



My Secret Recipe

A chef shares his secrets for reversing type 2 diabetes

BY ERNEST QUANSAH

I'm a chef and pastry chef by trade. I would bake desserts, cookies, and cakes and eat them for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Overworked and stressed, I didn't have time to take proper care of myself.

All of a sudden, I noticed I was having an intense craving for sugar. I'd buy massive jugs of lemonade and drink it all day long. I began to lose weight very rapidly. In one month, I lost about 20 pounds. I noticed a sticky, whitish

substance covering my tongue and the corners of my eyes each morning.

In a panic, I went to my doctor. He said, "We need to get a blood test right now, because I suspect you have diabetes." The test results showed my blood sugar was 394. (For most people without diabetes, blood sugar levels before meals hover around 70 to 80 mg/dL.) My doctor said, "Do you realize you're steps away from going into cardiac arrest?"

He put me on heavy doses of medication. Then my eyes shut down. I couldn't see, though after four weeks, my eyesight came back. I was 46 and felt overwhelmed.

Finally after two years of struggling, I asked my doctor, "Can my diabetes be cured?" He asked me if it ran in my family. I said no. He then said, "Yes. The best way to cure it is by using several approaches all working together."

We put together a diet and exercise program with my doctor. Basically, I ate no simple carbohydrates. I'd make my favorite soup—tofu and cabbage with lots of vegetables. Or I'd cut up raw vegetables and eat them with hummus. For breakfast, I'd make steel-cut oats with a little cream and egg whites. I stopped drinking anything sweet.

Every morning, I'd go to the gym and exercise properly. When I first started, I couldn't lift very much, and was only able to do seven minutes of cardio. Then slowly, I was able to stay on the machine for 10 minutes, then 15, and then up to 45. My doctor started reducing my medication.

At nighttime, I went back to the gym, and did only cardio. I worked out seven days a week. I began to feel a surge of energy. Further tests showed that I was healed. "Congratulations! You no longer have diabetes. Your blood pressure is perfect and your cholesterol level is down," my doctor said.

That was four years ago. Today, I'm full of energy. I'm still a chef, and occasionally I'll have something sweet on the weekend—ice cream or a cookie. But eating healthy and exercising—that's the secret.

ERNEST'S LIFE LESSONS

"Take up exercise. Start with five minutes and build up slowly. Your energy will come back."

"Take control of your diet. You don't have to be a chef to eat healthy, delicious meals."

"One of the simplest meals is to cut up vegetables, toss with greens and a little dressing, and put a can of water-packed tuna on top. That's a complete meal."

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR