

'Nutraceuticals' could prevent diabetes

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People at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes might be able to delay or prevent the disease by taking certain food supplements and making lifestyle changes, according to a new book by Dr. James W. Anderson, an internationally recognized authority on metabolic diseases and weight loss and professor emeritus of medicine and clinical nutrition at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine.

Diabetes is a worldwide epidemic, and it is growing at an alarming rate. In 2006, the United Nations declared it an international health threat comparable to HIV/AIDS. However, emerging evidence suggests that risk of diabetes can be reduced by a combination of weight loss, exercise, dietary changes and the use of supplements called "nutraceuticals," extracts of certain foods purported to have a physiological benefit or provide protection from disease.

Anderson's book, "Nutraceuticals, Glycemic Health and Type 2 Diabetes," provides an overview of glycemic health and highlights the use of nutraceuticals in the prevention and management of type 2 diabetes. Anderson identifies dietary fiber from whole grains as one of the strongest preventive measures for type 2 diabetes. The book also offers an in-depth discussion on certain minerals and herbs that assist in achieving tighter glycemic control.

Anderson collaborated with Vijai K.Pasupuleti, founder of SAI International — a firm engaged in research, consulting and marketing for nutraceutical, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies — to summarize cutting-edge research from all over the world and assemble

the outcomes. Thirty-five scientists from nine countries contributed 18 chapters presenting the latest findings on the role of nutrition in diabetes.

This emerging evidence will allow health care providers to offer the latest in nutrition guidance to patients with diabetes. It will encourage producers of foods and supplements to make active ingredients more widely available to consumers, and will enable self-directed individuals to make intelligent choices about nutrition supplements to prevent diabetes.

In the closing chapter Anderson provides practical guidelines based on his clinical experience, his research and the research presented in the book. He gives recommendations for specific amounts of minerals to slow progression of diabetes or reverse diabetes in its early stages. Over 100 herbal supplements are evaluated and 11 are assessed to be of potential value for treatment of early diabetes.

Anderson and his colleagues have been doing research on nutrition and diabetes for 35 years at UK and he has published over 100 research papers on this topic.

Source: University of Kentucky

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