



November 3rd, 2014

Diabetes News!

Do you want the good news first, or the bad news? The good news is that diabetic complications are down. A lower percentage of people with diabetes are developing kidney disease, having strokes/heart attacks or experiencing amputations. This is probably due to better care, treatments and drugs... BUT! The bad news is that the rate of diabetes itself is up – way up! More than 3 times what it was 20 years ago. Today more than 9 million Canadian live with diabetes or pre-diabetic conditions.

The US FDA is conducting a review of diabetes medications and has stumbled upon a possibly increased risk of heart failure with use of the drug saxagliptin (Onglyza). The medication may not be causing heart failure, but, rather, not doing a sufficiently good job of preventing it. It is not associated with other cardiovascular risks, such as heart attack. There is no recommendation to discontinue its use; just be aware.

Food for Thought

Given that diabetes is a condition intimately associated with diet, it may not be a big leap to think that disorders such as binge eating or bulimia nervosa could put one at twice the risk of developing diabetes. However, a recent study is showing that these eating disorders and many other mood disorders, such as depression, are inter-related and also associated with increased diabetes risk. Food for thought?

Prevention is Best

Why all the concern about diabetes? Prolonged high blood sugar levels are associated with many serious complications such as blindness, kidney disease, cardiovascular disease, painful peripheral neuropathy and amputations. Often by the time the signs of these conditions are apparent, the damage is already done and the best that can be hoped for is limiting the progression of the symptoms. Best to prevent diabetes – or, at least, catch it and manage it early!

November is Diabetes Month. Recently, pre-diabetes has been identified in an effort to catch and treat people destined to develop full-fledged diabetes. Talk to your physician about your risk – a get ahead of the curve! And if you have diabetes, check with your pharmacist to ensure you're using your medications in the correct manner.