association and spent eight years on its Board of Directors and Executive Committee. He was also named Volunteer of the Year for the United Way-Combined Health Agencies Drive and has been active with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Winkler's first connection with the Whittier was a lecture he attended at the Institute about eight years ago. He has been highly impressed with the caliber of the staff and the board members who serve the Whittier, and is looking forward to working with them.