A Functional Medicine Look at Autism and Child Development Transcript

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Introduction to Brain Health and the Podcast

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And it's so important. You know, in the almost 11 years that we've had our practice, only 11 children that have been with us have being diagnosed with autism.

Every single one of those is actually was found to be living in a severely water damaged building. Everything is connected and I'm here to tell you how.

I am Dr. Laura Hanson with Connect My Brain. This podcast is for moms who are concerned about their child's development. The brain impacts our mind, body, and overall health.

I explain how your brain is wired, what happens when it's out of balance, and how early childhood development not only impacts your child, but can affect you as an adult years later.

Want to know how to improve your life? Join me and learn about your amazing brain and what it can do for you. Hi, everybody. Welcome to Connect My Child's Brain.

We are so glad that you are joining us and I have a very special treat for you. we have Dr. Paula Klebstos with us today. She is a medical doctor. she's a pediatrician and she is going to share some great information with about autism and how she works at this at her practice.

So Dr.

Dr. Paula Klebstos' Background and Functional Medicine Journey

Kruppstaff, thank you so much for joining us. And if you would just give us, just tell us a little bit about you. Sure. Thanks, Dr Laura, for having me.

I was and am, I guess you could say, a traditionally trained pediatrician. But when my own health started to crater, i started looking beyond all my training.

So allopathic or Western medicine, the traditional training. And I maintain my board certification, but my weight ballooned to almost 300 pounds. I knew all the things up here, that I couldn't translate that to my heart and what that meant as far as everyday living.

And then unbeknownst to me, I was living in a severely water damaged home that you couldn't see it, you can smell it. But I developed all these signs and symptoms of what we call biotoxin illness.

So I started thinking outside the box. I think it's so cool. Connect my brain. I actually went to the Dr. Amon Clinic in Atlanta to have my brain scanned.

I saw all these things and then the thing that was the linchpin that changed my life and helped me get back on track. And translating that to everyday pediatric care was precision genetics.

I know you do precision genetic, too. We're not talking about what people inherit, we're talking not about deletions

or additions, but ways to optimize how our beautiful bodies are supposed to work.

That's what we focus on here. And so in June of 2025, I hung out a shingle, and we have several medical practitioners. We have two people who interpret genetics.

we see womb to tomb, meaning newborns all the way to adults, because we a family practice doctor and pediatric nurse practitioner and family nurse practitioners with us too.

Thanks for the opportunity. And that's kind of me in a little nutshell. I was certified through the Institute for Functional Medicine also. Oh, IFM. Yes, me too.

Okay. Well, I just love when you and I had a chance for me to be on your podcast. We both really share the passion of collaboration amongst providers, you know, because like even being a doctor of chiropractic, unfortunately, most people just think, now you're just cracking backs, but there's so much more to it.

And when they take the time to find out what somebody is actually doing and the results that they're getting, it puts that patient in the middle. Like, what can we do to help that person?

I'm so intrigued by your work with children that are diagnosed with autism or was suspected to have autism. Why don't you share with us about your perspective about what is going on in that population?

You know, our genes have not changed in all these years, and our ability to recognize autism has not change in these all years. But we have all of these children who check the boxes for signs and symptoms of autism.

And unfortunately, when you go to the pediatric neurologist, the developmental pediatrician, or the clinical psychologist, they say, yes, your child meets the diagnostic criteria for autism, the only evidence-based therapy is applied behavioral analysis, get your affairs in order, because when you're gone, who's going to take care of your child?

There is no emphasis on lifestyle, no emphasize on the poisons that they put in their mouth on a daily basis. There's no coaching on how to optimize the symphony of their body.

Autism Trends, Development, and Inflammatory Triggers

When I graduated from medical school in 1990, the rate of autism was about one in 10,000. And now it's published that it is approximately one-in-31, and in some states it much greater than that.

We also see that it's more prevalent in boys. And I think you'll kind of resonate with this is that there's a system called the vestibulocochlear system, how you receive information through your ears and your eyes and how it all integrates.

and little boys mature later than girls. And so you'll see a little girl holding a baby doll, stirring a pot on her pretend stove, pretending to talk on the phone, multitasking and doing all those things, just like her mommy.

Then you see little boy at the same age, you know, lining up his cars, doing something a certain way. But it's the exception when you have a little boy whose vestibulocochlear system integrates sooner.

So if we introduce an aggressive inflammatory trigger or triggers into the immune system during this very vulnerable time period where so much cognitive and neurologic immune and endocrine development is taking place, We hurt our children and that is exactly what we've done.

I'm sure you've seen that, just this increase. Yeah. When you talk about introduction of an inflammatory trigger, can you kind of break that down, define it?

What are those? Yes. Yes, you know, I am not anti vaccine, but I'm pro patient and pro immunization. So that

means that we currently in the United States of America have a cookie cutter program where we inject certain vaccines on a certain schedule without looking at the uniqueness of every single child.

I am all for looking at how a child's immune system works, how their detoxification works. How they receive and incorporate certain types of vitamins and minerals.

And so why should we introduce 84 vaccines before the age of 18 years of age? And when we add a partial live virus vaccine, such as measles, mumps, rubella, and baricella at a certain age, that is where I hear almost every week or in every encounter with a parent that they saw these milestones go away.

Like their child stopped making as good of eye contact or they started to stop speaking or, they developed obsessive compulsive disorder or tics. And they develop just these sad eyes where there's just nothing there.

that the aggressive inflammatory trigger what I'm talking about is what i tend to see is children who've been vaccinated according to the CDC schedule instead of just taking a pause taking your breath and looking at their uniqueness so we do something called a wellness blueprint for people who want to partner with us and it's just our proprietary genetic blueprint and we're like let's look at this and decide in an intelligent sequence how we should or should not introduce things into your child's body instead of haphazardly believing that this is the way it is and this what we're going to do, this way we've always done it, instead of taking a pause and reflecting.

I couldn't agree more with you. We've got to look at this style of healthcare for everything, like even for pregnancy.

Pregnancy, Environment, and Nutrition for Brain Development

You don't just get pregnant, take some time and find out what's your blueprint before you conceive. Because those babies are getting wired in the womb.

And if you're not in that best health state, that is going to impact that developing baby. Would you agree with that? Absolutely. 100% with more piled on top of yes.

It's that, mom, you want to create an environment where you're eating non-inflammatory foods and the air that you are breathing and what is impacting your skin.

So we know that so many people live in water damaged structures. There's a wonderful way to test your home. It is through a company called Envirobiomex, envirobiomics.com.

And it's a dust collection. And so at a minimum, to check and see what the mycotoxins are. But we know that if the humidity is high, above 50%, that there will inevitably be water damage.

If people are experiencing different symptoms, in order to protect that developing baby, you just want to be putting that healthy food in, getting a good night's sleep, making sure that you have, you know and I know, the right kind of B vitamins, especially methylated vitamin B9, that's called methylfolate, and that helps with something called cerebral folate receptors.

It's all of that a cognitive development that takes place in embryogenesis from weeks 8 to 14. So if you can't read or if can pronounce the ingredients on the food, it's not food.

Just get rid of it, get the dyes, the monosodium glutamate and try to do organic according to environmentalworkinggroup.org and those kind of things. It's what we do every day.

Put those links in the show notes. So I will ask you to when you have a chance, email me those two websites because I want to let people know what you.

Have recommended because those are very good recommendations. Was your training as a pediatrician, because you really sound like me, you're very holistic.

Did you always practice that way? Was that right out of the gate? Or was that something more that you came to? No, you know, it's really interesting. I was always a little crunchy in that when I went to medical school, I had so many friends that were nurses and they said, listen to the nurses, and listen, to moms.

And so, that compassion and that desire to hear and not to dismiss concerns when I went to medical school, I did a rotation in Liberia, West Africa. And so I have come 180 degrees because I saw babies die from tetanus and vaccine preventable illnesses.

But the difference is this. We live in the United States of America where we have clean water, and we're not tying the umbilical cord and packing it with grass or dung.

And, you know, that's just about the time everybody thinks it's vaccines, but it like it is public health crises. So it really wasn't until closer to more like 15 years ago, I had tried every diet under the sun and then I did my precision genetics and I was about to die and had a ruin Y gastric bypass.

I hypertensive and I'd had two children and had horrible sleep apnea. And so I had the Roux-en-Y gastric bypass and what it could have showed it, it was a tool that I believe saved my life.

Then I was able to have two more children after that. So a total of four kids, but three out of my four children have autoimmune conditions.

Food, Sleep, and Device Recommendations

Oh, wow. Yeah, never once in the rheumatology clinic did they ask me, what is your daughter with juvenile idiopathic arthritis eating? You know, just the basic things that we think about, you know as far as functional.

So no, I wasn't always this way and it was my own health failing and then looking into IFM and the amen clinics and Why did I struggle with clinical depression for 27 years and take 11 to 13 different antidepressants and then did my precision genetics and I no longer take antidespressant and got off of those things?

Go with it. No, I wasn't crunchy all those years, no. You may have had a little flair, but it's the journey and I can definitely appreciate that because I started off as a traditional chiropractor and it was my son that actually opened up my eyes and of course my training in chriopractic was the body can heal.

And so I came into the equation, well, wait a minute, we can't have a handicap. We have to be able to fix that. And it's always brought me to the why.

Now, of course, that's exactly how I practice. Everything is, okay, your child may have trouble paying attention, but why? You're innately wired to do that, let's figure out the Why.

Let's see what we can do to help parents know. Coming from a medical pediatrician, what are some great recommendations for three things? Food, sleep, and devices, digital devices.

What would you tell those parents? How about if we start backwards? Ditch the devices? and use blue light blocking glasses, but order rings work really, really well for bigger people, not so much little ones.

But as far as food goes, because we know that gliadin, it's a protein that comes from gluten, and that's barley, rye, oat, sweet and spelt. That forms a short chain of opioid, and it crosses the blood-brain barrier and binds to opioid receptors, but also cerebral folate receptors.

And then casomorphin, which comes from dairy. You never drive by a meadow and see a grown bull sucking from mama's cow udders. Are we really meant to be drinking milk when we're grownups from cow, sheep, or goat?

I would say as far as if you have a child with autism, even if they don't have the genetic makeup to develop celiac disease, because gliadorphin and casomorphin cross the blood-brain barrier and can bind to and block folate

receptors, cerebral foliate receptors and then also cause agitation and addiction, I'd say ditch the gluten and the dairy.

and all the preservatives and those kind of things too and chemicals that you can't read the name of. Second, as far as sleep, a real simple hack is to raise the head of the bed of your child by a quarter to a half of an inch and also have block blue light for about an hour beforehand and have a very calm routine that's predictable for your children.

And sleep is associated with calmness and kindness. And so it's a time that you can sit and you read to your children or lay in bed and pray with them.

Reflect on the day. You don't want to have arguments. And so locking that light, blue light and device is about an hour prior to bed and raising the head of the bed.

Why raise it? Because the brain has something called the glymphatic system, not the lymphatic systems. And when you go to sleep, that's when clean your brain out and you raise the hat of bed, and then the train can clean itself out.

That was discovered in about 2014, the GlymPhatic Network. Yeah, let me see, third on devices. What do you mean by that, Laura? You know, I just think that the kids are getting phones way too early.

There's research that shows that all the devices, even computers, so it impacts us too. But it actually ramps up the left side of the brain more than the right side.

And it'll dampen the and it also interferes with communication.

EMF, Water Damage, and the Wellness Blueprint

So the need to talk is on the right, the work of talk on is the left. If we're ramping up the Left, we see that communication as work rather than relationship, right?

Talking to your parent. And then the screens are 2D and our eyes are 3D. Then the dopaminergic change that happens because everybody's scrolling up all the time.

So that's the kind of stuff I just, you know, we're talking about it enough. I really don't. Yeah, really, I completely agree with you. And You know, the thing about these skull and the calvarium of children is that it's much more permeable because the skull itself is not ossified or bony.

So we know that when you put a phone Right up to an ear of a five-year-old or a three- year- old child, the electromagnetic fields and radiation goes all the way to the other side.

I use radiarmor, which is radiation protection, and I have something on my desk called a defender shield that blocks EMS. And those are not who-who things.

But there are ways to see if you have dirty electricity in your home, but also just being out and about and blocking EMF in you home. Like you said, the devices, it's so true.

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And it's so important. In the almost 11 years that we've had our practice, only 11 children that have been with us have being diagnosed with autism. Every single one of those is actually was found to be living in a severely water damaged building.

We have children that have actually lost the label of autism, but our foundation is that wellness blueprint, as I call it.

I'm just going to type into the chat our website, GetToTheRoot.com.

We're here in the Houston area. We can see anyone in this state of Texas. And then I have a Florida telehealth license. Then we have another team member that can folks in a few other states that are compact states for nurse practitioners for Texas and Colorado.

So we love to partner with families. Oh, and I asked her before, I'm going to put it out there again. If you ever want to think about Georgia, let us know.

We need more open-mindedness and more willing to get to the root. So thank you so much for being with us today. You are just a wealth of knowledge and just delightful to chat with.

I'm so grateful that I've gotten to know you even over both of our little podcasts. But go ahead and tell everybody how they find you and then we'll make sure that all of your connections are put in our show notes.

Yes, Laura, thank you so much for that. I feel the same way. It's so funny how I wasn't taught and given the respect for chiropractors. You know, taking a dive into functional medicine, it's like, oh my gosh, body work and integration.

And we just have this beautiful network of chiropractors that we work with, you know for tongue ties and torticollis and cranio. you know, tygeocephaly, brachycepaly and all these other beautiful modalities and you how chiropractic works.

But our practice is get, G-E-T, the number two, TheRoot.com. Get to The Root.

Practice Information, Resources, and Closing

And you can get on our website and learn about us and if you're interested, If you listen to the podcast and you're in Texas or Florida and if you want to learn more, we would love to partner with you.

We have a free discovery call with one of our health coaches or someone who does welcome calls, and we'd love Thanks again for having me. Thank you so much.

It was lovely to see you again, and I hope you have a wonderful day. And for everybody, make sure you go check out connectmybrain.com. We've got two free events coming up in June.

The first one is for our parents to do a primitive reflex workshop. And then on the last weekend of June, we're actually doing a babysitting training seminar right in the office, free of charge, both events, one hour.

And we are going to help young people learn how to work with children that do have challenges so we can get those moms and dads out for a date night. So go to the website connectmybrain.com, go over to resource tab where the events are scheduled and get registered.

And as always, be blessed. Thanks for listening. I hope today's lesson will help you or someone you love. Do you have a question or just really want to talk to somebody about brains?

Connect with me over on Facebook or Instagram at Connect My Brain. Looking to understand and optimize your particular brain? Check out connectmybrain.com for course information and resources.

See you next class. you