



# Lessons Learned

*Preventing and managing DIABETES  
through exercise and food planning!*

By Greg Ryan  
Professional Fitness Expert

*SAVE a life,  
share this!*





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## FROM THE AUTHOR

During the development of this book, I was criticized by a number of health professionals close to me. It was their opinion that the words in this book are too harsh and direct — they may come across as labeling someone.

My question is: *If you don't label something, how do you know what it is? And if you don't know what it is, how can you do anything about it?*

If the words seem direct, they are. Denying something never solves anything; it only makes things worse in the end. A time when millions of lives are at stake is not the time to be politically correct. Yours may be the next life lost.

There are two things that will help you prevent diabetes or keep the disease from getting worse: good nutrition *along with* exercise. Sure, you can take a pill and/or insulin shot, but, unfortunately, this will only get you so far.

*Lessons Learned* is about defining what diabetes is, how it can affect your life and how to take action against it.

It is also about realizing that a choice against taking action is a recipe for a poor quality of life. These pages will resonate with people who are ready to do something about their health now, not tomorrow.

Everyone needs to read this book: teenagers, adults, seniors and health professionals. *Teens* need to know what diabetes is. *Adults* need to understand the dangers that lie beneath. *Seniors* must learn there is hope for them. *Doctors* have to start thinking outside the box. After you read *Lessons Learned*, give it to someone else. Chances are they may be next. By handing someone this book, you could save a limb.

It is my hope that you will take hold of your health now, so you won't have to learn a hard lesson later.

## PROLOGUE

*“Really enjoyed it; I’ll see you next time, my friend,” he whispers.*

*“Have a good day, Addison,” I responded as I made sure the door was closed behind me.*

I met Addison two years ago. He was bedridden so long that he had sores and his attitude had been even more damaged by his forced inactivity. Not much left in the eyes, but there was hope in his heart.

He didn’t have to say anything. I could just tell he wanted to live again. He didn’t just want to get out of bed — he wanted to walk again, even if it was on one leg. Diabetes could kill the limbs, but it didn’t kill Addison’s spirit. All he needed was a helping hand to give his heart a boost.

With a little work, Addison first started to sit up, and then he was stretching, strengthening and eventually standing. Yes, standing up. The glow returned to his face almost instantly. Even though the progress

was slow from the outside, his heart was full again on the inside.

Exercise didn't save Addison in the end, but his family would tell you it gave him two extra years of hope and happiness with the ones he loved most.

Addison may have passed away from physical heart failure, but he didn't die from refusing to give his heart to his exercising.

*What would two more years of quality life be worth to you?*

## *In Remembrance of*

Addison Smith; who, just a short time ago, unexpectedly passed away of congestive heart failure brought on by years of diabetes.

Thank you, my friend, for the smiles, inspiration, love and most of all, your attitude toward life. Your physical heart may have played out in the end, but your spirit will live on forever. You will truly be missed.

Are you next?

## INTRODUCTION

It was so cold, I could barely stand it. But my father insisted on it; a lesson must be taught, even if Old Man Winter brought his wrath.

I was ten, the temperature was 12 degrees and it was time for the farmer's torch to be handed off once again. Did I care? At the time I thought, *"Another lecture? Great! What could I possibly learn from this? This has absolutely nothing to do with me."*

Oh, but it did then and it surely does today.

Grapes never need pruning in the warmth of summer, yet they reminded me of their fall sweetness in the dead of the winter. On that day, Dad was determined to teach me what grapes, life and disease were all about.

Why would he pull a perfectly good grapevine up by its roots, only to leave it lying there on the ground to die?

"I know what you're thinking, but you're wrong; the vine's already dead," he said.

*“Looks fine to me,”* I thought. *“Let’s go in, I’m freezing!”*

Dad proceeded to point out infected areas in place after place within the trunk of that grapevine. What seemed beautiful on the outside had become ugly with disease on the inside. Something in the soil had caused the roots to rot. Dad’s worthless plant gave me a priceless lesson.

You may be thinking, *“This has nothing to do with me.”* But I say it does. What you don’t see today could bring you pain and misery tomorrow. It is not what you see on a daily basis that brings on diabetes. It’s the silent and slow damage of the root of your health, from the inside, that could be your demise in the end.

However, just like the grapevine, your body will bring a life filled with beauty, health and a sweetness for life, if cared for in time.

I  
TRIUMPHANT

*The only things that raised Addison out of his bed were hope, humility, and hunger.*

Greg Ryan

# 1

## GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS

### **Hope, Humility and Hunger**

The good news is there are better ways of preventing and managing diabetes than there used to be. The bad news is they are not being promoted as well as they could be.

One out of three people will develop diabetes in the next 15 years. These people will see their health care costs triple and their quality of life will suffer greatly.

If you want good news, you have to do something different to get it. If you want bad news, keep doing nothing and you will get it for free.

The only things that raised Addison out of his bed were hope, humility and hunger.

There can be triumph, but only if you want the good news badly enough to do something about it. Are you hungry enough to start today? Will you humble yourself and ask for help? Do you have any hope left?

## **Good News**

If you are proactive, a progressive thinker and willing to have some faith, you can head off diabetes with exercise and better eating habits.

If you happen to already have diabetes, better management can also be accomplished through exercise and nutrition. Why is exercise the smallest chapter in a diabetes prevention manual? It could be that our society has given in to the comparatively easy but deadly road of pills, pride and procrastination. Don't make those same mistakes.

## **Bad News**

If you don't do something about avoiding this epidemic today, tomorrow will find you in a heap of trouble, in pain and possibly even depressed. Do you want to feel that way?

There are a numbers of factors that contribute to contracting diabetes. Getting daily exercise and pre-planning your diet are the best bets in prevention.

## Lessons for Life



### *“Triumphant News”*

There is hope! Getting regular exercise and eating better may be your greatest hope for managing or even beating diabetes. If you are genetically susceptible to the disease or already have it, there is still time to get a handle on your health.

Yes, it will be challenging; there's no denying that. However, the rewards will be priceless. You will have higher energy levels, healthier vital signs, more confidence and a better quality of life all around.

The toughest hurdle will be that of pride. Your biggest nemesis will be denial. Jump over these obstacles, push through them and do whatever it takes to feel better. Whatever you do, don't give in to the temptation to “take a vacation” from your healthcare.

Diabetes never takes a day off. It creeps, it eats and it never sleeps.

Exercise gave Addison two more years of quality life. What can it do for you? It could give you some triumphant news! What would that news be worth? What would a few more years be worth?

*SAVE a life,  
share this!*



# II SILENCED



*Give it to me, give it to me, and give it to me  
now! If you don't, I'll.....*

## 2

### THE NOW GENERATION

Do you know that the NOW generation, teenagers today, will be the first in history not to outlive the average age of their parents?

Teenagers think, *“I don’t feel any pain, my energy level is fine, and I even can handle the extra weight I’m carrying!”* The last thing on young people’s minds is concern about their health. And adults are just as bad.

What is your attitude like? Do you want everything now? Do you ignore the immediate dangers of your behaviors for the instant pleasures of food and comfort on a couch? Do you think you look good enough to deny the truth? *“It won’t happen to me,”* many think.

Have you heard what is happening with the rise of diabetes? Or do you have the *“talk to the hand, because the ears aren’t listening”* attitude?

## **Convenience**

The discovery of the microwave was the beginning of the instant gratification movement. What was once thought of as a timesaver has bred other technologies that fill your life with stimulation, stagnation and meaningless stuff.

The majority of your eating habits are determined by convenience rather than by what's healthy. Today, coffee houses buy old banks just for the attraction of having a drive-up window.

## **Laziness**

While your busy lifestyle plays a big part in your eating habits, the underlying truth may be you are just lazy. We also live in a world of so-called protectionism. Many have the "*it won't happen to me*" attitude, not realizing that their lack of ambition and inability to plan ahead will somehow affect them.

# 3

## HEARING IMPAIRED

### People “Hear” What They See

*“People hear what they see, Bobby.”* In the movie *Beyond the Sea*, movie star Sandra Dee explains to singer and husband Bobby Darin that people are moved more by what they see rather than what they hear.

While factual, this truism has become deadly as it pertains to diabetes. If you can’t see it, you will likely do nothing about it. Right?

What brought down Bobby Darin’s initial career was his failure to change with the times. He refused to change his style because he couldn’t see the need.

With the candor and encouragement of his wife, he changed his old style and thus rejuvenated his career. What does this have to do with diabetes? They both have to do with pride!



Can you hear me now!

# 4

## THE SILENT KILLER

### What is Diabetes?

Diabetes mellitus is a group of diseases marked by high levels of blood glucose resulting from defects in insulin production, insulin action, or both. Diabetes can lead to serious complications and premature death. There are two main types: 1 and 2.

### Types of Diabetes

#### *Type 1*

This used to be called insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM) or juvenile-onset diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes develops when the body's immune system destroys pancreatic beta cells, the only cells in the body that make the hormone insulin, which regulates blood glucose.

To survive, people with type 1 diabetes must have insulin delivered by injection or a pump.

This form of diabetes usually strikes children and young adults, although disease onset can occur at any age.

Type 1 diabetes accounts for 5 percent to 10 percent of all diagnosed cases. Risk factors for type 1 diabetes may be autoimmune, genetic, environmental or *lifestyle*.

## ***Type 2***

Type 2 is a non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM) or adult-onset diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90 to 95 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.

As the need for insulin rises, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce it. Type 2 diabetes is associated with older age, obesity, a family history of diabetes, a history of gestational diabetes, impaired glucose metabolism, physical inactivity, and race/ethnicity.

## **Gestational**

Gestational diabetes is a form of glucose intolerance diagnosed in some women during pregnancy. Gestational diabetes occurs more frequently among African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, and

American Indians. It is also more common among obese women and women with a family history of diabetes.

During pregnancy, gestational diabetes requires treatment to normalize maternal blood glucose levels to avoid complications in the infant. After pregnancy, 5 to 10 percent of women with gestational diabetes are found to have type 2 diabetes.

### **What is Insulin?**

Insulin is a hormone secreted by the pancreas. It helps the body utilize blood glucose (blood sugar) by binding with receptors on cells like a key would fit into a lock. Once the key (insulin) has unlocked the door, the glucose can pass from the blood into the cell.

Inside the cell, glucose is either used for energy or stored for future use in the form of glycogen in liver or muscle cells. One huge problem today is the muscle cell builds up a resistance to insulin.

### **What is Insulin Resistance?**

Insulin resistance occurs when the normal amount of insulin secreted by the pancreas is not able to unlock the door to cells.

To maintain normal blood glucose, the pancreas secretes additional insulin. In some cases (about 1/3 of the people with insulin resistance), when the body cells resist or don't respond to even high levels of insulin, glucose builds up in the blood, resulting in high blood glucose or type 2 diabetes.

Even people with diabetes who take oral medication or require insulin injections to control their blood glucose levels can have higher than normal blood insulin levels due to insulin resistance.

## **In Common Terms**

### ***Trick or Treats***

Unfortunately, many are living a Halloween nightmare all year round. Your body is getting tricked by the treats you're feeding it. I don't just mean treats like sweets; I mean too much of even normal foods. Insulin resistance is a huge problem today and will cause much greater problems down the road.

Don't be fooled into thinking you are hungry. Once the cell hardens its attitude,

you are tricked into thinking you are. You're not. So you eat more than you need. This is why exercise and better nutrition is so important.

Pounding away at the walls of the cell through exercise is your best defense. It's a pretty good offense, too!

### ***Treated***

It's a vicious cycle. You think you need food or something sweet, so you eat it. Your body tricks you and you treat yourself, only to be fooled in the end again and again.

You can't deny this problem nor should you just chalk it up to a physiological affect of the body that can't be helped. That would only be an excuse and a big mistake.

Your eating and exercise habits may be the only thing to stop this trickery. They may be the best things to break down the walls and build up your health.

### **The Bottom Line**

Since type 2 diabetes is really a severe case of insulin resistance, the solution to your condition is to find a way to increase the

sensitivity of your cells to insulin and help your body get the sugar out of the blood and into the cells so it can be metabolized and turned into energy.

This inability to metabolize sugar is one of the reasons why most diabetics often feel tired and fatigued. The answer is exercise and eating better! Are you starting to get the message?

## **The Deadly Effects of Excess Insulin**

Metabolism is the food processing and energy production system of your body. It is made up of extremely fine-tuned internal processes. Insulin is the master hormone of your metabolism. When it is out of balance and your insulin levels are consistently elevated, a long list of deadly complications are created:

*Heart disease*

*Hardening of the arteries*

*Blindness*

*Increased cholesterol levels*

*Vitamin and mineral deficiencies*

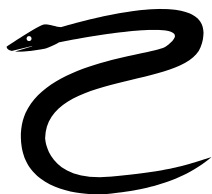
*Kidney disease*

*Fat-burning mechanism turned off*

*Accumulation and storage of fat*

*Weight Gain*

These are just the primary effects of excess insulin. The secondary effects are endless. It doesn't matter if you are a teenager or an adult, the effects of lack of exercise or poor eating habits are frightening. Don't let it creep up on you. Don't be blinded by it. If you do, as an adult, your life will not be very fulfilling.



*It creeps, it eats and it never sleeps.*

*SAVE a life,  
share this!*



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