Introduction and Dr. Tufenkianu2019s Healing Journey

Hi, it's Dr. Jenn and welcome back. I am so thrilled to have my colleague and friend here today to talk to us. Dr. Tufenkian has been a practicing naturopathic doctor for over 20 years.

Her focus is helping chronically ill return to full health and along with being a doctor, she's a mom and a business owner and happily married for 25 years.

And I have to add to her resumé that in this last year and I hope you don't mind me sharing, but you became a patient. And I think that that gives you an entirely different perspective on life, on being a healer, because it's one thing to heal other people, and it's an entirely different thing to heal yourself.

It's something that I've been through myself, so I really know and believe me when I say like, I'm sending you love and healing vibes and I know your pain.

And I also know by looking at you that you've come through the abyss. Because I remember what you looked like when you were down there. So welcome, so welcome here.

And you're really your experience is much like what people with breast cancer are experiencing because when you're in the depths of it, you are really fighting your mitochondrial health.

And that's a lot what people don't understand that concept. So I really want to dove deep and dig in there because cancer is a mitochondrial disease. So welcome.

Please share your story and help us to understand what mitochondrial health is, what it means, and how people can work to really improve theirs. Thank you so much.

Jenn it's just such a it's so fun to be here with you. And I love what you're doing and thank you for that beautiful introduction and heartfelt bringing tears to my eyes.

Thank you. Yeah, you're right. I. I ended up getting an infection last summer, and it tipped it up to my chronic fatigue that I had 20 years ago and reactivated it.

And I went into a long COVID session that has been was really intense and professionally. I've been working with people with chronic fatigue for a couple of decades, and it was part of my story and I had a complete dark night of the soul and came out of that through working with these tools and figuring out there are five root causes to chronic fatigue.

And as the pandemic had, I knew we were going to have a second pandemic of of another realm of chronic fatigue. I didn't know at the time it was going be called long COVID.

I knew that was going to happen because. I want to I want to hear more about that. Why did you know that we were going to have a new epidemic of chronic fatigue?

Because there are five root causes to chronic fatigue. One of them is a chronic viral infection. Every time throughout history when we've had an uptick of a viral infection anywhere in the world, there are more people who struggle with ongoing chronic fatigue afterwards.

It's not new. It's it's a known phenomenon. And that can be because either that virus stays in the body or the stress of having that virus reactivates other infections, or that infection can trigger the body to go into sort of a smoldering low grade infections place where it never has the offer to completely clear it.

And you got this really ongoing chronic piece going on. It's yeah, go ahead. It's so obvious. Right? Right. And yet the world seems really surprised, right?

Why Long COVID and Chronic Fatigue Are Rising

Well, the magnitude isn't. Why is the world so surprised? I know, right. And when it's so obvious. And then, of course, one of the other root causes of getting any kind of chronic fatigue and this relates to people who get cancer is stress and having a deep a deep just vibrating your body kind of stress like a I am looking at death potential of death kind of stress can trigger your vagus system, your autonomic nervous system, and get into this vicious cycle where it alters your immune function and can make you susceptible to stay in this fatigued or, you know, pain ridden state.

So obviously, the pandemic was bringing up both. And so it just seemed, as you stands, a no brainer that this was going to be the second pandemic. And sure, here it is.

And as I was going through the pandemic, I was doing really great and doing lots of teaching and sharing this information with people. And I wonder theoretically now, are the things that I've always done with chronic fatigue going to apply to this chronic long-covid or not?

And it and it seems like they were like, I got it. And so I got to really test on myself. Working some strange ways, doesn't it? And oddly, it has been really interesting to be in it and to see really what it's like in the really granular way and the little nuances within it.

And honestly, I feel like it's it's here so that I can serve more people. That's how I see it. Mm hmm. Yeah. Our our diagnoses are often our messages.

Absolutely right. Yeah. Yeah. So you talked about chronic viral infections. You talked about stress. And I was questioning our mortality. I, I wonder and I don't know if you know the answer to this or not, are we going to see an uptick of cancers?

Because cancer is often, you know, everyone makes cancer cells, right? Yeah. I'm old. Everyone in between. Yeah. I'm the thing that keeps cancer at bay is our immune system, right?

So our immune system took a huge hit over the pandemic. Huge. Like if if you got it, then and recovered, those people were probably the best off the ones that got it and recovered without incident.

Right. But the people that got it and got long COVID and they they are kind of under this chronic stress and therefore their immunity is driven down. And also the our immunity took a huge hit with the vaccines cause we really only learned to be more immunologically intelligent when we are challenged.

Right. And so the vaccine really as much as it maybe decreased the effects of the original alpha variant, the subsequent variants, it didn't have much effect on and it was really not, you know, our, it wasn't educating our immune system, right.

So we really came out of that kind of immune challenged. And on top of it, people are like sanitizing their world. All right. Like everyone's walking around with spray and gel and there's soap everywhere and antibacterial everything everywhere.

And we're in this sterile world that, like, our immune system is getting dumber and dumber. Right. Because it's it's a muscle like anything else. Like if you don't use it, you lose it. Yeah.

And so what effect do you think that is going to have on the cancer world? Because it's really our immune system that keeps breast cancer in check. Yeah, it is definitely a broken immune system that leads to cancer.

There's no doubt about it. I hate when patients come to me and this is going to alarm some of you listening to this.

But when patients come to me and say, I've never been sick a day of my life, I think, Oh.

Looking honest comes the Whopper. And I don't know if you've had this in your clinic, but I've known clinically, I've had people who show up with really advanced cancer saying, but I've never been sick a day in my life.

I'm like, Well, that's part of the problem. You literally your immune system needs to exercise. It needs to have a cold every once in a while. Now, what happens when you have a chronic virus like Long-Covid is people who go into a chronic fatigue state is that they're they haven't their immune system in their teach to system.

They're stuck in the stage two dominant type of state. Explain to people what that is. Well, there's there's that's it. That's our language. But it's not everyone's language. Right.

So you're stuck in a state where your body, you have different types without to go in and deep into immunology. Right. Your body has different in illogical states that it needs to be able to respond to.

It's like a teeter totter, like you need to have some of your immune system needs to respond to allergies and things like that, you know, to me and things like that.

And the other part of your immune system needs to respond to infections and that kind of thing. And it's this teeter totter that goes back and forth. People that are dealing with long stage chronic fatigue, they're all their immune system has gotten stuck in what's called the state of TH2, and they cannot appropriately mount a response to that infection that's going on.

Immune Dysfunction, Fear, and Cancer Risk

They're almost too tolerant, right? They're too tolerant. Exactly. Exactly. Exactly. So what does that do to cancer? Honestly, I would put that back to you, because I believe you probably understand that better than I do.

And I would love to hear your answer, because, honestly, I have the exact same question. I was, you know, what is this going to do? Because we yeah. So yeah. So it's twofold there, right?

So when we're in that th2 stage, we are too tolerant. So we let things go that we should let things go. We should be responding, but we're not right. And so that is, for lack of a better word, that is an immunocompromised state.

That is an immunosuppressed state. Right. So there is going to be allowance for expansion of a cancer population if you are in its two dominant state.

So that is that is one part of the problem. The other part of the problem is that we are just not mounting enough response because our immune systems are exhausted, because when you are in that sympathetic fight or flight state for too long, when you've been on high alert for too long, like think about an army that is fighting a war and they're on guard, right?

So if they're on guard for one night, okay, they can get through it second night. They're not doing so well. By the third night, your army is asleep, right?

Like you just cannot be on guard constantly. And that's what's happening is that we are so constantly on guard because of this environment that we're living in and because, you know, that was a tremendously stressful time.

I mean, these people with something that they don't know and don't understand, that is the basis of fear. That is the basis of sympathetic drive. Yeah, I think fear of the unknown is the greatest fear there is.

Right. I talk about it in the context of when the Jews were slaves in Egypt and they had the opportunity to leave right. They're freed by Pharaoh. Moses brings them out of the 3 million Jews.

Do you know how many laughed? No, I don't. 20%. Wow. 80% of Jews stayed in Egypt under deplorable

conditions. Slavery, right? Because the fear of the unknown was so much greater than staying.

Yeah. The devil they knew. And I think that that is one of the major reasons why this virus I mean, of course, millions of people died and I am not discounting that.

We can talk about the fact that millions of people who would have died of heart disease died of COVID. So it's confusing to me whether or not the all those diagnoses and assignment of cause of death are correct.

But that aside, millions of people died. I do not want to diminish that. But the effect of the fear of not knowing what it is, not knowing what's going to happen, I think that ripple effect is tremendous.

Absolutely. It was a huge time in the planet and the whole planet experienced at the same time and to not have. And I think the other piece that adds extreme stress is to not be able to have any effect, any control over it, which brings us back to the cancer diagnosis, because I think that's what a lot of people feel when they get that cancer diagnosis, is that, oh, I have no power over this.

There's nothing I can do. This thing has come into my body and it may end my life or severely alter the dreams and visions that I had for who I am and what my life is going to contain that gets halted when you get that diagnosis.

And it's that same sense of powerlessness that can be very challenging to deal with and is really where I want to step in. And I think Jenny and I what I love about you, John, is that you're in the same place I am, which is let's step in, let's accept our feelings and process our feelings because we need to we need to process our anger and our fear and all of that kind of stuff.

And then let's step into the power that we do have. What is it that we can do to impact the health of this thing that we are walking around in in this lifetime?

Because there is there's so much that we can do every single day that impacts how our immune system functions, how we're able to detox the toxicity in the world, and how we can set ourselves up for success no matter what is facing you at this time.

So if you have a cancer diagnosis, what I what I truly believe is just like any other intense diagnosis, this can be an opportunity for you to I in a sense, it's a wake up call, right?

It's like, wow, what do I really want to do with my life and what do I really want to do with my health and how much my willing to own this? And it can be scary at times to change how it is that you live just like that story that you told you know, it's easier to be in your uncomfortable.

Box, you know. Than it is to go out and try something else. But man, it's worth it to get out there and live life in a different way. Yeah. And to have the opportunity to live life in a different way.

Because without question, change is scary. And the truth is that people don't change until the fear of staying the same. Yes. Is worse than the fear of change.

I mean, that's really what it comes down to is that staying where you are has to become so utterly unacceptable. Right, to walk into the unknown. Absolutely. Your back is against the wall. And that can be the gift of really challenging health situations, because it can get you to be willing to make that change, to have the reason to really make that change.

Yeah, absolutely. Okay. So we talked about five root causes of chronic fatigue and we got to one, which is chronic viral infection, too, which is stress.

Right. Have the other three. Yeah. So two being limbic dysfunction where it actually alters your vagal tone in your limbic brain, which is a little bit of a deeper issue than just stress.

The third one is what I call the Gateway Cause, which is the hormone triangle is off your hypothalamic pituitary access, your adrenals, your thyroid, your ovaries, that whole system that needs to work and symphony and harmony together is off.

And usually it is that hypothalamic pituitary axis is what we're supposed to call it.

The Five Root Causes of Chronic Fatigue

It's known as adrenal fatigue or easier to say, and that is the one that so many of us experience over and over and over again as having that system out of whack.

And I call it the gateway root cause, because a lot of us are running on the Stress Express and pushing work. We're working we've got kids. We have some of us have aging parents.

And we're going all the time juggling lots of balls and hoping we don't drop one, usually do. Something point and this can undoubtedly. Right. And this can really throw off the system.

It can begin to throw off that immune system from functioning normally. I really think that that's often when we look back as to see why did this cancer diagnosis maybe were you at higher risk to get this cancer diagnosis or why did you get chronic fatigue?

This is often one of the gateway pieces. So that's that's a key one. The other one is looking at toxic to many toxins. So metals mycotoxins from mold from mold exposure that maybe you had when you lived in that college dormitory with the black mold on the walls.

That was me. Maybe it wasn't you, but I mean, the. Perception or I mean, listen, it is it is so ubiquitous. I mean, mold really, truly is everywhere. And you make an excellent point, which is the first, is that it could have been years ago. Right.

Because once mold comes in, 25% of us have an HLA haplotype, a a genetic predisposition that we do not code for the enzymes to break down mold. And I know that I'm in that 25% and I can walk into any place anywhere and immediately tell you if there's mold there.

Because my head is exploding. It is instantaneous. Yeah. And so for those people and I'm putting myself in those people. So I'm not it's it's not accusatory in any way, shape or form.

You have to be super hyper vigilant about your environment, checking, doing an army test to check your environment. And you have to make sure that it's not coming in and then be detoxification procedures and filtering your air.

And, you know, you unfortunately, it it's an active process. And you talked about, you know, doing some of the limbic work because it does affect your limbic system.

And so many people who have mold illness get told that it's in their heads. I know. Right. That they're making it up because it's. Kind of it is in it is affecting their limbic system.

So it is affecting their autonomic system. So it kind of is in their heads, but it's not imaginary. Right. They didn't make it up. They did not make it a.

Physiological response. Or. That. Yes, it's physiological. Yes, it is in your head, but it is physiological. Yeah. So that's a huge one. And that one is a lot a lot of it's the awareness is rising around mold issue, which is great, but that is very common.

I'm also in that group and that's been a huge piece of why I was at higher risk to get long-covid once I got the once I got the infection for sure. Yeah.

There are just some people who just can't mount an adequate response to a lot of toxins. Right. And that's that same thing that we're talking about of sort of like that, you know, just can't. Yeah.

And then and then the first root cause is mitochondrial dysfunction, and all of these root causes can interact with each other. I find when I'm working with people who have chronic fatigue, long COVID, they have one, two or maybe even all five of them.

It depends on how much work they've already done or how sick they are as to which one ends. The important thing is to figure out which root cause is really impacting your health.

So before you go on, because you and I know what mitochondrial dysfunction is, but I don't know that that is a very well accepted or understood term. So I know that it's a long explanation session, but can you try to because I know you're very good at talking to people and helping them to understand what is happening.

So can you break down what mitochondria are, what they do, and what this mitochondrial dysfunction is that you're referring to? Mitochondria are so cool, actually really love them.

They're these little, little tiny things inside of so inside of your cells. Let me back up this way. You have a body inside your body. You have organs like your liver, your heart, your brain.

Inside each one of these organs, you have a cell. And maybe you remember back to high school biology of looking at the cells inside the cell are things called organelles, which are little tiny pieces inside the cell that make the cell function.

One of those things that's inside that cell is something called mitochondria. And mitochondria literally are what creates energy in your body. They create ATP so that you have the energy to move your body.

You know, you've heard that you can go ten days without, you know, ten days without food. Was it three days without water? You can go. You can go 40 days without food, I'm pretty sure.

Yes. Yeah. And two to maybe three days without water. Yeah. I always have another story that I could tell about your. Time. Around that those numbers, they depend.

On what's going on with you for. Sure. Yeah. But you cannot live if you all of your mitochondria goes away like you're only going to live. 4 seconds. When you look at those comic books where people come in with poison and everybody instantly dies, that's poison.

That's poisoning the mitochondria. You have to have your mitochondria to live the the organs that have need more energy like your heart and your brain and your liver have more mitochondria in the cells than other cells do.

And the mitochondria are amazing because they're always adapting to what's going on inside your body. When you start working out more and start stressing your muscles in a good way and get good stress, or if you do intermittent fasting and do good stress, your body actually adapts to that and cleans up mitochondria that aren't working and gets rid of them and builds up new mitochondria and they communicate with each other to support your system.

But these amazing, beautiful things are also super, super, super delicate and very vulnerable to all kinds of damage that can come in from our environment.

They have two different layers in them, and they have this inner membrane that has to get nutrients back and forth. And unfortunately, that pathway gets easily blocked by metals such as lead and mercury and thallium and things like this can go in and block that mitochondrial function and make it so the mitochondria don't work as well.

Some people are born with a genetic defect and so they don't. Their mitochondria may not work as well. That's really not that common. But a lot of us have mitochondrial dysfunction from toxins, from stress, also from chronic viruses, viruses can go into the mitochondria and actually alter the sugar production, the energy production in there

and take the energy for themselves and hide out there and alter.

Which is another reason people feel so tired when they have a chronic virus.

What Mitochondria Do and Why They Fail

When we start talking about cancer and that chronic fatigue that comes on post cancer for people that have done chemotherapy, that chemo, those chemotherapy, pubic agents are actually really destroying the mitochondria.

We've got study after study after study. After study after study. Showing how the mitochondria are. They can't they can't do energy production properly.

They can't process sugar properly. They are malformed. They can't just they can't figure out if they're so sick that they should die or if they should hang out.

So you've got a lot of broken, you know, you know, garbage, junk stuff in your cells, which is a lot of why people feel exhausted post chemo. Absolutely.

And not not only the fatigue, because the fatigue is very real now. And that's why fatigue is associated with chemotherapy. But think about the effects on the brain.

Exactly. The brain is such a mitochondrial rich organ. Right. So everyone I don't know anyone who has gotten through chemotherapy without brain fog. Yes, exactly. And why?

Yeah, exactly. And it's the same reason why we have so much brain fog with with long COVID and all of that's the same process that's happening inside the brain where you have mitochondrial dysfunction happening in the brain.

And you also end up getting this chronic inflammatory process in the brain. The brain, unlike when you sprain your ankle, it kind of has a natural inflammatory cycle.

It's 72 hour inflammatory cycle where it gets worse and then starts to come down naturally unless you re injure it. Right. The brain has once it's inflamed and it gets inflamed easily from these toxic insults or from infections or from hitting your head, it has a hard time stopping that inflammatory process and you end up the immune system starts to eat its own neurons.

I mean, the immune system in the brain starts to eat the neurons, which doesn't really help the brain follows. Yeah, yeah, it doesn't. Yeah. And that's why people with head injuries, it takes them so long to recover because they're kind of fighting against the body is trying to protect itself.

That's what happens. It doesn't want the damaged tissue to hang around. Exactly. But that's why it takes so long to heal. Which is not to say that you can't.

I mean, you and I see stories of healing and regeneration all the time. Right. And at times you have to be patient for it. Yes. It does take time. And I really want to say, there are many, many, many things that we are that you can do.

And we're actually finding that a lot of the wisdom that comes from the practitioners who've been treating traumatic brain injuries in a functional medicine and naturopathic approach, those really apply well to people who are struggling with brain fog from other reasons, from chemotherapy or from a chronic infection that those same therapies work.

Because you can use things like tumor EC to help bring down the inflammation and tumor. Actually, the tumor oil actually helps grow new neurons together.

You can use things like essential frankincense, which decreases inflammation. You can use progesterone as long as it's in an oil base, male or female, and that can be used as a way of decreasing inflammation in the brain.

Sorry I had to go to mute because my dogs are barking like crazy. I don't like to hear them now. I couldn't hear them at all. Oh well that's good to know. And I won't tell them so. So I love talking about these solutions.

And what we're talking about actually are things that are improving mitochondrial health. Right. Right. And so, you know, even though people don't think of these things as the same on a on a cellular level, on a molecular level, the process is the same.

We're talking about a chronic inflammatory state that is caused by either trauma or exposure to toxins like metals and plastics and and viruses, yeast, mold, all of these things.

Or, you know, it could be trauma stress like acute stress from the death of a family member or having a chronic stress having to care for a family member, being a caregiver.

And all of these things are actually just contributing to this, a low lying, inflammatory state, which when it goes on for long enough, it's like you hit the point of no return.

And I know that's where you were last year, so I would love it. I know that people don't think about breast cancer and chronic fatigue being the same thing, but they actually, on a cellular level, look very similar.

They do look like mitochondrial dysfunction. Right? Right. Yes, they do look like mitochondrial dysfunction. And, you know, I was just reading something the other day where somebody said cancer does not occur in a vacuum.

And I say chronic fatigue doesn't occur in a vacuum either. Yeah. And and I and I really and I really appreciate you bringing this point together where they are the same on a cellular level.

And I also really think that I really want to call out to those of you there out there who are dealing with cancer and may be going into chemotherapy or have been dealing with chemotherapy, or if you're a practitioner listening to this, to really pay attention to what it is that your that you're feeling in terms of your energy or if you're your practitioner, listen to your patients when they're talking about they're tired.

Don't just dismiss their fatigue as being just post cancer fatigue. And there's nothing we can do about it except wait for time. Because my question is, when does cancer related fatigue become chronic fatigue?

Right. Like, when does that and then. Well, and what you're talking about is chemotherapy related fatigue or radiation, because radiation just creates free radicals and.

Yes, right. And that's the same thing. But, you know, it doesn't happen. Thank God. So often with breast cancer. But there is such a thing as cancer related fatigue and it's not due to treatment.

Many times it is induced with people with early cancers. We treat them and then we and then we induce cancer related fatigue. But if cancer is advanced or is cancer related fatigue that is due to the cancer and that's because the cancer or what caused the cancer, because the cancer is not doing it.

Cancer is a normal response to an abnormal environment. And so it's whatever induced the cancer that's actually causing mitochondrial damage. And that's that's the cancer related fatigue.

Right. So you and I both know that the answer is addressing the costs. Exactly. So can you start to talk about how you reverse this mitochondrial damage, this mitochondrial fatigue?

How does one go about addressing that? So the first thing you really need to look at is, is you need to get figure out if you can figure out what what is going like, what is the cause, what is it, you know, is it mold mycotoxins?

Do you have that in your environment? You need to get that out of your environment. It's very hard to heal your mitochondria if you're still in an environment that you're reacting to.

Same thing if you have metals, if you have mercury fillings in your mouth or other things where you're getting a constant flow of mercury, it's very hard for the mitochondria to completely heal if they're constantly getting a flow of this. So really doing a going and working with somebody who can help you uncover what kind of impact your body's having from these toxic influences.

Really, really, really important once you do the best you can with that. I mean, we just frankly, live in a toxic world and I and and not in a way of I don't want to say that in a way to make people scared but more of a it just is.

And so what can we do every single day? Well, the body knows how to detoxify if it's supported.

Detoxification, Fasting, and Supporting Recovery

So I really believe in supporting what are called them arteries, which are all the organs of elimination, like your stool, your urine, your skin, your lungs, like all these way are the ways that we get rid of toxins every single day.

So just bringing in a ritual every single day to just detoxify. And then one of the powerful things about this is then, you know, you're doing something every single day.

That sense of powerlessness begins to go away when you're taking action, proactive steps every single day that, you know are supporting your body. So making sure you're eating vegetables that help your liver detoxify, eating brassica vegetables to help your liver pathways, eating a lots of different the different rainbow of fruits and vegetables every single day.

Making sure you have enough fiber that you're eliminating your bowels so that your toxins, your excess hormones are getting out of your body. I like doing dry skin brushing before I go to bed because it moves my lymphatic system and helps my body detoxify.

I drink a ton of purified water to get things, toxins to flush out. There's, you know, the solution to pollution is dilution is enhanced. Yeah. So those are the basics.

And as a surgeon, it's always said every before, every case, the solution to pollution is dilution. Right, right. Right. Irrigate, irrigate, irrigate. Right.

And these are just basic things that I honestly think every single person on the planet should be doing every single day just to bring their level up and helps things detoxify when you start talking about mitochondria, the mitochondria need certain nutrients for them to function well.

And a lot of these are antioxidants, things like lipoic acid reserve a trial, coke you ten. These are necessary for the mitochondria to function. You also need B vitamins for it to function and you can support your mitochondria by people who are dealing with fatigue.

And this is something that I needed to do. I needed to boost my mitochondria with some supplements such as Eminem and Nad and things like that, to really give it a jumpstart so that it would have like you have the energy to actually start cleaning out and functioning more normally as well.

And I love if you're curious if your mitochondria are impacted, I often have my patients do what I call a mitochondrial challenge for a week, which is where they take five grams of D ribose, which is the sugar that mitochondria need for energy, take five grams of it three times a day for a week, along with a few of the other supplements I talked about a little bit of CoQ10, some lipoic acid, some reserve trial.

Sometimes you can get that all in one supplement and see how it feels if your mitochondrial dysfunction for some people, it is a miracle. It feels like all of a sudden they have energy and you know, they will come back for that derived post at 5:00 on a Friday afternoon in the clinic saying, I need more of this more your site for the weekend people that it doesn't work.

It may mean that your mitochondria is too gummed up and it can't receive the nutrients, which is then what I do with my patients at that time is I always run a heavy metal test next.

When I'm I'm taking vigorous notes. So I want to know what your stance is on fasting and where fasting fits into detoxification. Yeah, I think fasting can be a great way to get the mitochondria to to start normalizing their function.

It is what is called a good stress in the sense of the body. It's like it sets off this stress signal like, oh wow, there's no food. We need to like clean up our act to become more efficient and we need to get rid of the mitochondria that aren't working so well.

We need to break them down. We need to bring up new ones. It can be a very healthy stress and I think it is awesome for the mitochondria. If. And only if the person's body is ready for that stress.

A lot of people I work with, a lot of people I work with and a lot of you out there listening to this are not ready to do intermittent fasting because that whole stress response, that hypoxia long pituitary axis adrenal fatigue piece, yours is trashed.

And if yours is trashed and then you try to intermittently fast, your body cannot your body can't handle that stress. So how do you know if you're ready?

You know if you're ready, if you're if that's a really good question, you can experiment and you can see how it feels. You can do a 12 hour fast and see how that feels.

If you're not crashing, if you're not getting super hangry, if you're not getting really emotional, if your energy isn't crashing, if you still feel pretty good, then you can experiment with extending a bit.

Yeah. I honestly find though that with women especially, you may not be the same every day and every week and you certainly not the same before your period.

So I don't think women should should fast right before their menses or during their menses, their body, the progesterone and estrogen are stress buffers.

They're really great hormones to help buffer the stress and they drop right before your menses. It's not a good time to put yourself in extra stress. So it's so interesting.

I don't know if you read the book Fast Like A Girl by Dr. Mindy Pelz, but she she talks exactly about this, that there are times in your cycle too fast and times in your cycle when you shouldn't be fasting, right?

And where your nutrient needs are different. And it, it kind of astounds me that we're not universally talking about this, but we're not use universally talking about any a lot of things that are very clear and even somewhat obvious in the literature, like operating during certain times of the month, like don't want to operate during a growth phase and then exactly right.

And and yet there is no thought put into cyclic timing of surgery. Right, right. Right, right. Yeah. I had a really intense personal experience, not with surgery, but with my menstrual cycle when I was dealing with chronic fatigue years ago, I was well enough to go back and visit my relatives in Britain.

And I, I'm one of those geeky people I buy Scientific American before I fly. So I bought Scientific American and therefore you do not. Think you know.

So I bought Scientific American. I was on the plane. I didn't read it. I flew. I had just gotten my period, actually. No, it's premenstrual. And I got to I got to where my in-laws lived and went into a severe, deep depression.

Like, I couldn't believe how depressed I was. And it really freaked me out. And I remember sitting in my room and I happened to pull that Scientific American, and there happened to be an article in that magazine about women's

menstrual cycles and mood and how you were more susceptible if you had stress right before your period to to depression and to mood stuff.

And I know that flying internationally, PMS threw me into the cycle and ever. And so I want to give my advice to my patients who are dealing with any kind of health issue is book your long term flights when you're ovulating, like not when you're.

You know. It's like you can schedule your life to support your body. And if your body doesn't have all the bandwidth you need yet. Yeah, well, and depending on how long you're traveling for, you might want to wait until your menses starts before you fly back, right?

Totally. Yeah. It's so funny that you say that because when my I have a dear friend and she rented a house in Italy for all of us to celebrate 50th birthday and she is several years older than I am.

So I was still menstruating at the time and I am kind of almost never depressed. And we got on the plane and I was fine and we landed in Italy and it was like someone took the shades down and I like felt like crying the entire week.

I was sleeping through everything. Like, it was crazy. And I didn't realize until years later, actually, because that was the time when I was like deep into traditional medicine and I wasn't thinking about things like this at all.

And I didn't realize until years later that is what had happened to me on that trip. That's interesting. Yeah, right, exactly. That's exactly my experience, too.

It's just like, what is this? And you're, you know, to fly to you, I mean, you think about that X that triangle is that has to work together. If you're blowing out your circadian rhythm because you're flying halfway around the world, you lose a night's sleep.

It's like your body can't handle that at the same time. You no. And and I'm glad you brought up circadian rhythm because we are beings that are very tied into the rhythm of the sun.

And when we think about that whole HPA axis and hormone balance, you know, the best and easiest way to disturb your hormonal balance is to not abide by circadian rhythm.

Circadian Rhythm, Hormones, and Daily Habits

And that's why we see so much disease and people who are night workers and shift workers and that kind of thing and I'm not picking on them at all, but I am going to go on a limb and make a bold statement that it is nearly impossible to maintain your health while you're working shift work at night.

It just really is what our bodies are designed to be awake during the day and be sleeping at night. I agree. It's very, very challenging. And I would say that as challenging as it is to have your schedule blown off, I'd also say that working with your getting back on a good schedule is one of the most powerful ways we can impact our health, especially if your adrenal system, that circadian rhythm is off, if you're feeling tired, if you're feeling stressed out like the number one easiest thing you can do is just get up at about the same time every morning, go to bed at about the same time every morning, eat at about the same amount every day and get exercise about summit time every day.

Yeah, we are creatures of habit and we need to respect that. Yeah, right. Yeah. Okay, so let's sum up what we talked about today because it was so much and so good, but the where is where we started is gold, right?

There are five root causes of chronic disease. So there's chronic viral infections. There is stress, but stress in the way that you are kind of questioning your mortality.

And and it's really a has a significant sympathetic drive and impact and it alters your immune function. So it's not little stressors. It's like big stressors that are altering your immune system, life threatening.

Yeah. And then it's gateway root cause, right. Like things that are driving what we call adrenal fatigue, dysfunction of the axis that really results in hormone imbalance.

I mean, at the of the day, that's what we're talking about. We're talking about the symphony, which is beautiful when it's working together and when that symphony is off, it can really be quite disturbing.

And that's where we are. We are exposed to too many toxins, molds, metals, plastics, all the hormone disruptors, all the end of all the endocrine disruptors.

I do want to say that there are lots of things that concern as toxins that we don't necessarily think of as toxins. Right foods. Right. Processed foods can be really toxic.

Franken foods, Franken foods. Exactly. I love that term. My favorites and relationships can be toxic. Yes. If you are working a job with a toxic boss or a toxic partner or a toxic coworker, and you're doing that day in and day out, believe you me, that is having a significant effect on your health.

Can I also say that you can have a relationship with yourself and that's the. Most. Primary relationship to work on. And I invite you if you feel like you deal with negative self-talk, if you don't feel like you can look inside that, look at the mirror and feel like you can say, I love you to that person you see in the mirror to reach out and get some support and help, because that is your primary relationship and how you vibrate that energy inside yourself is going to impact every single one of your cells and it's going to impact everything else in your life.

So that is like your number one relationship deal. Yeah. And, and words matter and the way that you talk to yourself matters and it is going to affect who you are and how you are.

Right. And then finally, we talked about mitochondrial dysfunction. And in that vein, we all have so much more power than we think. And a cancer diagnosis doesn't have to be a punishment.

Instead, it can be an opportunity. And as scary as it is to change, it is so utterly worth it. And so when we talk about like chronic fatigue and other chronic diseases and breast cancer, what we talk about them in the same sentence.

We do so because it's the same thing at the root of all of this. All these dysfunctions, all these inflammation generating things are essentially the same.

So it's so important to help uncover your why to be asking that question, to take a deep dove and to take a look because you're why is there and at the same time you do know how to heal your body, knows how to heal.

Sometimes we need to give it what it needs, and sometimes we need to take away what it doesn't need. And you there are so many things that you can do to support your body, to just support your detoxification systems and just do something every day.

Closing Thoughts on Healing and Breast Health

I had a great conversation with Anna Cabeca who was talking, you know, there are so many things to do, right? Your to do list seems to be infinite and go on forever.

And she said, all you have to do is one thing today, do one thing today that drives the needle forward. And I think that that that is a really important message.

And I hope that everyone here is that. And I hope that they can look at you as the vibrant, shining person that you are and know that healing can happen.

We really do have so much more power than we think that I leave anything out. I think you said it all. You did a beautiful job and I appreciate you and all that you're doing and just bringing so much more awareness to everybody who's dealing with breast cancer.

It's just it means so much to see you out here doing this and all the women that you serve. And I would just encourage those of you who are really struggling with this diagnosis to follow what Jenn is saying, because she is going to offer you the tools that you need so that you can really keep yourself in your most healthiest state.

Now, at the end of the day, I say breast health is health, like for one and the same Dr. Jenny, thank you so much for being here and I look forward to many, many more conversations between us.

Thank you. I look forward to that as well. Yeah, it's Dr. Jenn Bye for now.