Epigenetics & Health Optimization Transcript

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Podcast Introduction

It was known many years ago that there were 60,000 genes in an earthworm. Now what is a gene? A gene is a blueprint within the cell and in fact the nucleus of our cells that holds the blueprint for how we make proteins and proteins are what control everything about us, the color of our hair.

Is it straight? Is it curly? What's your complexion? How high are you? How tall? What kind of a structure do you have for gallbladder, for internal organs?

Health Choices and Personal Destiny

We saw that in anatomy in medical school many years ago where there were different arrangements, different architecture within a person's body, within an individual, between different ethnicities, different people from around the world.

Welcome to the Natural Facts Podcast. I'm your host, Dr. David Wickenheiser. I'm a naturopathic physician with over 30 years of clinical experience. I have a focus on natural and regenerative medicine.

Through this podcast, I will be your guide, helping you to make sense of conflicting healthcare choices. Welcome to the Natural Facts. Hello, I'm Dr. David Wickenheiser and welcome to this episode of the Natural Facts Podcast.

Have you ever wondered how much affect your daily life choices have on your health? I think we all have. Can we really affect our health? Can we improve it?

Can we control it? What is fatalism and what's destiny? Are we fated to have poor health? Every time I have a patient come into the office, as a new patient, we take a full patient history.

That means I want to know what's happened to you in your life as well as your family. What has happened in terms of your lifestyle choices? What's happened to you health-wise, good and bad?

What has worked for you? What hasn't? What are your health concerns? And how do we optimize your health? How do we help you to regain and maintain good health over time?

This is a critical desire of every person that I meet. Everyone wants to know how can they be their best for as long as possible.

Genes, Proteins, and Human Variation

I believe that we have a destiny, every one of us, and we don't know that destiny, but we do have a choice on how we can optimize our life during the time that we have on earth.

The choices that we make, do they really have an effect? And of course, yes they do. Dr. Bruce Lipton, PhD, had a landmark, very popular, 2011 book called Biology of Belief.

And in that book, he discussed many factors of health and factors that affect us, including why do we think the way we do, why do we believe what we do, and how much of it is rooted in biology, what we've inherited, our genetics.

And it turns out a large portion of it. But we still have control. And this was highly illustrated with mapping of the human genome. Now that was an interesting development in the healthcare of the world of people.

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We saw that in anatomy in medical school many years ago where There were different arrangements, different architecture within a person's body, within an individual, between different ethnicities, different people from around the world.

So we know that not every person is alike. We're similar, but not exactly the same. And so our genetics have that effect. Now that's to grow us, to make our structure.

Epigenetics and Lifestyle Control

But what about the physiology? How we work inside of our bodies, our day-to-day chemistry, and how that contributes to our good health? So what it comes down to is simply you can turn on the right genes and turn off the wrong genes.

This was huge. This is what came out of the 60,000 gene concept with earthworms because the venture capitalists who sponsored mapping of the human genome had the belief, and it was a reasonable belief, that human genetics would be far more complex than an earthworm.

We are more complex as structures, as people, thinking, actions, how we control our environment, much more so than an earthworm. So if an earthworm has 60,000 genes, a person, a human, must have 600,000, 700,000. Now why were venture capitalists motivated to do this research?

And it's fantastically useful. emerging in the decades since the mapping into very important for helping us to determine methods of optimizing our health.

So epigenetics came out because what was expected to be a larger amount of genes than an earthworm has, what was found that the human genome is in fact 25,500.

We're roughly 40% of the genetic material of an earthworm. The obvious question is how could this possibly work? Is there a lot of genetic material in an earthworm that's simply not being used?

Are we more efficient? Or is there another concept which there is and that's called epigenetic. Now if you've got a gene that will produce a protein that will result in digestive enzymes in your stomach, perhaps in your health of your heart, Genes control many parts of our health, but we are able to turn on the right genes and turn off the wrong genes.

This is a very important concept for those of us who want to optimize our health and not just be fatalistically stuck into the exact same health history as our parents and grandparents.

If you want to optimize your health and step ahead of what's been the common experience in your family, then you look towards epigenetics. Now epigenetics, what that means is that we have far fewer genes than we were expected, but those genes will variably express.

There is one particular gene as an example that depending upon your lifestyle choices, depending upon where you live in the world, what latitude on the earth do you live at a high altitude at a lower, closer to this level altitude?

Do you drink enough water? Do you eat enough protein? What type of protein do you eat? Do you exercise? Do you even go outside? Some people stay indoors.

All of these different lifestyle factors have direct effect on genetic expression. And again, you want for optimum

health to turn on the right genes and turn off the wrong genes.

Taking Charge of Your Health

So what was found with epigenetics was one particular gene that was illustrative of others that depending upon what that person chose, their lifestyle choices, their day-to-day choices would result in the production of any one of 200 different proteins.

we have immense individual control over our health. This is very inspiring for those of us who want to optimize our health. Some people are fatalistic and they just wanna go along to get along.

But if you really wanna be a rebel, if you really wanna have the best health that you can possibly have, you need to consider epigenetics as your guide.

So being able to turn off the wrong genes, turn on the right genes, and express your genes in a way that will give you optimum health is your choice. You have the ability to do this.

Do you eat enough fruit and vegetables? Do you eat clean protein? Do you eat the right protein for your body? What about good fats? What about herbal and other types of support?

All of these factors are within your choice. And it does have a huge effect. So do you want to be fatalistically going down the road and just accepting whatever poor decisions you've made resulting in poor health?

Or do you want to take charge? Move ahead and have the best life that you can have. So if you do, we can talk. We will figure out together how to optimize your good health.

I'm Dr. David Wickenheiser. This is the Natural Facts Podcast. And thank you for listening. And we will have more episodes shortly about more choices that you've got for good health.

Dr. David Wickenheiser, naturopathic physician. Thank you for listening. I hope you enjoyed this episode of the Natural Facts Podcast. To get access to my future episodes as soon as they're available, subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.

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