Type 2 diabetes: Turning management into remission

Like type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes has long been considered a progressive, incurable condition in which the optimal goal after diagnosis is tight glycemic control and risk factor management to prevent vascular disease and neuropathy. The assumption that type 2 diabetes is irreversible is supported by the strong association with genetics, the high prevalence of microvascular complications, and the loss of beta cell mass and function frequently present at diagnosis.

The typical impact on morbidity and mortality for those with type 2 diabetes is rather grim and in excess of many cancers. The average 10-year survival rates for breast cancer and non-Hodgkin lymphoma are 84% and 55%, respectively; the average 10-year lifespan for type 2 diabetes is 50%. While the goal for most patients with cancer is remission, the patient with type 2 diabetes is taught that they need to live with this incurable disease. This need not be the case.

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References