Eczema Healing Shouldn't Have an Age Limit — My Aunt's Real Story Transcript

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Intro and Cathyu2019s healing story

Hey team, welcome back. So most of the people that I get to work with are strangers before we start. And they're usually parents that found me on the podcast or through a friend.

This one is different because she's my aunt and she is someone who's shown up for me and my kids for my entire life. For most her adult life, she quietly dealt with eczema and stomach pain so severe that it landed her in the hospital.

And for just as long, she was just told it was normal and that she is getting older and nothing can be done and take an antacid and move on. And I know that mirrors so many of your guys's doctor's appointments and pediatric appointments, just like, well, this is my experience, you know, that this what you can do to manage it.

Otherwise you're just going to have to deal with this and moving on last winter. That changed for my aunt Cathy, who you'll meet in a minute. I got to coach her through healing her eczema.

And a side effect of doing that work was healing, her stomach aches and her severe nausea. Today she's sharing what that actually looked like, the fear she had going into it and what shifted and when it feels like now to be on the other side of it.

I mean, she is legitimately aging backwards. It has been such an honor to walk her through this and to see the changes in her and She doesn't itch anymore.

She does not have eczema anymore and if any of this sounds familiar to you as you're listening, you don't need to wait as long as she did or if you are thinking, oh my goodness, I can't not sleep for the next 18 years because I'm sleeping in my child's bed.

Book an alignment call of friends. You can do it via the link in the show notes or you can it at examakids.com. That's where we just talk through what's going on for your child and your family and what we can to make things better for you current life experience and for future life experiences.

The link is in the show notes or you can go to eczemakids.com and book your free call there as well. We'll talk about what's going on with your kid, what is going for your family, and what we can do to make your current life experience better and more comfortable and ultimately not include exima in it at all.

Cathyu2019s background and years of unexplained symptoms

So head to Eczemakids. I can't wait to have a conversation with you and let's start figuring out your own path forward. Okay friends, let us get into it.

Today is a good one. Is your child struggling with itchy nights and endless flare-ups? I'm Andra McHugh, mom of four and host of Eczema Kids. Here you'll find natural solutions that actually work so you can heal your children's eczemat without steroids, without the overwhelm, and finally see calm, healthy skin again.

Let's get into it. Hey team, welcome back to the Ezzema kids podcast. So today's episode is a little bit different for me because I am not talking to a client, even though I love them all dearly and we become very good friends.

Today, I am talking to my aunt who I have known and loved my entire life. If you knew her, you would absolutely get it. She's 60. I hope it's okay that I share.

And her kids are grown and she's poured into her own family and so many people outside of that throughout the

years. She's been a teacher throughout her whole career and she's just one of those people that really shows up for everyone.

She has been huge influence in my life and my kid's life. And she is just the person that you call when things are really hard because she just always willing to help and to show up.

What I didn't know for a really long time was that was really suffering health-wise and she was suffering quietly. And she had eczema and it wasn't the kind that was like peeling from her face.

You wouldn't necessarily know, but it was throughout her body and her stomach hurt really badly. She even showed up to the hospital for a procedure to just get some answers because the pain was so debilitating and she's just going through it the way that many of us do, just pushing through because you're a mom and a wife and an employee and all the things and you don't want to be a burden.

Last winter, I was excited. I got to start to walk alongside her on this journey and coach her through. The real work though, of course, was her and her consistency and just showing up day in and day out and showing out for herself and really taking charge of her health.

I'm so excited because she said she would show up with us today and talk about the journey, what it was like before and what is feels like to be on the other side now.

Cathy, welcome to the show. Hi, Andra. Thank you. Quite an introduction. Well, oh my goodness. I cannot believe how excited I am to be having this conversation with you today.

Like I said, it just holds a special space in my heart because it's you and you're amazing. And I just want you to feel better and feel that vibrancy that you deserve and help so many other people feel.

I would just love to hear a little bit more. First, would you introduce yourself to everyone listening? Just share a bit a more about you. Sure. Like she said, I am Andrea's aunt and I was a special education teacher for over 20 years.

I'm very involved with my work. Had two children, both grown now. Live here with husband. In Nantucket. and doing the things like working and managing a house and being a good wife and yeah, growing a child mom, which is still being mom.

But no matter what, right, the mom season never really goes away and there's a lot to do all the time. That is true. Basically, I did that what you call the mom season, I like that word, and didn't take care of myself.

Hospital visit and diagnosis of reflux damage

I knew that I was sick. It knew stuff was happening and had ups and downs, you know, times when I did okay and times I really didn' I did have the support of my husband, which was amazing.

So he could take the kids on the weekends or after work if I just had to go to bed. And I didn't see any kind of a pattern, saw the doctor that you said, oh, you're getting older.

Like, hmm, I'm like 40. I am not that old. Yeah. Um, and then I started noticing what I thought of as rashes or dry skin as eczema, I, for many, many years, didn't have a word for that.

you know, get up, Get your kids breakfast, go to work, make it through the day, supporting these special needs kids. I mean, how are you feeling at the end of the Day?

Overwhelmed and exhausted. It was just so tired most of The time. Like I said, there were times when I did okay, but most Of the time I was Just exhausted and like I Said, Dr.

would just say, Oh yeah. you know, if you're getting older, it's part of it. And there was like a year or so where

getting to work was very, very difficult and I didn't always make it." And I know, hindsight, I still can't quite figure out what was different that year, but I'm sure it was something.

Yeah. Well, nervous system things and adrenals. And when your body is under duress and in the state of dis-ease, it's working very, very hard. It's utilizing all your minerals, all of your B vitamins, every single thing that you have.

at its disposal to just get through the day. And it sounds like you were really feeling that. Then what did the doctor say specifically? Did you ever go to the doctors to show them your eczema patches?

They just said, yeah, you have exima. No, and it wasn't bad. It wasn' ever like I mean, I'd be itchy. I get spots that bled, but it wasn't like the really severe, my most severe symptom was always my stomach, to a point where It hurt so bad I couldn't sit up straight, had trouble walking.

It related to the way I sit, the I walked, all of those things. So, you know, then my back started hurting and other symptoms started. But I think that's all from the stomach pain.

And that started very young, and doctors would just say, oh, you have an ulcer, take this medicine. Well, they'd do a test and they didn't see any ulcers, but, Oh, just take the medicine, And when you finally, I mean, this was last summer, right, that you went into the hospital because the pain was so severe in your stomach, like you said, you couldn't walk, and you did endoscopy.

And what did they say from that? They said that they found some scarring due to what they called acid reflux, which makes sense now that changed my diet and I don't have that anymore.

And so, you know, so that means years and years Having that pain was causing some damage, esophagus, and that now has scarring tissue in there. They didn't really give me any cure, take antacids, basically didn' recommend anything significant change in my diet.

Starting the healing plan and diet changes

And, you know, and meanwhile, when you went to this appointment specifically last summer, You were not eating garbage all day. Like you were already not, eating sugar.

You are not. Eating gluten. Yeah. not eating like a whole host of things. Like our diet was much more expansive than yours at this time when your pain was at its highest, right?

Right. So what I did is I limited to what didn't hurt the most. That makes sense. You know, so I was eating a lot of dairy cheats, but I had stopped gluten and sugar, well, gluten probably like 10 years ago.

There were some things, you know, gluten became a thing and talked about celiac disease and I kind of went through that online and went, oh, not quite, but it could be intolerance.

So I stopped gluten, still had some issues. I don't know. Three or four years ago, I guess I stop sugar. That was huge. That's huge! Sure. I mean, because both of these are highly inflammatory foods, right?

Absolutely. If you're experiencing any sort of unfavorable health outcomes, it would behoove you to take those things out. But it's not even required.

I mean, especially the sugar, right? Like we deal with a lot of kids, my kids would flat out have a riot if we said no more sugar. And, you know, like, thankfully, that's actually required, but I just wanted to, bring to the forefront that you weren't just eating garbage all day and experience symptoms that were already eating really I mean, really well by most people's standards and and still experiencing this issue.

And then the doctor says, well, There's not a lot we can do. Bummer for you. Take in acids. P. S. Stomach acid is highly important. You want your stomach acid to be as thorough and vibrant as possible because otherwise you eat

a steak.

What is going to emulsify that steak into a liquid so that you can ultimately digest and extract the nutrients that need to extract and then get rid of the rest, right?

You want your stomach acid to be functioning at a very, very high level. And they say, take in acids, quell the fire and carry on with your life. So then what did you decide?

Like then take me back to that moment when it's like, well, okay, here's where I am. What should I do? just sort of gave up and was like, okay, this is kind of where I am and this going to be it.

Prior to that, I had done allergy testing and it was already following that diet. It was just getting smaller and smaller. But I could notice what things were affecting me more.

If that makes sense. Once I started really thinking about it, and I guess that's it. Just really think about like me, which took many, many years to put me in that light.

They didn't say anything. Yeah. When we decided, okay, let's make a plan. Let's feel better, let's do this. I remember we did some tests. We're really fundamental, but before that, we put you on a plan, right?

It's like, here are the supplements that you can take. Here is a way of eating. And during this time, I have to say, you were living with my sister, helping her with her third baby.

So you weren't just alone to your own devices. You had a really intense schedule, very physically demanding schedule, you know, helping over the other two kids.

One has severe autism. It was a lot. And then you're going through all these dietary changes and deciding… It did, it took a minute to figure out how to do it.

Like you said, I was at Amy's house that first month that I did this. I able to change small things. One of the major components, I feel like, of what you were recommending was the supplements.

And I was able to do that with a smoothie. So I would put in as much stuff as I could and then add the supplement to that. That would be really good. Like that would breakfast.

Then for dinners and stuff, Amy was very cool about it. I just cooked like meat and vegetables. and she cooked her stuff and I cooked my stuff, and we did it.

And to be clear, she could have eaten your things.

Early improvements in energy and eczema

It would have helped her to eat also the meat and vegetables, but she's not there yet, which is fine. Yeah, it's totally okay. For families in general, I say Obviously, the tide rises all ships because when you start eating this way and you cook this, and then you're cooking for everybody in your family this and everyone's eating like a burger and cauliflower, like nothing crazy, everyone starts to feel better.

So the point is, it was like you were in an environment that was not necessarily conducive to a lifestyle change, but you still able to do it. I was. When I came home, working, like, okay, how am I going to do this if I'm not even in the house?

Like, How does this work? And then figured it out. Like I figured out how to set the oven in morning so that I could cook something and get dressed at the same time.

And we purchased a glass air fryer. and then was able to do that. So I could do things in the morning and it didn't

take very long. and then pack that up and take it with me.

Yeah. Which you have to pack a lunch anyway, right? Everyone who's going to school, and you were going school as a teacher, daycare, you gotta pack these things anyway.

And yeah, I mean, after doing this for most of your adult life, for your kids, yourself, everybody, really, did it feel that much different than what you're doing before?

Well, it did because what I would do before is just something that would just take a couple of minutes. You know, make a sandwich or cut up cheese and crackers.

You know, something like that. But I was able to do it and, you know just a little time management, but it really wasn't as hard as I thought it was going to be.

And then what were the first like changes that you started to notice in your health and just how you felt day to day? I noticed I had a lot more energy.

My head was my, I want to say my head, was clear. I'm not sure that that comes out right. You It took a while for it to go away completely, but definitely had less, even body pains, definitely less of the stomach pains.

I think that the energy level was definitely the first thing I noticed. Yeah, yeah, just huge, right? That's like getting your life back. When you're feeling so tired that you don't want to do life, that's just not the way.

And oh my goodness, you can show up so much better for your children, for everyone around you when you have the energy just to want, to get out of bed in the morning.

Is there anything that you would really attribute, is there any one specific thing that would you really contribute to? Like this made a really noticeable difference or do you feel like it was more of a compilation of things?

I really feel it like was a compilations of thing. I feel that it I didn't wake up one day and be like, oh, look, I feel great. But over those months, like I said, it got my energy back.

I started feeling better. The eczema went away. Guy Kevin had any for months. Just that general feeling of feeling. Yeah. When I was with you, I went and visited you a month ago and you said to me, you know, when I put on lotion or shave my legs, just can't believe that this is my skin.

Believe it. It's amazing. These can be my leg. They can. That's not possible. All my life, it's been something, but was never diagnosed. It's just, oh yeah, you've got really dry skin, and you shouldn't use some lotion.

Okay. Turns out that we call it eczema. Even then, they'd be like, well, that's exima. Here's a steroid. Maybe. Yeah. If it doesn't really bother you, just don't do anything.

Just deal. Right. That's almost the saddest part. They just say that this is your ceiling of health and go about your your day and this Is it for you?

You're just meant to live in this uncomfortable itchy rashy Stomach hurting space and that's just oh man. They do it's a travesty. It's really really sad If you're talking to a friend who is mentioning the same sort of symptoms as you, and these are really common symptoms, just overall fatigue and just not feeling great, likely some pain and then probably some itchy, dry patches, What would you say to them about a few changes that they could start to make right now?

Reflecting on progress and encouragement for others

I think that the way that we started and used your your creams and your spray that itch spray helped so much the creams helped to clear things up for sure and I Think modifying my diet, you know taking out a lot of the things that

I didn't realize but were inflammatory and then I was just eating them every day.

I really stuck to it and I think I stuck because I felt so much better. When we first started this process and you said it could be three to six months I went hmm I don't know if I'm capable of doing that.

But after a few months and then realizing, you know, things are changing, this does feel better. And it's not that hard to eat differently. To eat real whole food.

But yeah, I mean, and I think you're a testament to, honest, the people that are committed and consistent. You do see those immediate rewards. It's about 1% better every day.

My goodness. I mean, it's in three months time. You are in a completely different place. And it just, like you said, not that hard. It requires a commitment and it requires some follow through.

But not at a total aside from what you're doing before, you still have to go grocery shopping. So to make food, to cook food. To feed your family. and I'm so proud of you and really thankful that you are willing to share so openly and vulnerably with everyone today because there's so many people in your shoes.

I was very candid with you. What extends timelines is age, which is fair, and thorough and pharmaceutical exposure. I've been living with this for my whole life.

I had almost 60 years of buildup and whatever that was. It took some time and some work on your part to figure out where we were and where were going.

I was able to use the recipes that you have or use, you know, use skills that were teaching me and follow through with that. Did it? Thank you. You did it.

Oh, You're so welcome. I'm so glad. and like I said so proud of you and just I can't believe the transformation and I mean you are aging backwards like you feel better now at 60 than you did at 45. I'm so much better oh my gosh if I felt like this at forty-five my life would have been so different oh that's so wild I once had one of my kids say to me like i don't remember when you weren't sick like That hurt, but he didn't know any better because, you know, he was just a little kid.

And then I thought about that and he's right. I've been sick for a long time. It does break your heart a bit. But that child has a very good relationship with you.

Yes, that's for everyone who knows. He's back at home, hanging out with us and working and living his life. Yeah. Yeah, so the bless is hard and just, you know, it's, is a journey.

It's a Journey for everybody. And you, know this is what it looked like for you. But that is so much for getting me through that and onto this new Journey.

My pleasure. Thank you. Oh, my pleasure, it's so fun. It's fun to work with you, and it so rewarding to do this work, with everyone. Because those are the outcomes.

I mean, every single time I was talking to a client not that long ago and she said, wow, is it really that easy? And it is, once you line up the correct inputs.

Once you get it going, It just goes. It is, it is that easy. And as long as the consistency is there, and that's all you. I mean, you're the one that determined this health outcome.

So thank you, I love you and we'll talk soon. Okay. Thank you bye. Bye. I am just so proud of Kathy and so grateful that she was willing to share so openly today because there are so many people out there living exactly the way she is.

Just itchy and dry and five foods in her diet plan and exhausted and in severe, severe pain and being told this is just what getting older looks like or, oh, hopefully they'll grow out of it.

And her story is proof of something that I say all the time. It really is that easy once you get the right inputs in place. You test and know exactly what we're targeting.

You stay consistent and you follow the plan that I outlined for you exactly line by line. She didn't have to do anything extreme. Said she can't believe that the skin on her legs is actually hers and if any part of Kathy story reminds you of your own itching or the dryness or fatigue the whittling diet the stomach pain the patches this is your life now or.

Hopefully your kid will grow out of it. I don't want you to keep guessing your way through it for the years that she did or through your child's childhood years.

That's just not how you live your best life and I just want every family to feel the energy and the joy and The bliss that it could be just being healthy and well and together So if that's not your experience right now You can book an alignment call with me the link is in the show notes or you can find it at eczemakids.com I would love to talk with you and Let's figure out what's actually going on and what healing could look like for your family.

So thank you so much for listening, friends. I'm honored that you joined me today and I will talk to you next week. Take care. Thank you for helping with my eczema.

Love you. Thank you 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 eczema kids and finally rest easy too.

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