A Holistic Pediatrician on Eczema, Gut Health & Raising Healthy Kids with Dr. Carole Keim Transcript

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Intro and episode overview

If you've ever taken your child to the doctor and walked away hearing there's nothing more that we can do, this episode is absolutely for you. I have so been their friends and there is nothing discouraging.

And today I'm talking with pediatrician Dr. Carol Keim whose experience practicing medicine around the world has given her a very different perspective on what pediatric care can actually look like.

We're talking about the connection between eczema, allergies and asthma, and why gut health and food diversity matter so much early in life, And what parents can do at home to support healthier kids.

That's what we're all about here, without making family life completely overwhelming or having to go to the doctor at all. And Dr. Keim also shares some incredibly practical strategies for picky eaters and sick kids and those everyday moments when you're wondering, okay, but what do I actually do?

And friends, if you are listening to this because your child's eczema keeps coming back and it won't ever go away and you ready to stop managing flare after flare, after flair and start figuring out what's actually driving it so you can overcome it and live your life, book an exima elimination method alignment call with me.

We'll talk about what is going on with your And what we can actually do moving forward so that this stops running your life so you can obtain eczema freedom, food freedom and just let your kid be a kid and you be the parent that gets to enjoy those little nuggets.

You can book your call at eximakids.com or through the link in the show notes.

Dr. Carol Keim's background and global pediatric experience

Okay, let's get into our conversation with pediatrician Dr. Carol Keim. Is your child struggling with itchy nights and endless flare ups? I'm Andrea McHugh, mom of four and host of eczema kids.

Here, you'll find natural solutions that actually work so you can heal your childhood without steroids, without the overwhelm and finally see calm, healthy skin again.

Let's get into it. Dr. Khyme, welcome to the show. Thanks. Great to be here. So, we were just talking before we hit record. I mean, you have such a background traveling all over the world and practicing medicine all the over world in different settings.

How did those experiences, maybe just go into a little bit about where you've been, who you are, and then talk about how those experience shaped the way that you think about pediatric health today?

Definitely. So I have lived in a lot of different places and I always tell people I'm a pediatrician, but not like a normal regular pediatricians, sort of a weird pediatric.

And so what I mean by that is like I've lived and a lotta different areas. I was born in New York. We moved to Boulder, Colorado when I I got to kind of grow up a little bit in both areas which have very different approaches to like, you know, culture and healthcare and all that.

I went to Colorado College, I was there for six years altogether. And so when I in school there back in, so this was 2003 to 2008, a lot of the equipment they had was manual.

So I learned how to do a blood count manually by looking at the slide under a microscope rather than putting it in a machine and reading a number. So I know what those numbers like really mean, right?

Then I did a year of residency, family practice residency in Colorado, and three years of pediatric residency and New York. And in between those, I worked in Argentina and I also worked In Finland for a month in a hospital there.

So, just got to work in like all of these different settings, big cities, little cities rural villages, And then had my house called practice. I just like a lot of different different kind of things.

And residency in New York, I feel like a kid would cough and the parents are like, okay, we need an antibiotic. We need x-ray and we got five minutes.

we've got to get out of here. You know, and I was like oh boy, i need to explain how this is a virus and you don't need these things, whereas you know I got Colorado and i remember like one of my first house calls I get there and parents were like okay my kids got a cough we did the oregano oil on the feet.

What else? And I was like, oh, okay. It's just a very different experience. So yeah, that is my approach to pediatric healthcare. I love that. Is it just maybe a compilation of all these different experiences?

And it's so funny, it makes me laugh because I'm from Boulder. But my parents were in no way the oregano oil type of people. I was from Boulder before.

It's like Boulder as it is today. And so, I'm an 80s Boulder. You know, we did a lot of antibiotics. But I am just wondering if there's one specific instance that really stood out to you that changed the way that you started to practice.

I feel like I've always just sort of gone with whatever seemed like the most interesting and fun, just followed the dopamine trail sort thing. I love change and I loved doing different things and traveling.

My parents met as flight attendants in the 70s and so I think it's just genetically ingrained that I like to travel and be in new places. And I have been to 11 different schools in my life and just lots of experience with being in a new place.

meeting new people. So I love that. I like that sort of like travel doctoring thing. Yeah, I think it's just sort been like a continual exploration of when I went to medical school.

Medical school prepares you to go to residency. And that's all. It does. You can't work. Can't do anything. Just go residency and then residency is where you specialize.

After medical you have your M. D. But you still can't do anything until you've worked at least a year and have a full state license. And then depending on the state that you're in, sometimes it's three years or more.

I was a foreign medical graduate, so that also changes things too. But anyway, after residency, then you can fully practice anywhere. They basically tell you, you open a practice and give you zero instruction on how to do that, or come work at a hospital.

Or maybe you could find a clinic to work in. And that's it and so residency prepares you for like one of those three settings and really it's for a hospital or clinic setting and that is it.

So I started off like when I graduated from residency, I was living in New York and just went to a bunch of local practices and handed out resumes and was like, hey, looking for a job and found one.

And it was at an urgent care that also did primary care. That was really fun because it's like the urgent carer, you get to do stitches, get like a strep throat, I can fix that.

You know, that's easy. The primary carers great because you got to see the kids grow up. So that was fun. But then after a while, just felt that I needed to get back to Colorado.

I was feeling like my people were back in Colorado and not in New York. Yeah, there's a lot of like, why are you so cheerful?

Why conventional care can fall short

So it's all good. I came back to Colorado and was like, I'll just hand out some resumes and find a job, no problem. And there were no jobs. So then I started my house call practice and I got some calls from locum companies to do these like sort of temporary fill-in jobs and like that sounds really fun.

So yeah, I've just been doing like, both of those for a while. I had my daughter in 2017 and then I still was practicing for awhile and got pregnant with my son.

It was like I think it's pulling me away from the kids too much. And I want to spend more time at home. So I kept doing the local work in hospitals, but then closed the house call practice.

Oh, and the book and podcast were all sort of like accidental too, the TikToks. I haven't seen the TikTok, but I definitely want to get into the books.

But I'm just so curious, your time in New York and those traditional healthcare settings, I mean, what made you really think that conventional medicine was failing those kids, especially with…

Yeah, you know what it was? It was like, so sort of two things. One was hearing several doctors say, there's nothing we can do. hate when I hear Spector say, there's nothing we can do, because there is always something you can and I refuse to believe that.

I mean, I've been the mom, but heard there was nothing you could do. It's like, what? There's just nothing more soul crushing than that! Somebody in the wake up saying like this is it.

Right? No! Or like, tincture of time, haha. No, no, there's more. There's always things you can do to make your child feel better. And there are even things that you could do make them get better, faster.

It's just really what they should be saying is there is nothing more that I know that they could be doing. So, there was that. Working in a clinic out there, I remember one of my mentors just holding up the prescription pad and saying, this is all we are to people.

And after a good six months working in primary care out, it really felt that way, that parents were just coming in, demanding prescriptions, wanting to leave.

Not really interested in like their child's health or mental health, more just like a quick fix, you know, always in a hurry, that kind of thing. And just, like, the overall negativity, I feel like it was, it's cool to be having like the worst day there.

Whereas, in Colorado, It's like you say have a nice day and you actually made it, right? Just a different, different feel. Yeah. So being a pediatrician, I just really wanted to talk to you about, you know, what everyone is here for and, it's eczema and specifically this gut immune connection.

From your standpoint, how do you explain that in a way that actually lands for parents?

Eczema, allergies, asthma, and inflammation

if there's something new for them. So eczema is part of this atopic triad. Eczeme, allergies, and asthma are the three atopic diseases and they tend to run in families.

Sometimes you'll see one or two or all three of those in a whole family, in each family member. There can be a mix. Any of these are kind of a risk factor for another one.

A parent having any of them is a factor, for your child having those. But not always the same. So it doesn't always mean like if you have eczema, your child will have Eczima, they could have an allergy.

Or if your allergic to penicillin, They might have a skin allergy or something, you know, it might be something totally different. And so exema we say, so like there's a lot of rashes in pediatrics that itch and we Say exima is the itches that raches, not instead of a rash that Itches.

So, it starts off as dry skin and then kids scratch it and it gets inflamed. And the thing about inflammation and allergies too is that they stack on top of each other.

So if your child, let's say they have like a mild egg allergy. Right? Like they get like maybe a little rashier like they used to as a baby and you feel like They've kind of outgrown it right and like, maybe they're like a Little allergic to dogs and cats and You've got pets at home and then maybe there are little allergic pollen and it's spring You might notice that like their eczema is flaring a bit more because all of these things kind Of stack on top of each other.

So Decreasing any inflammation anywhere can help So, there are some foods that are more inflammatory than others. And then, of course, if you're directly allergic to it, it will be inflammatory in you.

So that connection is the foods you eat will drive inflammation in your body. There's also that whole gut-brain connection, too. But the food you ate grows different bacteria that can process more of that same food that you are eating.

Even just making like slightly healthier choices over time, day after day will make you want more and more healthy foods and can help decrease your inflammation over 10 too.

So yeah, is that sort of what you're asking? Yeah, absolutely. That really helps. And what do you tell parents about, you know, that role of early gut health and how that can promote a chronic disease later or not?

Yeah, that's true. So the gut bacteria in babies comes from a couple of different places. It comes when they're being born. If they are born by vaginal delivery, it's normal for moms to poop when babies are borne.

And some of the got bacteria from mom is supposed to get onto baby and into baby, and it helps colonize their gut. Also from the vagal canal. Also, breastfeeding.

Breast milk has healthy probiotic bacteria in it that gets into babies' guts and colonizes it. And then formula has probiotics in as well. Then there's also supplements that you can give that are probiotically for babies.

That all helps to grow the gut flora. And so I say a wide variety of food is the most important. So like having a big diverse gut flora is The healthiest gut Flora.

If you just have one type of thing, you Just eat one Type of Food. It's not going to be good for your body long term. so having like a lot of biodiversity in your gut and the way to have a diversity is to eat a Big diversity of So, for babies in the first four to six months of life that are entirely eating either breast milk or formula, ideally for moms who are breastfeeding, you should be eating as many different things as you can.

Don't eat anything that you're allergic to, but otherwise, nothing's off limits. You should eat everything and anything you feel like eating. Healthier is better, of course, right?

Things that look like it did when it came out of the ground is like a number one, and then, But anyways, a big variety is really the best for your baby.

And then once you start introducing them to solid foods, also that variety I tell my kids probably every day, like,

guys, we're going for, yes, the biggest array of foods that we possibly can.

And ultimately, I mean, the more diverse your microbiome is, The better your health. I means, it's just directly equivocal. As Dr. Mom, I was wondering, because this is a big thing that comes up because, you know, these kids don't feel good.

Then on top of that, there's a lot going on.

Gut health, microbiome diversity, and early feeding

We're changing the diet. It's like oh, whoops, and we are making some substitutions and all things. Maybe compliance is an issue. And just as Dr. Mom, what do you do for your children to help promote their gut bacteria diversity?

It's funny because I have a two-year-old and a picky eater who's older. Given the choice, they would only eat like, you know, buttered noodles for every meal.

So, what I do is just sort of sneakily like cut up fruit and vegetables all the time, put them near them when they ask for something that has no nutrition in it.

I'll first set down something like that and a lot of times they'll pick at it while waiting for their food to get there that they asked for. That's, I should put food in air quotes because like it's you know.

Not really, arguably food. And then we also do supplements. We do the Juice Plus supplements, which are just made from organic fruit and vegetables. They're basically juiced, freeze-dried, put into capsules or gummies.

I take the capsule, the kids eat the gummys. Yeah. But yeah, just to try to get that extra little bit of like fruit and veggies in and really just like emphasize to them that I focus on like the good parts of the things in food, like what the food has in it.

So like, you know, carbohydrates are good for energy. And when your body needs energy, carbohydrate can help with that. Too many carbohydrates or not as good to your and can actually make you feel tired afterwards.

So, you know, eating something that has fiber in it, like a fruit or a vegetable, can help you to not absorb it as quickly, and then you'll have more energy later, sustain you longer.

Something with protein will make feel full for longer, something with fat also, especially a healthy fat, will help feel for full longer too. And so, I don't like labeling foods as good or bad, or healthy or unhealthy, it really bothers me when I hear the universal, this is good for you.

because there's probably someone that's allergic to it. It's not good for everyone. But yes, there are definitely some foods that are better than others, but trying to eat a big variety and really trying eat things that… I joke that my kids will eat ingredients or hyper-processed foods, not a lot in between.

They'll eat raw fruit and vegetables, sometimes the occasional lightly steamed fruit, vegetable, I guess, but not really, or like a raisin, like, a dried fruit.

But yeah, for the most part, they just want like single ingredients. They don't want, these complex cooked meals. Right. Which, good news. As long as we get all the big groups, right?

Yes, yes. And you, just one more Dr. Mon question as a working, you know, Dr. Mom, like, you have to meal plan and prepare these foods. You know, if you're feeding them junk or you are feeding highly nutritious foods, either way you get to prepare and get them and put them in front of your kid.

I mean, what does that look like day to day just realistically? How do you manage that? I mean, sometimes like with

the toddler, it just means, you know, stick you in a high chair and we're eating now and putting all these foods like on the tray in front of him and he gets to choose which ones he eats.

For my daughter, she has a lot of time, I know this is gonna sound bad, but she's on a screen a lotta the time. And so like sometimes I'll just, hand her her plate or put the plate in from of her with the variety of things on it.

We have the ideal of like trying to eat together as a family and realistically it doesn't happen a lot of the time, partly with like just different schedules.

Nap schedule, you know, he wakes up really hungry and then she's not ready to yet and I'm already yet, and just like the timing and the staggered bedtime timing.

So realistically I feel like it's a lots of juggling, but in order to kind of get the most out of it, a couple of kind like life hacks I have. So, like, we use those bento lunch boxes, which have segments in them.

Any lunch box is fine. But, I like that this one, it has five segments. And what I've done is I have traced the lunchbox on a piece of paper, and I just written a list of things that my kids will eat that can go in each segment.

So I figure like a starch, a protein, fruit, vegetable, then the little tiny one is a treat. Like a single chocolate chip or a marshmallow or something like.

Or a gummy vitamin. So those are kind of easy for me to then plan out. And then when I find a fruit or vegetable that they like, then it's like okay, I've got that.

I can put it in, and I make a couple of those ahead of time. Some have the lids that you can just keep them in the fridge and kind like pre-make them at the beginning of the week or on Sunday.

Then they're ready to go for the weeks. So that's one thing. If they have leftovers at dinner, i put into the big section of one of their lunch boxes.

It's just ready-to-go for next day. Real easy. And then there's like making things presented in like a fun way can make them try more things is what I found.

So like using clothespins to pick up your green beans rather than a fork is fun. Or you know we have like fun utensil night where it's anything but a spoon or fork.

And chopsticks are still okay on fun you utensils night even though we use those like kind of regularly. But yeah, no spoons and forks. Sometimes we'll use like spatulas or like ridiculous things measuring spoons.

That's so fun. And then sometimes just like fun kind of platters. So like using, you know, like a big serving platter for fruit and veggies and just putting a couple on each one or using a muffin tin with a You know, cereal can be like a snack and it's really cheap.

And so I could just put like, a couple of Cheerios or even like even a sweet cereal in there as a treat. That could be, like one of the compartments. It's a really easy, just like I'm allergic to nuts, so we don't have a lot of nuts in the house.

But yeah, nuts are a good one to have in compartements. Shredded coconut is good. Dried fruit, raisins, things like that. Keep in mind that things, that raisin and dried currants are poisonous to dogs.

Chocolate's poisonous for dogs, anything with xylitol in it is poisonous.

Practical picky-eater strategies at home

I do a lot of like I sort of call it free-range feeding where I'm like kind of just putting the food out where they're

playing or near where They are and you know, they are kind picking at it and because I've tried with the meals and I have become completely defeated over the years with like cooking a meal and making everyone sit down to eat.

But yeah, just having it like having nearby, you now like little snacks that I am okay with whatever on that that they eat just yeah something sort realistic.

I love that. That's so funny because we just had spaghetti and meatballs. You and I are talking at night because it's summer, right? Like, what are you going to do?

And oh my goodness, like even that, they're like, no, I don't want to eat it. But you know, if I just throw in the towel, Like I definitely cut up peppers and things like that when I'm on it and just put it out for them to whenever throughout the day.

do that. I mean, here we keep in mind, you know, food combining is a thing just because these little digestive systems, they're compromised, we're not absorbing the nutrients we need.

Like we really need to get the digestive system to any sort of boost that we can. So we put foods that go together, together. And if you can cook, I just like raw is little harder to digest than lightly cooked.

You know, that's okay. Leftovers can only last 24 hours. Like, it's OK. It's all good. You can amend. But I love that. I loved the muffin tin strategy and the utensil strategy.

That's fantastic. Those are fun. So, oh, also with berries, you know how they always get moldy in the fridge. If you just like, when you first get a bunch of berries just fill the sink with water and put like a little vinegar in there or hydrogen peroxide, just pick one or the other.

Don't do both. And then, dunk your berries in their, they're good. It'll kill like the fungal spores that are on it, like mold that's on and so it doesn't get mouldy and the fridges get kind of like dried out over time.

But it'll make them last at least throughout the week. I feel like those things usually like if you don't eat them on day one, or two, then it's kind too late.

Yeah, you know. I'm not going shopping multiple times a week. That's a hard rule for me. Like I've been going to the store once and for us, we have the opposite problem.

They just go too fast. But I would much rather them just to go fast and not get moldy, get eaten. So the blueberries are gone, they're gone. And I am cool with it.

It's fine. But do you have more tips like that? Like you wrote the Holistic Mama's Handbook. That's just, I know it's so aligned with everything that we talk about here.

Can you walk us through what parents will find in there and who that's really for? So having worked in like a lot of places, right, and then moving back to Boulder, ultimately, I was also teaching at the acupuncture school for a while.

And I've kind of dabbled in, like, a little bit of like I'm a Reiki master. I have done matrix energetics. All different kind of things. And I got to know a lot of different practitioners in the area too.

We're saturated here with alternative medicine. It's really like we're very spoiled. Oh, I want to go to like the very best pediatric chiropractor, not the second best one kind of thing out of like the top 10 that are here, you know?

It's crazy. So yeah, I got to get to know a lot of them, got a have a great conversations with them. One of my really good friends from high school is a neurobiologist who then went back and got an acupuncture degree.

It was really fun just talking to her about the crossover and I feel like a whole lot like Western, Eastern medicine,

different I don't know, different types of medicine.

Really, it's all the same thing, but like a different language almost. And you know like what they might call a, I dunno, chicken foot wind invasion or something.

We might like call like mycoplasma pneumonia or like something like that. I dont know if that's the right one, It's things like that that you just sort of translate differently in different ways.

And so I feel like, that kind of experience has sort-of shaped where I was coming from with this book. So then I had a lot of parents asking me, like through my house call practice, you know, my kid's sick, what can they do?

And it's like well, there are lots of things that we can do. What sort things are you open to? Just discussing with them, seeing what worked over time, just kind- of gathering information for years and then finally put it all together into a book There is a book called The Holistic Pediatrician by Kathy Kemper.

It's an older book and that is also the inspiration for this one. And that's more for older children where she goes through the research and like what treats what kind of a thing.

For me, The holistic mama's handbook is focused on the ages six and under where really Western medicine is your last resort and we might not even have anything.

Like we've basically got ibuprofen, acetaminophen, which is paracetamol outside the US and I don't know, rest. water, like not a lot, right, for supportive care.

So there's a lots of other things that you can do. And so I got to really like deep dive into the research for the most, I took the top 30 conditions that come up in the first like three to six years of life and went through chiropractic, acupuncture, naturopathy, nutrition, supplements, that kind of stuff.

The Holistic Mama's Handbook and baby care tips

homeopathy and aromatherapy and then also Western treatment for all of those things and sort of diagnostic criteria like what to look out for at home and put it all into a book organized by topic so and it's like alphabetical its index at the front but you know like baby acne for example is one of them and I just go through it says like What it looks like I can sort like show you a little bit inside And then how to treat it from like different standpoints and really each one is like two pages Oh, that's great.

Let me ask you a few. Since you mentioned it, baby acne, what would you do? Yeah. So Western, we say just use a filter on your camera and wait. I mean, really, like I've told parents, it's a cosmetic thing.

Don't worry about it. That's what Photoshop's for. Like that what we're supposed to tell parents. But I have learned that actually breast milk works and breast is kind of magical.

It has antibodies and it has IgA antibodies in it, but it can kill microbes on the skin and its got like a really nice, its like lotion. Its got a good like fat to water content balance and so its really hydrating for skin.

Actually does help with baby acne. So like what I've seen in practice is that's one thing that really does helps. things that don't help, putting Vaseline, Aquaphor, diaper cream of any kind doesn't, help coconut oil doesn' help.

I feel like it dries them out and sometimes they get this like paradoxical even worse acne. i don' know if you've seen that also. um i feel, like even with eczema too because it's also a little bit acidic and they, get kind of a flare up from it.

yeah we don"t need any coconut, oil in our stuff and or olive oil because yeah yeah and but yeah coconut. oil like i've even seen you kind, of get like dry sort of burns from, it sometimes.

Yeah yeah. Definitely. And then other kind of things like calendula cream may or may not help and there are some like homeopathic remedies that might help.

Nice. Yeah. Okay, what about just an acute cold, you know, like the runny nose, the mucusy kind stuff? Yeah, this is one of my favorites because no cold medicines till you're six and that's because I'm sorry no cough medicine I should say until you are six.

Anything that suppresses a cough is it can cause the child under six to stop breathing. And so that's why we say absolutely not. Their airways are smaller at that age and just the smallest bit of narrowing can be too much for them and can dangerous.

There is something called Musinex or Gwaifenazin, which I absolutely hate. What that is, that a medicine that is safe for children, but it's an expectorant.

So what it does is it causes you to secrete more fluid into your airways. It makes you produce more watery mucus, and then it makes cough that mucous out.

If you're giving that medicine to a child, it is going to make them cough more. And it's marketed as a cough medicine, which I guess, yeah, it is a pro-cough medicine instead of an anti-coff medicine.

So most parents are a little confused with that. And a lot of times we'll end up keeping their kids on mucinex for a long time because they're like the cough is just not going away.

I'm like, well, that's actually being caused by that medication. So I'd say like for over-the-counter cough and cold, nothing. Only like plain old ibuprofen or acetaminophen is safe for children.

And that's for fever and it's only really in pain and only like if they're uncomfortable. So you don't have to treat fever based on the number until after a year of life.

For the first year life, if you have a fever, you'll have call your doctor right away. A fever is anything over 100.4 degrees. But after a year of life, it's okay to give acetaminophen or ibuprofen to your child for fever if they're uncomfortable.

So it doesn't really matter what the number is. If it is like a 105 and they are running around and playing, you don't have to get them. It's OK. You don' have medicine for that.

miserable then yeah you can give them that medicine that's okay but yeah other things for like colds that will help them to feel better so I know in Colorado it's really dry I recommend humidifiers while kids are sick in colorado in places like New York it tends to be humid all the time or like in in humid places basically like anywhere outside of Colorado feels humid to me but If you're in a place that's prone to growing mildew, a humidifier can actually backfire and cause more milde to grow.

So I don't recommend it. You might even want a dehumidifier for your house. But yeah, so just sort of like balancing the like amount of moisture versus the amount mold in the house there.

Some scented things can help. There are some like respiratory essential oils, if you think of anything, it's kind of minty or Vicks smelling. Like menthol, eucalyptus, peppermint, spearmint.

Wintergreen, those kinds of things. You could put them in a diffuser or in like your cool mistimidifier. There are some that you can put topically on baby's skin.

If you're going to be using essential oils with children and babies that need to diluted in carrier oil, and I say how to do that in my book. Anyone who knows anything about essential oils can tell you how to do that.

It's fairly easy. But yeah, those oils CAN burn your baby's skin if you put them straight on, so you need to dilute

them. That's very important. Other kind of things for colds, magic socks can sometimes help.

So having cotton socks that you can put in cold water, put those on your child's feet, and then put wool socks over them and leave them on overnight, that can help to reduce the fever.

Onions and garlic and their derivatives can be used for ear related stuff. And so I know one time I was traveling with my daughter and she got an ear infection.

We were in a hotel. So I ordered a hamburger. I used the onion slices, I warmed it up in the microwave, made it like cold, you know, just like warm to the touch so it wouldn't burn her and then put it around her ear.

And that helped, and she was better the next day. And I was like, oh my goodness, this is insane. I wasn't sure if it was going to work. This feels really weird.

But I'm just going try it because my naturopath friend said to do it. We were in a country where I could have bought amoxicillin.

Natural remedies for colds, congestion, and fever

It was really pretty amazing. So yeah, other like congestion things like natural decongestants, ginger is a natural de-congestant. Ginger tea is good, and ginger candies are good.

Anything spicy is de congestion. Think like wasabi, how that kind of opens you up. Hot and sour soup, anything spicy. If your kid tolerates spicy or if you tolerate spicy foods, those can really help.

It's called gustatory rhinitis, which is when you eat spicy food and it makes your nose run. That kind process, it thins out that mucus and helps clear it.

Ginger also helps settle the stomach, which a lot of kids that have a cold, they're swallowing mucus, especially in their sleep and sometimes they throw up in the morning or sometimes the like gag when they are coughing and throw-up and so ginger can help with that symptom as well.

Peppermint tea, chamomile tea can also help settle a stomach and mint tea also can helps with congestion too. So, one of my favorite go-tos for a cold is really any kind of tea with ginger, honey, and lemon in it.

And honey is only for kids over a year. Under a years it could potentially cause botulism. You can use agave. It's not as good of a cough suppressant as honey but it is better than anything else that we have for children under a And then over a year, between ages one and six, the best cough suppressant supported by evidence is honey.

And so putting honey into warm water with a little lemon, a lemon for vitamin C, ginger for decongestion, setting in the stomach, that can really help.

That's my two-year. Kind of like go-tos for a cold, I guess. Yeah. My older two had a call this week, but they're just like, Mom, my teeth, like I just…

That's what we do, that's step number one. If you make it fresh too, like with a ginger root and like half a lemon, it's so good. And local honey, which has like the pollen from, yeah, can help.

So great. What about, do you ever do garlic socks or onion socks? So those I don't and I've seen a couple of babies that have burns from them and that's why.

I know that like in older kids that it's sometimes done but I have seen it in younger babies like six months and under a handful of times in my clinic where I was working in an outpatient clinic in a different city but we had a population that used a lot of home remedies and so several little babies where they had cold and they have chemical burns on their feet from it.

So, it's just to keep in mind that it can be really potent. So just like you wouldn't put a straight essential oil on a newborn baby, right? Interesting.

Yeah, I've never tried it. I have seen it with potatoes also with bigger kids. And potatoes can sometimes make your feet turn black or the potato turns black.

Okay, well, okay, don't do that. Okay. Yeah. Good. Oh, other kind of things I've heard of like castor oil packs, sort of mixed feelings about on the belly may or may not help.

Sinus rinses are good for if you have a lot of congestion or if your prone to sinus infections. Just rincing with saline is great. If you any like allergies that cause sinus infection, you could like squirt your allergy medicine like your nose spray in your sinus rinse and then just do it all at the same time.

Super easy. The decongestant, afrin, is for older, like 12 and older. But that's a very good long-acting decongestant for adults. As an adult listening to this, if you need that dec congestion before clearing out your sinuses, something like afrine or oxymetazoline is the generic of that that can open you up.

It will dry you out for 12 solid hours. And you might get nosebleeds because you get so dry. So then you may need to put some vaseline in your nose. Just like a double-edged sword there with that medicine.

Okay. Thank you for that. You also talk a lot about just reducing the stress of young children and empowering families, as that looks like in your practice.

Yeah, it's funny. I'm sure you know too, after working in the field for a while, you get to know things, and you have kind of your spiel down, But parents are hearing it for the first time.

And so, you know, having to like, figuring out how to make this information land for parents in a way that they can understand like really quickly is sort of where I'm coming from with all of this.

Parents learn in lot of different ways. So, I mean, it all started out actually back when I was working in that urgent care, primary care setting in New York.

I got a lot phone calls at night and I know we talked about this during the day. Like, we have handouts and our hand outs suck. There's a lot of words on them and not a lotta information in those words.

So like, it could be better. And I tried, I was working as an employee, so you know, was like hey guys, what if I, would you like me to tweak the handouts at all or do anything?

And they're like don't rock the boat, It works. I'm like okay fine. So then when I started my own practice, I was like, "I can do this. I can give handouts if I want." I start doing talks at the birth center folder for new moms and making outlines and things like that.

And then just sort of accidentally turned that into a book. So that's how my first book came about. I wrote a second edition after my daughter was born and I realized there were a couple of things that needed to be tweaked a little bit.

Then there are also some updates to some of the medical guidelines and then a third edition again five years later. The baby manual has sort evolved in that way.

But I realize that I like books, but not a lot of people really, and I don't even really have a ton of time to read books. So really a lotta information nowadays is through video.

And so during the pandemic, it felt like there was an iron curtain that shut down all at once. Everything shut At the time, I was living on an extension in my parents' house.

My parents were on one side of the house, and I on the other side with my husband, our two-year-old. And my grandma moved into my parent's side. At that time we thought, if I bring this virus home, then I'm going to kill the whole family.

So I needed to stop working in hospitals immediately. And in the meantime, you know, worked in my house call practice still and started just getting on TikTok.

My sister was like, You should get on Tik Tok. It's cool. Like, check it out. And so I just checked it up sort of as a consumer first, like I was, I don't know how to do TikTok for business.

That feels weird. I thought it was just kids dancing and originally it, but not anymore at pandemic times. So, and then it just like these short one minute videos.

I am so used to doing this now. In the clinic, I'm so use to like the phone call in the middle of the night, like, the one minute, get to the point, give them the information they need so that they're not panicked in that moment.

And then maybe they'll even remember it too, in case it happens again or whatever for something like a concussion or a head injury. But yeah, just to give them that information concisely so that it'll stick.

And so I started just doing these like one minute videos and at some point my account went viral and I was like, oh, this is so fun. I just kept doing more and more videos.

Getting feedback like we live in rural Nepal and we love this or we're living in the Philippines.

Reducing stress and making health advice stick

Thank you for putting this out. So it's just like so incredible to be like helping people everywhere. And then I realized like, this is really fun for like the quick entertaining, like bits of info, but wouldn't it actually be more helpful to have it like all in one place?

So that's when I started my podcast. And so it was like around 2021 that I sort of the podcast and did that according to age to begin with. So season one is first year of life.

and it goes like starting with the checkups that you go through, all the advice we give you and all of things you're probably gonna call me about before your next appointment and you know, I'll in like 20 minutes.

for each episode. And then there's a couple, like, topic-specific ones, and then second season, each one to three, third season's all the holistic and alternative care stuff.

Yeah, so it just became this, people consume information in different ways. Some people like long forms, some like videos, Some prefer the YouTube videos that are longer where you can like sit and watch on a TV or on the computer.

Some will just watch it on their phone. So I'm like, how can I get all this information out to families in all these different kinds of ways? And so that's where it all sort of came from.

And really like the one central place for if anyone's listening to this, like to find everything is like my website, which is just carolkeim.com. My link tree like L-A-N-K-T-R dot E-E slash D- R- K- E I- M, Dr.

Keim Easy sort of central locations for all of this stuff. But yeah, so I don't know almost an accidental kind of like a how did I work in so many different places?

It was just like this feels fun. I'm gonna do this for a bit. And yeah Oh for awhile I also like I I learned how to do like Instagram for business to understand Instagram.

Yeah, it's all Essentially like really the same thing is really I'm just trying to get like my you know 15 to 20 years of medical pediatric experience and parenting experience And other parents experience in hospital experience a clinic experience, and urgent care and all of the things I see you all have it into You know what parents actually need to know to keep their kids healthy and safe and ideally out of a hospital for as long as possible And yeah, just in all different ways Yeah.

Oh my goodness. Thank you so much for your time today. So fun to chat with you. This has been a really good time. And I just, before just closing, I would like to ask you just what's one thing you would want every parent to know who has a child with a chronic, and I say that with quotes, but a chronicle, what do you want them to understand that maybe they don't right now?

Yeah, I'd say that like all things add together and small changes over time can make a big change in your health. And so in making things just just 1% better each day, you know, just like cutting out, say, anything that's not water to start with and only drinking water and then just whatever whatever is like the easiest for you add one vegetable, whatever, the tiniest easiest step.

A single push up is better than no push ups. You know anything. and also you can't out supplement a bad lifestyle. we all want the easy fix. And unfortunately, really what it's about is living in a healthy way.

Modern life has made that really a hard path. It is really easy because we drive everywhere and we park close to places. We're not out in the sun, we're out picking our own food and looking for food.

Like it is very easy to be sedentary in our lifestyle. So yeah, just trying to think about you know, the sort of more natural, like, how can I get out in the world?

How can eat things that are like actual foods? And yeah, reduce stress. Overall, it all adds together. Yeah. Oh, thank you so much. All the books and the links will be in show notes.

And I appreciate your time and I really appreciate you.

Final takeaways and closing encouragement

Thank you! Yeah, I think you do. I hope this conversation gave you a little more confidence in just how much you can do to support your child's health.

And this is something that I believe in my bones, friends, that you are the person who has the greatest ability to change the trajectory of your children's' health, the skills that they learn while overcoming eczema don't disappear when their skin clears.

You learn how to feed and nourish your child, how support their gut and their immune system, and how recognize what their body is telling you and respond when something gets off track.

These are the skills you'll carry with you for the rest of their childhood and that they can eventually carry into their adulthood. Friends, you absolutely have the power to do this, no matter how dire the situation is.

The problem is that eczema is incredibly nuanced and multifaceted, and sometimes you need someone to help you figure out which pieces matter for your child.

and in what order to address them. And that's exactly what we do inside the eczema elimination method. If you're ready for some direction and a clear path forward that produces actual results, book an exema-elimination method alignment call with me.

We'll look at what may be keeping your child stuck and talk about what your next steps could actually look like. Head to eximakids.com or use the link in the show notes to book your call.

I will talk to you next week, friends. Take care. Thank you for helping with my eczema. Love you. Thank for listening today, friend. I know healing your child's skin isn't easy, but you're doing it one smart step at a time.

If this episode gave you a little hope or a better night's sleep, leave a quick review so more exhausted parents can find exima kids and finally rest easy too.

Follow, share and let's help more kids heal. Take care.