A Family Affair: How To Get Your Family On Board For Your MS Lifestyle Transcript

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Introduction and Background

Welcome, Madiha I am so glad that you agreed to be interviewed. We have such a great topic here. So would I like to have you do is just very briefly introduce who you are to the audience and then we'll get started.

Thank you so much, Dr. Terry Wahls, for having me. I am so incredibly honored to be here. I am so excited. I am a board certified family physician, author of seven books, including The Holistic Hour Extra Guide to Healing Chronic Inflammation and Disease.

I am a mother of five boys. Speaker Podcaster The kids have a Holistic Kids Show podcast that you've been on and doing, but most importantly, very passionate about trying to get this message to every household that it can be done easy time and cost effective because I feed a family of ten on a daily basis.

Okay. So, you know, this is something that I too care deeply about. I know people have said you can't implement the walls protocol. You can't implement the walls start unless you're wealthy.

And you and I both feel very passionately that that is not true. So slowly. Well, let's talk first about the time burdens that so many families have. Both parents are working.

How how do you help your families deal with the time burden? Well, I think first, we really recognize that this is a problem. I think right now millions of Americans are facing these financial hardships due to these rising consumer prices and the inflation.

And it's actually been the highest it's ever been in the last 40 years. Serious financial problems affecting 40% of the households in America. And actually, food insecurity.

Time and Cost Barriers to Healthy Eating

Before the pandemic, it was 35 million people across America had food insecurity and now it's 50 million. So there is, you know, a problem here, but educating the patient and empowering them with these lifestyle choices can really, you know, get them a long way.

And there are simple things that you can do in your everyday lifestyle and routine and creating these routines that can make it really affordable and time and cost cutting and cost effective.

This is and it's and it's super fun and delicious all at the same. So once you empower them and I feel that me as a practitioner, when I do this with my family, I'm able to do this then with others, because then I can role model that type of behavior.

And so that just like it works with me as a practitioner role modeling that to my patients, I need to then role model this to my family. Okay. So nuts and bolts, what are some of the time saving tips that you have people do?

Well, we have to first focus on those tips that will optimize the immune system and lower chronic inflammation, optimize the mitochondria. You know, help with all the different pathways that really optimize your health and well-being.

And we have to focus on the things that we can do, not all those things that we can't do because we have the power. We have to just educate and empower our patients.

And I and I just really want to, you know, encourage and give people hope that, you know, I've discovered this pathway and discover this, you know, with patients with multiple chronic illnesses.

My first patient that I ever saw was she actually had nine different autoimmune diseases and she worked at the Family Dollar store and she worked at the daycare.

That's really where she was. She didn't have a lot of money, but these are simple things that she could have implemented. And then within months you had 50% resolution of nine different autoimmune conditions.

So this is powerful things that you can incorporate. And as both focusing on the simple things that we do on a daily basis and keeping it super simple, developing your healing routine is what I like to call it, and to recognize that all of these pieces are really cost effective and focusing on the things I can lower chronic inflammation, optimize the mitochondria, help your DNA wood are your foundations of good health and that's your digestive health and detoxification.

That for us is stress, sleep, social and spiritual health and really optimizing each one of those areas to then, you know, help. And the first place that I really do love to start is the healing power of gratitude.

That is probably the most powerful piece that influences our genes. It boosts optimism.

Gratitude as a Daily Healing Practice

It really helps to prevent and improve the immune system, the well-being, happiness. And immediately when we wake up in the morning, you say ten things that you're thankful for every single solitary day.

It really changes I subconscious because I subconscious mind is really nothing but like these neural pathways that have been established in the brain that have been the result of the past, the leaves and conditioning, so your subconscious doesn't really know thinking of its own, but rather it relies on your perception of the world around you and listening to verbal and non-verbal cues so we can consciously turn this negativity to positive from the inside out.

And that is through these neural pathways associated with negativity, then pulling them down, but then using gratitude, be conscious to change our subconscious by immediately when we wake up in the morning, say ten things that you're thankful for every day, because that's probably the most one of the most powerful pieces that I have to help will help with my patients to really optimize their immune system and lower that chronic, chronic inflammation.

Okay. So it's everyone listening that cost only the time. Exactly. It's very. And so you say those things, you write them out. We just see them in our head.

We say them out loud or just write them out. We can do it both ways. If we can start with just saying, even in our head, journaling and writing about it, expressing gratitude, showing appreciation to all those people that have helped you in your life.

It's powerful. So that's my practice for going to bed at night. I have a gratitude practice where I visualize times in my life where people have helped me and I express my gratitude towards them, and I do it as an early child adolescent in college, medical school, and then in my early in, now in my current life, so very powerful.

I love it. It's powerful and it's super simple. And again, create that routine and have a good time either in the morning and the afternoon in the evening.

I incorporate gratitude all throughout my life and all throughout my day. So the next piece of the puzzle is the food, because we know that food is the number one driver of a chronic disease, and it's the artificial fake food that we're eating.

Right, because right now, globally, one in every five deaths was associated with a poor diet. And for every 10% of our diets that come from these processed, artificial fake foods, the risk of death actually goes up 14% of all cause mortality.

So we have so many benefits of like the universe has provided us hundreds of thousands of different types of fruits and vegetables and diverse foods we need to start to incorporate because unfortunately, when we start to incorporate these ultra processed foods, studies have actually shown that just by incorporating these ultra processed foods, we actually consume more 500 more calories from.

So we think that we're not eating, we're eating less. But it actually, you know, we're actually eating a lot more. And it really has to do because when people are consuming these ultra processed diets, one of the appetite suppression hormones called peptide Y y has actually been shown in other studies to be related to restrict, you know, restraining people's appetite actually went up despite, you know, people eating, you know.

So then we have they have shown that these levels of even this hunger hormone, the Gremlin, went down on an unprocessed diet.

Why Real Food Matters

So, again, we need to know that. And also when we eat more junk food, it actually also leads to leptin resistance. And then therefore, we are constantly eating more.

So we think that, you know, oh, just because it's cheaper, right? These foods may be cheaper in the you know, but in the long run, we're actually consuming more of it.

While these real foods, when we focus on quality foods, you're actually eating less food less often. And guess what? Now you're spending less on food quantity.

So that's where in the long run, when we eat real foods that we strengthen our gut flora and immune system, we stabilize our insulin levels. We don't have out of those spikes, those hangry.

So in my house, it actually I don't have I mean, I have five boys and one is still a two month old. But once I there's no hangry, there's no ups and downs.

We can actually talk to these kids like the normal human beings that I can see. And my husband's relationship is so much better. My in-laws relationship is so much better because we're all eating real food.

We don't have that hangry. There's no you know, it stimulates leptin. They're satiated. I'm not in the kitchen all day long. Yay. And it's nutrient dense foods that again, you can go longer in between these meals.

So and then to really, really educate your family and your children about what is actually in your food, my kids can read labels and they know that, for example, like MSG that's it's a neurotoxin and kills brain cells can cause headaches and allergies and damages your gut and actually leads to these food cravings and it is a stability along with these additives and preservatives all really push us to eat more food.

And so when they read the labels and the ingredients, they're able to be now empowered with the food choices that they make on daily basis. And they're not, you know, brainwashed by society to eat certain types of foods.

And even like the fructose, I mean, if you look at all the products at the processed foods group toast, actually also that makes you increase your food cravings is actually been a strong correlation between the elevated levels of sorbitol and fructose and with the neurological disability and multiple sclerosis patients.

So again, we have to get rid of some of that and just to educate and empower our children and just to keep it simple. Eating the rainbow. I know that like this is why I love to follow you and your work and see what you're eating every day.

Because it's simple. Dr. Walls it doesn't have to be complicated and it can be fun. We're incorporating all of these different colors in the Rainbow is, you know, we have a reds and oranges and a yellows and a blues with and those iron ends and our whites and our brown, you know, with all of these different colors and each color has a certain

benefit.

But the thing is, it's super easy and keeping it simple is super affordable. So that's probably one of the biggest pieces is keeping it simple. When we start going for these like gluten free products and these gluten free, you know, are just going out to eat on a regular basis, that's when it really starts to add up.

But when we keep food simple, focusing on tons of vegetables, clean protein, healthy fats, focusing on the foods that you can eat is really, really beneficial.

And that's what I do with, you know, even when people come over keeping it simple. Against everyone listening in the audience. I'm not a big advocate of gluten free products now.

I am a huge advocate of foods that are naturally gluten free. So we're we're talking vegetables, a wide variety of vegetables, including tubers, yams, squashes, potatoes, and including, if you're vegetarian, legumes and rice for your complete protein meat, fish.

You know, we have way too many deer. So many folks have no people who hunt and have plentiful access to to venison. Yes. So so I saw people in my veteran affairs clinics living on food stamps who we taught to implement the Wall diet.

And they did so very easily. And they had plenty of venison. And again, if you don't have access to that finding cost effective proteins and sale and stocking up can also be really beneficial.

I mean, actually, my freezer right now is stocked up with whole chickens that I bought for 199 per pound, you know, and it actually comes with all of the organs.

Affordable Food Strategies and Meal Prep

So that for me it's like, wow. And now I can use that for my broths and my soups and then I can use that work in meats on a regular basis that all them come for 199 a pound and that you can find you can find those sales and stock up, hunting, foraging, you know, all of those ways, gardening, limiting, eating out to when I when we do go out and about what we I love to take my electric skillet which is my ceramic electric skillet and even in a hotel rooms, my protein and my vegetables.

And I'll make that for an entire family. And therefore now I saved money on it, eating out and still having fun at the same time. So that's another thing that we do and incorporate the entire family with the gardening and different types of foods and vegetables and even making it fun at home.

We do all our celebrations at home and you can take fruit and cut it up. And I actually made fruit cake. That was really pretty. You take a watermelon, right?

And then you just make it really pretty with all the different colors. And then there's different types of recipes you can use to make so you can have celebrations at home.

We talked about buying in bulk and generic, but really focus on the basics vegetables, green protein, healthy fats, you know, plan and prepare in bulk.

You know, load up your plate with high fiber foods. You know, those focus on those inexpensive veggies. Another huge hack that I have that I absolutely love is, you know, buying and purchasing really high quality ingredients.

For example, spices is a really cheaper way of getting your boost of phytonutrients in every meal, tons of spices, and you can now hear you have all the different colors of the spices, incorporate those into your meals.

And each again, though, that's also eating the rainbow. I also love to use to grow my own broccoli sprouts and microgreens. And you can do that even if you're in an apartment and it's it's probably the most cost effective tool to

really increase the phytonutrients that you're getting per meal.

And it's really just two tablespoons of these broccoli sprouts in three fourths cup of water. You soak it up overnight, you will then leave overnight and then the next day you throw it out the water and then you rinse it and you just put it at a 45 degree angle away from sun, direct sunlight.

And within 5 to 7 days, you have these delicious sprouts that you can then incorporate into every meal. And that's what I love to do is I, I like to love to hide all these really powerful and, you know, these powerful nutrients because we know that broccoli sprouts, again, great for your immune system and like just a table a little bit is 100 times more sulforaphane than broccoli.

So it really goes a long way just by having these and my kids love it will grow all different types of sprouts and will incorporate them into our everyday meals.

And again, if you start to buy these things like it's really expensive, but when you start to incorporate like do these things at home and again this can be done with anybody in anywhere and no matter your living situation.

And now when you're growing these sprouts, is it just one kind of seed or do you have multiple different kinds of seeds in the same jar? No, I use different I use the same because you're surprised what I know.

But what I do is I use the same seed in that jar. Okay. But different types. Yeah, but you can then increase the amount you can. Different types that you can do.

But in my house we love broccoli sprouts. The kids can't get enough of that. And then watching them grow and watching them sprout every day they come and they're like, Oh, look.

And it's just becomes like this experiment that they have on a daily basis. So this is a great way to get your family engaged in what you're eating. Yes.

And a lot of times, especially in the winter months, it's really difficult to, you know, obviously garden outside. So this this is fun ways that we can incorporate an entire vast array of phytonutrients inside.

So that's really and remember like practice makes perfect so start little there's so many fun different ways to do it. So that was a few. That's what I do in my own household.

I hang out and we just talked about sprouting. You didn't explain growing microgreens. So let's hear about that too.

Sprouts, Microgreens, and Home Growing

So the so then what I do is and after then I that's how I log then grow them the my the microgreens is by continuing to just keep them on the overnight.

And then what you do is basically just what I do is I wash you. It's basically in like a mason jar with these. Screen. With a screen on it that you leave at a 45 degree angle and then everyday just rinse out the lens, out the seeds twice, twice, twice a day, morning and evening, and that's it.

And then you just leave it. So, so that's for the sprouts. But if, if we're going to make microgreens Stuart just now, let them see some light. Yes. Then I'll just let them see in sunlight.

Okay. Okay. Yeah. So then we sell that and then we actually increase them with the sunlight. So it's super simple things that you can incorporate into your everyday daily routine to get those the microgreens.

And again, I incorporate that into my like if I'm doing ground beef. Dr. Walz I'll throw those in there and kabobs, then I'll make out, throw those in there, you know, so anything that, it's just so much fun.

So then it's definitely one to focus on, you know, your clean environment, right? Because we know that detoxification is also important to help you heal.

And so lifestyle is key. Eating real foods, making sure you're sleeping, stress management, gratitude, making sure you're pooping, peeing, perspiring, Epsom salt baths, you know, dry brushing, massage, you know, hot and cold showers.

These are things that are so super, you know, very cost effective. They can really optimize your healing and then making those eco swap swaps. In my house, like, for example, you know, we don't have any plastics.

We have now these glass jars that we'll use and that's what I'll freeze and that's where I will store things. And, you know having how store inside plants it's sometimes it's people can't afford, you know, air purifiers in every room.

Guess what? I have a plan. I have plans in every one of my rooms where my kids are sleeping, you know, where they're studying everywhere. And then just by going out and grounding that these are simple things, hot and cold showers, just try to stand.

You know, you don't have to you know there's a lot of the talk now about our Mrs.. Oh hang on let's define who misses the audience may not know that term.

So who are Mes says is defined as a dose response phenomenon characterized by low doses of stimulation, a high doses of inflow inhibition. So basically it's putting your body under stress for sure, like mild stress can actually have really beneficial effects on your immune system, aging and longevity.

So that's where, you know, the sauna and the cold and the ice baths and things like that can be beneficial, but you don't have to have those specific, you know, extra, you know, you don't have to have a sauna at home.

But the thing is, I we have a gym membership that has a sauna, you know, so these are things that you can then incorporate into your everyday daily routine that can then help with that along with these hot and cold showers, just start to stand under the shower for about start with one minute hot and then go to one minute cold and then slowly start to increase to 5 to 10 minutes on each side.

So as much as you can tolerate and that will then also be super beneficial to help you heal. And again, these are things that are super cost effective.

Detox, Environment, and Hormetic Stress

Cost effective. I talk to my husband, I talk to my patients about just going outside. Yes, outside. Be in the weather. And, you know, I live here in Iowa, so I can go out during the summer to experience heat.

I can go out during the winter experience cold now. So I want people to be sensible. If there's, you know, -50 wind chill, that is probably not the day to go out.

That's not what you want to do for that. But, you know, most days I get myself outside in the morning, preferably within a couple hours of the sun going up.

And I just stand out on my porch like you have the sky and experiencing the weather that's happening that day. And that's again, the grounding again. Right.

Putting your feet on the ground. Can all of that just nature in and of itself? We can go into stress now, those stress management techniques that are super beneficial because we know that stress leads to 80% of the immune stress, 80% of the complaints that come to our primary care physicians.

It really of stress suppresses the secreted trait IGA, which is an immune molecule. It affects your gut flora and leads to high cortisol that raises your blood sugar, that triggers leptin and insulin resistance.

So if we can incorporate stress management techniques into our daily routine, that is again something that can really help to optimize your overall health.

And those we love to do is getting out in nature, just like what you talked about bees boosting the immune system, restoring our brain connections, improving our overall brain health, sort of boosts serotonin and leads to better mood and improved ability to focus and sleep and mindfulness and the ability to cope whenever stressors come after you.

And then also meditation. We know that that also improves the quality of life. I we have specific times in our day that I will meditate. We will do it outside.

So you combine it is getting your early morning sun that can also be really beneficial, but also to recognize that, you know, simple things like laughing, chanting, singing, you know can also even I tongue spray kissing, a scraping and even making yourself gag.

These are all how to stimulate those that vagus nerve because we know that heart rate variability. So if we check our heart rate variability and what is that is when you're the heart rate takes along type your heart rate variability.

We want it to be high, right? Because low vagal tone, low heart rate variability, high heart rate ability to recover your rapport. Our ability to recover.

So these simple things like that can actually raise heart rate variability, improve the vagal responses like laughing and chanting and you know, singing to yourself are really powerful ways to improve mitochondrial function and optimize your immune system.

And so in my house, we tell it we love what the kids love to tell jokes. So I am specific times of the day that well, especially when they come back, I'm like, Tell me, you tell me something really fun that happened today, or tell me a joke and that will really that's that's my way of really incorporating some and then decreasing, you know, the, the, my stresses in my life and really being mindful and be present in that moment is have those connection is our next thing that I was going to talk about also.

Stress, Connection, and Sleep

So and that will also improve your heart rate variability and optimize your overall immune system is by the how much a of you have because love does heal right and so keeping people around you that can lift you up not drag you down and then optimizing.

I sleep because right now, unfortunately, we are living in a world where we are kids are not sleeping. One third of all of Americans are getting less than 7 hours of sleep and lack of sleep is really destroying our circadian rhythms.

It's quadrupling our risk of cancer, it's doubling our risk of obesity. It's increasing our inflammatory markers like Hs-Crp, and it triggers a production of all these other inflammatory chemicals.

So getting good quality sleep and there was actually another study recently had done and like it's craziness that the amount of the kids are just not getting enough sleep.

But now recent published in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry found that poor sleep and adolescence may increase the risk of developing multiple sclerosis.

So we need to really start to prioritize this in the younger generations and in ourselves by creating that sleep routine, going to bed around the same time.

What I do is again decreasing the amount of blue light that you're seeing right beforehand, making sure you're not eating at least an hour before you go to bed.

These are simple things that we can incorporate. Turning off those electronics at least 90 minutes before bedtime will allow your melatonin and cortisol to sort of normalize again.

We talked about minimizing those blue lights using the amber light glasses or glasses that will filtered lights up. Simple things that you can do. And then you can even get like flipping off your Wi-Fi router, keeping your phone far away from you, putting it on an airplane model airplane mode can all all limit those amps, can really disturb your sleep.

And then you know, again, creating that restful room that because we heal in our sleep and these are again simple things that we can do to get this amazing, restful, deep sleep that can really prepare you for success and and healing.

So these are one of the simple things, your lifestyle, focusing on your lifestyle, your digestive health and detoxification, the 4 hours of stress, sleep, social and spiritual health can really be really powerful.

Okay. So everyone who's been listening, we've just given you a a whole list of things that you can do step by step that don't cost money, that cost a small amount of your time.

And you can begin implementing these things at a pace that works for you. This has just been so, so powerful and so empowering. You don't need lots of money to begin now. Now.

Are you still seeing patients, media? Absolutely. I am still seeing patients. And again, and that's another thing that we when I have me practicing this type of medicine, functional, integrative, holistic medicine for the last 14 years, I recognize that these simple, basic lifestyle tips are probably the most powerful things that have seen the most results in my patients.

And that is why I'm so passionate and spreading this message that it doesn't have to be spent. You don't have to spend a lot of money. It can be simple things you can incorporate into your everyday or daily routine.

Practical Next Steps and Closing

And then, you know, even basic labs, if you can't afford really expensive blood tests, start with the basics like your CDC or RCMP, your fasting, lipids, hs-crp, homocysteine, ferritin, TPO, antibodies, thyroid, you know, TSA antibody or globulin antibodies.

They fit for pretty, you know, t three uric acid antinuclear antibodies, magnesium vitamin D B12, fasting insulin, hemoglobin A1, C, I mean B and so much more that are just the simple.

Simple things that we can do. Yeah, we can all. And the insurance usually covers that, especially for us as physicians if we recoded appropriately and start with basic supplements.

So again. There's so much we can do. So much we can do this doctor. Well, so much help. Okay. So if you wanted to give people one simple action that they should begin after listening to us, where should they begin?

Gratitude. I love that perspective. Can either be your pain or your power. Okay, take that in to your power and there's so much hope to start one day at a time, one meal at a time.

But start with gratitude immediately. When you wake up in the morning, say ten things that you're thankful for is probably the most powerful thing that you can start today.

Okay. And what is your website, Madiha. holisticmommd.com. Okay. Thank you so much. This has been wonderful. Thank you so much for having me. It's been an honor.