Me, Obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, Tongue Cancer, and Jason Fung, MD

written by Holly
April 11, 2018
By Holly Lisle

Something you might not know about me. Back in the early 2000's, I was fat. Not chubby. Not "just need to lose a few pounds." Morbidly obese.

The point at which I stopped weighing myself and just gave up was when the scale hit 220, but I didn't quit eating, and didn't quit needing roomier clothes. So I weighed more than that. Best guess from increased clothing sizes (Wal-Mart Women's X when I weighed 220 to a max size of XX that was getting tight) is that I weighed around 250 pounds before I topped out.

On a five-foot, six and a half inch frame, (which using a standard weight chart would make me 5'7 because of the one-inch heels) my max healthy weight would have been about 150 – my wrist measurement is exactly 7″, which qualifies as medium frame. Which made my body mass index back then 34.4, and made me morbidly obese.

At the time, so was Matt. He weighed over 300 pounds.

I was working pretty hard on the *morbid* part, too, killing myself in bits and pieces. I had adult onset diabetes, something I didn't know until some weird anomaly triggered the ex-nurse in the back of my head. I bought a glucometer from Wal-Mart, checked my blood sugar and Matt's, and about fainted. Both were awful.

I was also growing an already active parathyroid tumor, but wouldn't know about that for some years yet.

And I was feeding future squamous-cell cancer of the tongue, one of the cancers associated with excess intake of sugar and sweeteners.

NOTE: The other predisposing conditions for tongue cancer are smoking – never even tried one cigarette; drinking – come from a long line of alcoholics who drank themselves to death, and decided I was never going to drink, and never did; and, chewing betel nut, which I'd never heard of.

Anyway…

When we first checked them, our blood sugars were so high I thought the damn meter was broken. But purchase of a second meter, and repeat tests at different times proved that in FACT we were both in incredibly bad health.

We were also way too broke to see a doctor, had no health insurance, had no backup, had nothing but a roof over our heads and the Internet and a desperate need to fix our lives.

Matt researched, and found the Paleolithic diet, which for us became our permanent way of eating for a bunch of years.

Because we were desperate AND broke, we ate what I called Wal-Mart Paleo, which was hamburger and other cheap ground meat, frozen vegetables, and raw fruit and nuts in season – or whichever was cheapest at Wax-Mart at the time. We eliminated snacks and junk food, and just ate one meal a day. (Mostly to keep down costs.)

This was a low-carb, medium-protein, high fat diet.

And we tested our blood sugars both fasting and one hour after meals. **Rigorously.** I used to be a nurse. I knew what happened to people with long-term diabetes.

In a short period of time, I lost at least sixty pounds (more, but because I'd stopped weighing myself after the scale topped 220, I don't know how much more), but I plateaued at 160, and Matt lost over a hundred, from around 300 down to around 200.

Our weight is both still there.

More importantly, our fasting and postprandial blood sugars dropped down to normal. And then never went back up.

With the one meal a day thing, and no snacking, we didn't know it at the time, but we had accidentally discovered 24-Hour Intermittent Fasting, which was eating just the one low-carb, medium protein, high fat meal a day, and drinking lots of fluids.

So I can attest that eating Paleo works to get the weight off. Well. And quickly.

But here's the thing. I'd been a dieter since my early twenties, and the thing I KNEW about dieting was that no matter what you did, the diet would eventually stop working, and the weight would come back, and bring friends.

But this weight never came back.

Neither Matt nor I regained the weight we lost, which is unheard-of for diets.

Until, about a year ago, when we changed the *way* we ate. We started eating extra meals, and snacking, and our weight started to climb.

Which was when we discovered – guess what? – it wasn't the Paleo that caused the weight loss. It was something else.

We went back to eating once a day, and the weight came back off.

Back to tongue cancer for a minute

I'd been a diet soda fan since diet soda came out in the 1970s, and my fluid of choice was not water, but the diet crap I've been drinking forever.

Even while eating Paleo, I hung on to those damn diet drinks.

It looks now like the artificial sweeteners are what caused the tongue cancer.

I have no other predisposing factors.

- Never drank.
- Never smoked.
- Never chewed betel nut.

Turns out tongue cancer "of unknown etiology" (which means "we have no fucking clue what's causing this) is showing up in women in their fifties – in other words, the exact market for folks who drink a lot of diet sodas, and have for years. My evidence is corollary, not causative, but there's a lot of it.

With about half my tongue gone, and no desire whatsoever to lose the other half, or my jaw, or half my face [I've seen the pictures: Not for the squeamish] I determined that I would do everything I could to stop the cancer.

I found mine when it was just a place on my tongue that wrinkled a little when I curled it, and that was sensitive to heat.

I've been drinking a lot of green tea. A LOT. Enough that it was causing me severe nausea every day.

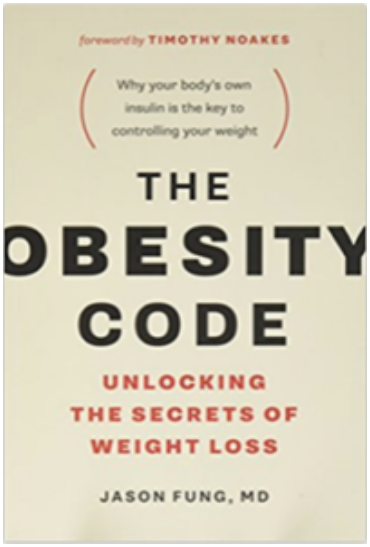
But it was the only thing I knew I could do that might help prevent the cancer from coming back, so I kept at it.

Matt was searching for eating-related help, though, and discovered mention of autophagy (the process of the body

destroying broken cells to use pieces to build new, healthy cells), and a link to this and improvements in squamous cell cancer.

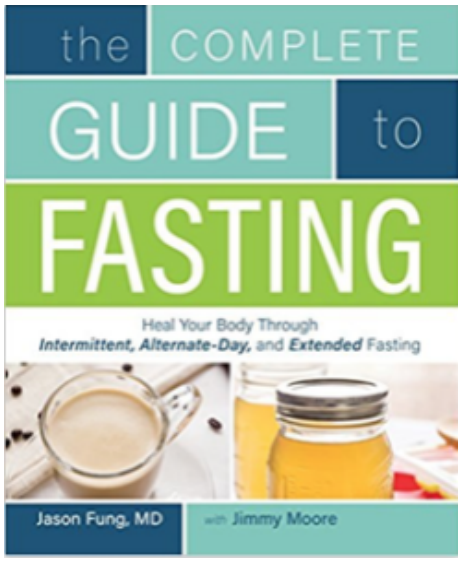
He got the book.

I don't recall if I've ever recommended a book here before (except for one of my own) – but I'm recommending not one, but two – and their author, Jason Fung, MD:



The Obesity Code

The Obesity Code: Unlocking the Secrets of Weight Loss



The Complete Guide to Fasting

The Complete Guide to Fasting: Heal Your Body Through Intermittent, Alternate-Day, and Extended Fasting

Why I’m recommending?

Because he clearly demonstrates the link between elevated insulin and a massive host of health problems (including Type 2 Diabetes, morbid obesity, squamous cell cancers, and other life-threatening diseases, like Alzheimer’s), and then CLEARLY demonstrates how to drop your insulin blood levels back to normal, and what doing this can do to save your life.

And I can confirm from more than a decade of personal experience that what he recommends works.

By the way, these are not affiliate links. I make nothing if you buy these. I bought both books myself, and am following the process – and I’d like my readers to be able to live longer, healthier, better lives. So we’ll all be around longer.

Holly



P.S. If you’re an HCW writer, there’s a place for discussion here – LINK UPDATED 2021. You’ll need to login first.

And the “Late 2021 Update”

I’m still doing intermittent fasting. Still alternating between keto and paleo, just to keep some variety in what I eat. Still weigh between 145 and 150 on any given (but rare) doctor’s appointment. Haven’t had to change clothing sizes since about 2019. Plain old off-the rack sizes 12-14,

depending on the cut and the manufacturer.
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