



Paula Deen Suffers from Easily Curable Diabetes



Popular Food Network host Paula Deen recently made national headlines when she revealed that she has been living with type-2 diabetes and has made a deal to promote the diabetes drug, Victoza. In writing this article, I have been watching some of her past cooking shows online, and to me she appears to be very warm, friendly, and grandmotherly. Her personality is similar to that of thousands of patients I have gotten to know throughout my medical career. Not coincidentally, however, her obesity and type-2 diabetes are as commonplace as her cooking style.

The ingredients that Paula Deen uses are the very same ones used by other chefs on various cooking channels. For less than \$5 and a few minutes spent in a drive-thru, you can buy Deen-style dishes at any fast food restaurant. What could be more fattening and diabetogenic (causing diabetes) than a Wendy's Baconator Double with two quarter-pound patties topped with juicy bacon in between a toasted and buttered bun, topped off with mayo, ketchup, and American cheese?

Here's the Bet

Would we love a trim-looking Paula Deen on a cooking show? How would we react if she lost weight and cured her diabetes right in front of our eyes? I am willing to make a giant effort to help Paula help herself and America become trimmer and healthier. I am publically inviting her to my 10-day, live-in clinic in Santa Rosa, CA. As an added incentive, I am offering her a Mitt Romney size bet* that my Program will change her personal health and her style of cooking on her future TV shows. Furthermore, if she attends my program and does not make the significant positive changes that I predict, then I will be a guest on her cooking show and eat sliced beef wrapped in bacon strips and fried in chicken fat. Otherwise, if the McDougall Program does, as I confidently predict, cause her to lose weight, lower her blood sugar, and get her off her diabetic drugs, then she will agree to be a speaker at my next Advanced Study Weekend, September 7-9, 2012, and prepare a five-course, low-fat vegan meal with a starch centerpiece, ending with a healthy dessert.

*In a heated moment during a recent debate, presidential contender Mitt Romney offered to bet Texas governor Rick Perry "10,000 bucks" to settle a point of contention. This gesture seemed inappropriate to many people in this downturned economy.

I have watched several of her cooking shows made over the past six years, and to her credit she knows that the oils, meats, cheeses, and sugars she uses are harmful. Notice her telling gestures as she adds these items to her creations. Her eyes roll and an embarrassed grin appears on her face as she deep-fries macaroni and cheese wrapped in bacon strips.

Her Diabetes Is a Normal Adaptation Made for Survival

Paula's body has been tested and proven to be strong. More than six decades of severe malnutrition have not killed her yet. I marvel at how much abuse the average person can tolerate and still survive, albeit compromised. The calories she is consuming in excess of her needs cause her to gain body fat—this is a natural, expected change and one that is important for survival during times of future famine. All this fat storage is accomplished under the direction of the hormone insulin, which allows fat to enter into her blubbery tissues. Her body has made many necessary adaptations in order to stay alive under adverse dietary demands.

More than three years ago she reached a point where all this fat accumulation became counterproductive—a point when any further excess body weight gain would have caused her serious physical harm. Her body then put “the brakes on” in order to slow her rate of storing fats. This was accomplished by a variety of metabolic mechanisms, which ultimately made her insulin become less potent—and thus less able to push dietary fats into her body fat. [She developed insulin resistance](#), the hallmark of type-2 diabetes.

Insulin's most important job (even more critical than allowing for fat storage) is to facilitate the entry of sugar into the body's general cells. When Paula's insulin lost its potency (insulin resistance developed) sugar could no longer easily pass into her cells and the distinguishing sign of diabetes, an elevated blood sugar, developed. Her doctors' response has been to give various medications, including Victoza, to lower her blood sugar.

Her Diabetic Medications Are Costly, Useless, and Dangerous

Medical doctors continue to prescribe remedies that have *never* cured a single case of diabetes. Most doctors and patients view the elevated blood sugar as the enemy to be beaten down with medications. Unfortunately, the results of these expensive efforts are fatter, sicker patients with slightly lower blood sugars. [This “poly-pharmacy” approach promotes](#) weight gain, heart disease, hypoglycemia, and death. The average weight gain after initiation of typical drug treatments is 8 to 18 pounds within a few short months.

The medication, Victoza (liraglutide), manufactured by Novo Nordisk, is worrisome. It works by helping the pancreas to release insulin. This drug, given once daily by injection, causes thyroid cancer in animals, and pancreatitis, serious hypoglycemia, and kidney problems in people. Weight gain would be expected from a medication that increases insulin activity, but this does not seem to be the case for Victoza. I suspect the common side effects of headache, nausea, and diarrhea counteract the weight-gaining effects of extra insulin release.

Her Diabetes Is Easily Curable

At the very least, her doctors should tell Paula that her disease is easily curable. Weight loss by any means will make a substantial difference. Most notably, bariatric surgery alone will [cure 80% of patients](#). But let's not go so drastic as to have stomach surgery. There is an easier way: Change your food, Paula.

Multiple [studies dating as far back as the 1920s](#) have shown the benefits of a high-carbohydrate, low-fat diet in the treatment and cure of type-2 diabetes. This kind of eating is more descriptively referred to as a starch-based diet (potatoes, rice, corn, sweet potatoes, pasta, etc. with vegetables and fruits). For example, published research from the [University of Kentucky Medical School](#) reported that as many as two-thirds of type-2 diabetics were able to discontinue insulin and almost all stopped oral agents shortly after a change in diet. A [recent review](#) of the use of vegetarian diets in the treatment of type-2 diabetes reported on research showing improvements in blood sugars in diabetics, with 39% stopping insulin and 71% stopping diabetic pills after three weeks of therapy. Relief of diabetic neuropathy pains, reduced lipids (cholesterol and triglycerides), lower blood pressure, improved kidney function, and reversal of eye disease all have been reported with a better diet. Over time, switching to a low-fat, starch-based diet and associated weight loss will [cure essentially every patient](#) with type-2 diabetes.

Paula Deen, Clean Up Your Kitchen

I am surprised by the paucity of television cooking shows dedicated to healthy eating, much less ones dedicated to low-fat, vegan, cooking. Especially when the health and environmental benefits are so well established. This tells me that there is little profit in

this message. No pharmaceutical company would sponsor such a show. There are no potential backers in big-dollar food companies: the ones who sell meat, dairy, and processed foods. And my experience has been that public demand is also low for information on good eating and diet therapy—primarily because they have not been informed of the benefits or shown how to cook this way. This leaves a wide-open opportunity for Paula Deen to lead the way.

How much money can you spend, Paula? I have watched your show and you definitely are in the 1 percent of the wealthiest people in the US. I know you don't need and shouldn't want any more money. The real question is: How much is your life worth, Paula? You know better, so now is the time to turn your smirks over greasy foods into smiles over teaching the public how to cook with healthy ingredients. This simple transition should be no trouble for one of the world's most talented chefs. Put down the butter and pick up the broccoli. Replace beef and bacon with barley and beans. You can do this for us and for yourself. We will help you get started. Give in before something disabling and irreversible happens to you, and come to the next McDougall Program, March 16 to 25, 2012.



E-mail to a friend

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