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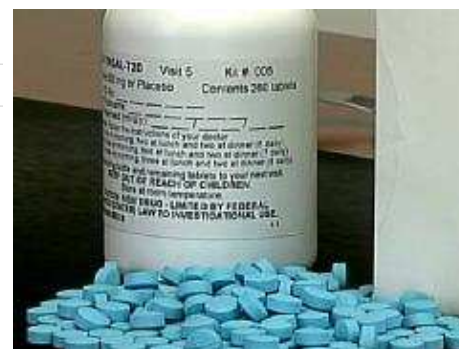
Researchers Eye New Treatment For Type 2 Diabetes

Generic Arthritis Drug Could Lower Blood Sugar, Doctors Say

POSTED: 4:04 pm EST January 29, 2009
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BOSTON -- There's a promising development in the treatment of type 2 diabetes. Local researchers are investigating whether an inexpensive arthritis drug can help diabetics.

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News Center 5's Heather Unruh reported Thursday on the latest research.

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Mary Ann Provost, of Jamaica Plain, Mass., was diagnosed as a pre-diabetic

more than 30 years ago. A few years back, she went on a low-glycemic diet to control her type 2 diabetes. It worked for a while, but then her glucose began creeping up again.

"There wasn't any way I could keep it down. And then at the same time, I was having a hard time with my arthritis," Provost said.

Shortly after that, Provost turned to the Joslin Diabetes Center for help. Researchers there were studying an arthritis drug to see if it could lower blood sugar in patients with type 2 diabetes.

"And it (blood sugar) continued to go down and down and down, until it was in the low hundreds," Provost said.

At Joslin Diabetes Center, Dr. Allison Goldfine and her colleague, Dr. Steve Shoelson, are focusing on the drug Salsalate in a new, nationwide clinical trial.

"The smaller studies we've conducted to this point have found that it is possible to lower blood sugars and improve metabolism," said Goldfine.

Researchers believe a protein that triggers inflammation is turned on in overweight people. The inflammation leads to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. They suspect Salsalate shuts off that protein.

"We think inflammation that's enhanced and produced by weight gain can be suppressed by this drug," Shoelson.

"For me, it's a miracle drug," Provost said.



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She has stayed on the drug for her arthritis pain, but says it is also keeping her blood sugar in check.

"This was, for me, great. Because I really didn't want to take diabetes drugs, but I was willing to take one that did two things at the same time," she said.

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