



The doctor of the future

Dr Craig Golding is South Africa's first **American board-certified anti-aging doctor**. Discover what made him pursue the challenge of repairing and preventing disease

By Nikki Graham

Like the movie *Sliding Doors*, there comes a time in all our lives when the "train doors" slide open for a brief moment, to a new path – if we're brave enough to walk through.

What do you do if you're a conventionally trained specialist physician, running an ICU unit at one of Johannesburg's hospitals and your father dies from type 2 diabetes complications, while taking seven different types of medication? You take stock and reassess your training, even if you are a cum laudé, award winning medical school graduate. Quite possibly, you begin to look for reasons why the education you received is unable to cure chronic disease.

For Dr Craig Golding, it was after his father died that the turning point came. He began to question why medicine didn't seek to prevent disease, but rather to treat it after it arrived – as though doctors were born to use their highly functioning minds as pharmaceutical wicket keepers. Neither he nor his fellow colleagues had ever consciously signed up for that kind of doctor-patient contract. As medical students they had all shared a passion for making the ill well.

Nevertheless, as he began to research how his father's

disease could have been prevented – if such a thing was possible – Dr Golding discovered a whole new field of medicine he had never known existed – preventive, anti-aging medicine.

Much like the quantum physicists who stumble on molecular behaviour that defies conventional science, once initiated, the mind simply refuses to turn back. And so it was with Dr Golding. Based on his discovery of a groundbreaking field of medicine, he spent almost R500 000 on three years of study in the USA, attending lectures at the American Academy for Anti-Aging Medicine. In the end, Dr Golding became the only specialist physician in Africa to hold American board certification in Anti-Aging and Regenerative Medicine – and a Fellowship in Anti-Aging and Functional Medicine.

There was no turning back.

Stepping stones

Looking back at his father's heart attack at the age of 42, Dr Golding

can see the stepping stones to mortality. With the benefit of his training in anti-aging and preventive medicine he knows that heart disease very rarely lives in isolation and is often an early indicator of greater trouble looming.

Today, although it's too late to help his father, Dr Golding knows what warning signs to look for, to change the fates of chronically ill patients. Quite often it's a matter of following the clues yielded by blood tests and then treating them with nutrients proven to treat disease.

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Explaining the difference in his treatment approach, Dr Golding says, "In conventional practice, you manage the disease, by diagnosing and then by treating it with chronic medication. Conventional medicine essentially treats the symptoms of the disease, but often misses its root. Integrative medicine, in contrast, treats the cause of disease. It does not totally do away with drugs, but in many cases we can get people off conventional drugs, which often have serious side effects, and onto lifestyle-based plans."

Here are a few examples of patients whose diseases have been significantly reversed under Dr Golding's care:

Halting heart disease

In November 2007, Mr Walters* came to see Dr Golding for the first time. Aged 66, he suffered from ischaemic heart disease, in which there is reduced blood supply to the heart muscle. Mr Walters' previous treatment history reflected the conventional medical approach, in which heart disease is managed only after it appears – usually with "stents" and heavy pharmaceutical medicines. A stent is a small tube that prevents the diseased artery from collapsing.

Five years before he came to see Dr Golding, Mr Walters* cardiologist had arranged for a stent to be inserted in his artery and had placed him on several kinds of pharmaceutical drugs. The drugs included: Tarka, for blood pressure; Nexiam, for stomach acid; Concor, a beta blocker; Crestor, a statin to lower cholesterol; and Puricos, for gout. Unfortunately, these medicines come with a range of serious side effects.

Mr Walters* complained to Dr Golding of muscle pains and low libido, which are common side effects of Crestor and Concor. In addition, he was drinking heavily and eating unhealthily.

To get to the root of Mr Walters*'s problems, Dr Golding ordered a series of complex blood tests. The results were startling. A GGT test is a specialist test that analyses liver function and can detect liver disease. While a healthy score lies somewhere between 0 and 35, Mr Walters* had a reading of 316. Clearly his liver function was in crisis.

Further tests showed that, for a man of his age, Mr Walters* had very low testosterone, extremely high levels of cholesterol and excess fat in his blood, and high homocysteine levels, which are linked to a high risk of heart disease, stroke or Alzheimer's.

Based on Mr Walter's* blood test results Dr Golding prescribed several nutraceuticals proven in studies to reduce heart disease. These included: ubiquinol CoQ₁₀, policosanol, red yeast rice, beta-sitosterol, silibinin, n-acetyl-cysteine, omega 3 fish oil, and magnesium glycinate. In addition, Dr Golding prescribed daily doses of folic acid, vitamin B₂, B₆, and B₁₂, inositol and zinc, which are also proven to benefit heart disease patients.

Result: 2 months later

Just two months later, Mr Walters* was a new man. A second set of blood tests showed his liver function had improved dramatically, his homocysteine levels and excess fat had decreased, while his cholesterol had practically halved. In addition, he no longer felt any muscle pain.

As of 2009, Mr Walters* is in good health, far removed from the clutches of heart disease.

Keeping stroke and Alzheimer's at bay

In 2007, Mr Kotze* came to see Dr Golding. Aged 56, he had a strong family history of stroke and Alzheimer's. His father had had an infarction at age 50, a condition in which tissue dies because the arterial blood supply is blocked. When one of the main heart arteries is blocked,

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an infarction leads to a heart attack. If arterial supply to the brain is restricted, it leads to a stroke.

In addition to his high risk profile, Mr Kotze* was binge drinking, not exercising and eating lots of red meat and dairy products.

With a height of 181cm and weighing 95kg, Mr Kotze* was moderately obese and suffered from high blood pressure. Given his high risk profile and his lifestyle he seemed destined for either Alzheimer's or a stroke.

Dr Golding ordered an exercise stress test (ECG), various blood tests and an Alzheimer's gene test. The ECG came back negative, which meant Mr Kotze's* heart was working normally, but his homocysteine levels were very high, placing him at grave risk for Alzheimer's and stroke. His levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol and his triglycerides were also much higher than the norm.

Dr Golding recommended Mr Kotze* begin an exercise programme and adopt a healthy, cholesterol-lowering eating plan. In addition, he prescribed the following nutraceuticals: omega 3 fish oil, policosanol, red yeast rice, CoQ10, a homocysteine lowering formula, TMG, curcumin, carnitine, vitamin E, and phosphatidylserine.

Result: 2 months later

Mr Kotze's* homocysteine and triglyceride levels had declined nicely, and his LDL cholesterol had normalised.

Result: 5 months later

By this point Mr Kotze's* homocysteine levels had fallen dramatically to 10.7, from an original high of 48, radically reducing his Alzheimer's risk. Six months after the first consultation, Mr Kotze's homocysteine levels fell even further to 9.2. He was now officially off the high risk list – no longer heading for stroke or Alzheimer's.

Hindering Hashimoto's

In 2007 Mrs Zeller* first consulted Dr Golding. Aged 58, she was postmenopausal, overweight, and extremely depressed by her continued ill health. She had developed a condition called Hashimoto's thyroiditis, in which the body's immune system attacks the cells of the thyroid gland. Symptoms of Hashimoto's include weight gain, depression, mania, sensitivity to cold, fatigue, panic attacks, high cholesterol, reactive hypoglycaemia, constipation, migraines, muscle weakness, cramps, memory loss, infertility and hair loss.

Conventionally, thyroid conditions are diagnosed by testing the level of thyroid antibodies. At the time Mrs Zeller* first consulted Dr Golding she was already taking Diotroxin and Eltroxin – thyroid hormone replacement pills that are the conventional form of treatment for this condition. Dr Golding, however, has had tremendous success in reducing antibodies and managing thyroid hormone levels using combinations of Eltroxin and Tertroxin.

Before treating Mrs Zeller, Dr Golding ordered blood and saliva hormone tests and discovered that Mrs Zeller's* cholesterol was

far higher than the norm. Her LDL (bad) cholesterol was also very high, while her GGT score was quite simply horrific, indicating a very fatty liver. To top it all off, Mrs Zeller's* estrogen level was dangerously low.

Dr Golding prescribed a form of bio-identical estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. In addition, he prescribed certain nutrients to reduce fat storage and carbohydrate craving, a stress damage reduction formula to help normalise the adrenal glands, silibinin to help the liver detox and a cholesterol-lowering formula.

Result: 2 months later

Remarkably, just two months after consulting Dr Golding Mrs Zeller's* health was greatly improved and

Just two months after consulting Dr Golding Mrs Zeller's* health was greatly improved and her depression lifted



her depression lifted. New blood tests revealed that her cholesterol had halved, her GGT score had reduced from 200 to 37, and her estrogen had increased to a high of 176 from 41. Even her progesterone levels had increased, which is remarkable, since progesterone levels after menopause are normally as low as 2.7.

While Dr Golding's results may seem extraordinary, to him they are simply the result of scientific studies being put into practice. After all, what good is science if it cannot benefit mankind? And since there are so many studies pointing to the use of nutrients and hormones in reversing disease, why should we ignore them?

In the aftermath of his "sliding doors" experience, he feels medicine should always have been about prevention, early detection and reversal of chronic diseases. It's just taken till the 21st century for this new medicine of the future to see the light. **HQ**

*Patients' names have been changed to protect privacy

i In her book, *The Field*, medical researcher and author, Lynne McTaggart, interviewed several famous quantum physicists who described their confusion and shock when their individual experiments revealed molecules defying the laws of conventional science. Not wishing to become pioneers on the fringes of conventional medicine, jeopardising their grants, they were nevertheless forced to accept what their experiments showed – that the truth was often far different from their training.

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