

PREVIEW_ Gary Taubes - Presentation (San Diego 2017) 2

Gary Taubes: You could actually go back in time to the very beginnings of this epidemic. And Elliott Joslin was there. So, Elliott Joslin became, in the 20th century, became the leading authority in diabetes in the United States, the god of diabetes.

But when he was a young, had just graduated from med school at Harvard in 1894 and as a young doctor in 1898, he went back with his colleague Reginald Fitz, who was a Harvard pathologist, very famous at the time.

And they examined all the inpatient records at Massachusetts General Hospital going back to when it opened in 1824 and they wanted to figure out, they wanted to identify every single case of diabetes at Massachusetts General and try to understand how to treat this disease and how it progresses, by looking at what they had seen in the case records.

So, they identified 48,000 handwritten patient records over 74 years. And Joslin in this article talked about going through, patiently, going through these handwritten records.

And the question I asked physicians is, "How many cases of diabetes do you think they saw in 40,000 patients, in 74 years in the major Massachusetts hospital?" And the answer is 172 cases in 74 years.