

Adult-Onset Diabetes and Louis R.

I am a type II diabetic. My diabetes started in middle age, but even before that I'd always experienced problems with my weight. At six different times in my life I've been 40 pounds over-weight, and I've dieted to lose those 40 pounds. Each time I was successful in losing the weight, but over time those same 40 pounds reappeared. I have done Weight Watchers, I used Diet Center twice, and I've gone the Nutra System route and others. Each of these diets was effective. The pounds just flew off but psychologically I was about four feet off of the ground at all times. Either that or I was unbearably fatigued. My whole family is predisposed to being heavy. My father was a little shorter than me and at one time weighed about 240 pounds. My paternal grandmother was about six feet tall and a very big woman who weighed about 230 pounds. When my late sister was diagnosed with colon cancer, she weighed 290 pounds. My maternal grandfather was large, as was my maternal grandmother.

So I'm from sturdy big stock and I'm never going to be one of those men who weigh 165 pounds. I know that. Once I dieted my way down to 168 pounds but I looked horrible. People were asking me what disease I had, I was so gaunt. Today my goal is more realistic. I want to reach 185 pounds and stay there for the rest of my life. My other goal is to control my diabetes with diet and exercise.

When my mother turned 60, she told me she just wanted to be a fat old lady. She just let everything go. When she died she was 5'2" and weighed about 240 pounds. I turned 60 last year and I decided I do not want to be like my mother. I'm going in the opposite direction. I want to slim down and build some muscle and remain attractive.

I have to say up front that when I first visited Dr. Platt, I walked into his office with an attitude of skepticism. Not because of all the diets I'd gone on, but because I have an insider's knowledge of medical scams. For 20 years my career consisted of marketing and selling pharmaceutical products. I know what pharmaceutical companies will stoop to in order to turn a profit. I lost my innocence about medicine long ago, and I'm always on the lookout for someone trying to turn an easy buck.

But once I spoke to Dr. Platt I was relieved. From the way he talked, I realized he wasn't just promoting products. What he said about why people hang onto weight and why their bodies hate to lose fat made sense. There was none of the jargon and medical babble that tends to cluster around trendy medical scams.

Platt's office staff have also been very supportive, and they communicate a sense of being genuinely interested in everyone who comes in there. The whole atmosphere is wonderful. They're not punitive when you don't meet your goals as expected.

As far as the process of losing weight is concerned, it's been virtually painless. The diet itself is

easy to follow. I'm a fruit freak and that's been the most difficult thing to give up, but I realize that I will be able to go back to fruit later in the process; it's not something I have to give up for the rest of my life. Once I've lost the weight I want to lose, the fruit will be re-introduced. In the short term, trust me, if that's all I have to give up, that's fine.

There was a brief period when I was losing weight but not feeling very energetic. I went in to see one of the nutritional counselors, who recommended a multi-mineral. It was my thought, knowing just enough about medicine to be dangerous, that perhaps I should be taking potassium. I know diets can be potassium-depleting. But the counselor said not only to do potassium but to take a multi-mineral as well. Sure enough, my energy returned and I started feeling absolutely great. It made me wonder whether I'd been lacking in some mineral or other for many years.

During my very first interview with Dr. Platt it came out that my sister died of colon cancer and that now one of her daughters has colon cancer. Also, my mother had a mastectomy when she was 38. Dr. Platt was very interested in this. It's one of the reasons why he placed me on progesterone, which is erroneously thought of as a female hormone. But according to him, progesterone will protect me from the excess estrogen I'm putting out. He knew that was true even before he did my blood work, just from my family medical history.

I was also started on testosterone, and the amounts were very carefully monitored by Dr. Platt's office. It certainly helped with my libido (interest in sex). According to the blood work my DHEA is that of a 30-year-old. Dr. Platt wanted to know if anyone in my family had lived a long time. My grandfather lived to almost 90, and my mother was almost 90 when she died.

Dr. Platt also thought my thyroid was not putting out as much hormone as it should, so he has me on a couple of thyroid medications. This makes a difference. I've noticed since I've been on this diet that I don't get that late afternoon letdown I used to get. I think that's due to the thyroid medications and the progesterone, which Dr. Platt states is stabilizing my blood sugar.

So far I've lost 32 pounds, and I've weaned myself off one of my medications for diabetes. As we go along we're fine-tuning my medications. It seems to be a rather sensible approach. I'm very pleased with the results.