Summit Introduction and Guest Background

Welcome everyone to the Gut Health and Longevity Summit. I am so glad you're here. Today we're going to begin with the foundation of everything we're going to cover this week, the gut and how deeply it shapes the immune system that protects you, or in some cases, can turn against you.

Most people have been told that autoimmune disease is one of the most confusing and frightening diagnoses in medicine, and has a direct line back to gut health.

Our expert this week is here to change that, and starting with a conversation I want to bring to you for a long time. What happens when a physician who was told that her disease was incurable, set out to prove otherwise, and then publish the data to back it up?

My next guest was diagnosed with a disease. Her own doctors told her she would likely manage for life or lose her life to it. Instead, she reversed it herself and then spent the next two decades proving in published case series that her patients could do the same.

Doctor Brooke Older graduated with honors from Carnegie Mellon University for Genetic research in leukemia and neurobiology, earned her medical degree from Temple University.

I'm a Philadelphia person to and was chief resident during her psychiatric residency at UCLA Harbor. She is the creator of the Hyper Nourishing Nutrition Protocol and the autoimmune lecturer for Cornell Plant based Nutrition Certification Program, and sits on the Forbes Health Advisory Board.

She is also the author of A Goodbye Lupus, A Goodbye Autoimmune Disease and The Recipe Companion. Goodbye, lupus. Hello, delicious. And her 2024 case series in Frontiers in Nutrition documented three women with lupus and Sjögren syndrome reaching symptom remission in four weeks or less.

That is absolutely amazing. And she's been featured in so many places people magazine, A disease, Reverse Reversal, Hope and Eating You Alive and reaches so many followers on all of her platforms.

So Doctor Brueckner, welcome. I'm excited to bring your story and your data to this audience. So let's dive in. Sounds good. Glad to be here. All right.

So before we get into the science, I want to start with you. Your doctors told you that you would likely spend your life on immunosuppressants or lose your life to your disease.

What was actually happening in your body when you were diagnosed? And what does lupus do to someone's immune system? Yeah, so long before I was ever a doctor or an author, all the things you mentioned, I was a patient, and I'd been a patient since I was 14 years old, at 14 of starting with really severe migraines.

And I mean, just in bed vomiting for days. They couldn't find anything wrong. I had all the tests done, all the wires on my head and okay, it's just genetic.

And here's your medicine for migraines. And it was a couple of years after that, from 15 to 16, where I started to have other symptoms, where I'd get joint swelling or pain.

And usually by the time I got to the doctor, it was better, but it would kind of work its way around my body. It might be in my shoulder, and then it'd be in my knee, and then it'd be in my toe.

And then, you know, just kind of move around. And it never made sense to me as a kid because I was used to pink

coming from injury. So I was thinking, if I hurt myself playing volleyball, my right shoulder, how come I left shoulder hurt the next day, which can be part of autoimmune disease?

But I didn't know that back then. And then I started getting rashes. I had a rash across my cheeks, over my nose. That was worse when I went in the sun and all sorts of just, and then that would be mixed in with the migraines and fatigue.

And I was a mess. So 16 right before starting my junior high school, I had a really bad day. Been out in the sun all day with my friends. It was a fun day.

And that night I was just throwing up from a migraine. And when I came out, I was swollen and my cheeks were really red because the vomiting brought out the rash and I ended up in the air.

And my doctor, who had still she'd been trying to figure out what was wrong with me, but hadn't discovered it yet. And she met us there, and she took a look at me and went, I think I know what this is now.

Lupus Diagnosis and Early Kidney Failure

And I and my mom told me recently it made her angry because she looked at me and said, I think this could be lupus. And my mom's like, oh no, it's not like you don't get just like I've been taking her to you for a year.

You don't get to decide that. The only reason my mom knew what lupus was, is we happened to have one member of the family that had it, but not related.

It was someone married into the family had it, who had died from lupus. But she did all the testing. And yes, I tested positive for lupus. But what we didn't know because it was a silent thing, I didn't have symptoms of this, was they told me that I was also in kidney failure.

And so, you know, there was I had no symptoms or pain that told me I was in kidney failure, but my blood pressure was through the roof. They wanted to keep me in the hospital because of my blood pressure.

They had me do an immediate kidney biopsy, and so it was like two days after that that I saw them to. And he was the one who said, listen, you have the most aggressive form of lupus nephritis, which is lupus attacking your kidneys.

It's called membranous proliferative. And it's so severe that without doing experimental treatments, because we don't have any treatment currently that will stop this with without doing some experimental treatments, you may only have six months to live.

Oh, wow. So I wasn't told. You're going to have to manage this rest of your life. I was told you might be dead in six months. And so we said, well, what's the best we could hope for?

He said, the best we can hope for is dialysis. But if you're willing to undergo some experimental treatments, we may be able to put this into a remission.

So what do you say? I mean, okay, let's save my life then. But it was extremely difficult. And it's something that, you know, it changed my life in so many ways that I consider positive.

I think, you know, most of us at 16 are thinking more about prom and SAT scores. And I was thinking about what's going to make my life matter, because not everybody knows that their life is limited, especially at that age.

And so I come from a family of Holocaust survivors. My grandmother, who at 16 was in a prison camp. She was there when I got my diagnosis. And, you know, she was on her knees like praying to God, like, take me and spare her.

And it was just, I mean, seeing the pain of caused my family changed me because I learned that we're never sick alone and that we have to take care of ourselves for the people who love us.

And I also knew that I was still really lucky because at 16, my grandma was much worse off and I was surrounded by people who loved me. So even though I had a scary diagnosis, I was still lucky and I was going to do whatever it took to live.

So I had to take seven pills a day. They gave me high dose steroids. They gave me hormones to suppress puberty. They gave me high dose chemotherapy that now is commonly used situps and chemotherapy.

But I was one of the people they tested it on, and they raised the dose every month to see if they could use. The side effect of chemotherapy was, which is that people's immune systems go down right.

They use the chemotherapy for cancer to stop fast growing cells. But the side effect is that can suppress their immune system. And it's why a lot of people with cancer dive infections, well, they were on purpose trying to suppress my immune system.

Since in lupus, it's the immune system that's attacking the kidneys, right. Attacking the joints. So they wanted to shut down my immune system as aggressively as they could without killing me.

And so they said they had every month raise the dose because they gave me the full dose all at once. That could kill me, too. Or even a horse, my doctor said.

So I was going through all that, and I went to high school. And so I learned how to also kind of put things where they needed to be, like, here's my pills.

And I learned how to swallow all seven pills at once, so I wouldn't have to take more time than needed. Thinking about health, I took my pills, and then I went to school, and I took in my AP classes, and I was myself with my friends.

And yes, I, you know, had low energy at times and I couldn't go out the way I used to. And, you know, I couldn't go out to the Jersey shore on the weekends, go play beach volleyball.

But I was still able to graduate top of my class and I was still able to get into college. In fact, I got a scholarship to my dream school, and I started at two weeks after I finished chemotherapy.

I finished chemo, and then I went to college. So, you know, it's life with lupus is is complex and it can be painful and it can be tiring. But for me, it was still life.

And I just figured I would have a life that mattered as much as possible, and I was going to enjoy it fully and I was going to achieve fully and then see what happened.

And yeah, I'm sitting here today, I'm about to turn a few months away from turning 50, and I have zero health problems. I've been in remission for over 20 years, will be 21 years next month, but back then I had no idea what was going to be next.

And so I recently was told by an interviewer that I've been living like I'm dying for over 30 years. And yeah, I definitely had in the best possible way, but it made me really the one of the reasons I wanted to be a doctor was because I wanted to help people with chronic disease know that they could still live and maximize their ability to enjoy their lives and not let it stop them.

And so I thought, you know, that's why, like, even with my patients today, they said they'd never had a doctor who goes line by line through the labs and explains everything to them and sits with them.

I don't see people for less than 75 minutes. Right. Like I just I want to make sure that I'm in this with them. And

it’s one of the reasons why they recover so well and feel good too, is that I’m there with them.

I understand them, I know them, and I can hold their hand while they’re sick and then celebrate with them when they’re well. So yeah, that’s my summary of life with that.

That’s quite a story. I mean, to be dealing with this when you’re a teenager, and I know many of the people who are watching or listening to this are like, well, you know, my autoimmunity came later in life.

And I know for myself, you know, you were blindsided as a teenager with this diagnosis. I mean, just to go in and get a kidney biopsy. And I’m glad you, you know, you use the words glomerulonephritis because me as a trained pathologist, I’m like, I’ve been looking at kidney biopsies.

I know, like I’m visualizing exactly what you were seeing. But those are really big and scary words. And, you know, for me, I personally developed autoimmunity after a traumatic brain injury.

Right. So anybody is in the space where they can develop autoimmunity anywhere along their health journey. So this is why this conversation is so important, because I myself had to reverse my own autoimmune that that I developed.

So it’s really interesting. Yeah. And it’s progressive right. So the thing about autoimmune disease is we’re taught that it’s progressive and chronic meaning chronic.

You’ll have it forever and progressive is going to get worse. And that was my experience before changing the way I ate. I mean, you know, I got through college okay.

And I maintained what they called a remission. So I went off chemotherapy after two years and because my kidneys were no longer failed. So I still had some protein in my ears.

But they said that’ll be chronic because you’ll always have that because of damage that was done. But you’re no longer a kidney failure, which was huge.

I still had arthritis. I still got rashes from the sun, but medications, oral medication to care of that. And I was thrilled not having to do chemotherapy.

I already felt like I was like freedom. You know, I still had to take medication when I had, you know, migraines and miss class for that. But I still made it through that.

But medical school almost killed me. For real. I mean, medical school. I couldn’t make my, you know, I couldn’t just take a day off and sleep in if I needed to, like in college and the the call.

Oh my goodness. Nowadays they actually limit call where you can’t work more than 30 hours straight. But back then we didn’t have that protection. Remember my first 72 hour call where I basically drove home and threw up because I had my body had never been awake.

I was in New York actually, for my rotations. It was a torture. Yeah. And there’s no reason for it. It’s not like we’re good at our job once we’ve been up that long, but as med students really.

But yeah, I, I remember, you know, I was getting sick and I knew it, but I wasn’t having my previous symptoms.

Managing Severe Autoimmunity Through Medical School

I was having episodes of Double Vision and where I literally be walking down the hospital hallway, and then I’d have to hold on to the wall because it was two worlds, and I had to wait for them to come back together.

I was getting little red dots all over my body and okay, this is bad. And I actually went to my attending at the time

and I said, I think I've got something going on.

I have lupus, and you can see there's dots in my nails and I'm getting some double vision. And she actually she told me that, you know, she basically made it seem like medical students are hypochondriacs.

And I'm probably fine. And like, I'm not opposite of a hypochondriac. I don't want any of it. I've already had enough. I don't want any of it, you know, and and I said, okay, you know what?

Next month is Thanksgiving. I'm going to go home and go see my doctors will work this up, which I should have gotten to work up sooner. But I had a really scary episode after that where I was seeing patients at a clinic and I was trying to read the chart, and I suddenly couldn't read it, and I didn't remember if I couldn't figure out if I was awake or dreaming.

I was trying to figure it out, and I couldn't talk to the person who was next to me. I wanted to say something. I couldn't talk to him and I woke up later.

The clinic was closed and I was sleeping on the chart, and they must have left me there thinking like, oh, there's another med student who's exhausted, you know?

But it was really bad. And I remember when I woke up, I just wanted to go home. I wasn't thinking clearly. And I remember I had my teas and I got in my Jeep, and thankfully I lived only about a mile from the clinic.

But I remember stopping at every intersection to try to look and see if I saw my house, because I wasn't sure how to get there. So I got back to my house.

I and I went to bed. I woke up like ten hours later and I felt normal as like this was bad. So I went back to my doctor back home. And that's when I found out that the lupus was no longer.

My kidneys were still stable, but I had developed something called Antifa lipid antibody, where lupus was causing blood clots. So I was having mini strokes.

I was sending blood clots into my brain, and that was causing the double vision and the confusion. And so then I had to go on a blood thinner. And they told me for the rest of your life, they said, you know, the rest of your life you're going to have a major stroke.

And I said, But I'm really clumsy. What if I bleed into my head? You know, I fall, I, you know, and they're like, this is the safest thing you can do.

And considering the history of kidney failure and the current issue with blood clots, which at the time I think I was 26, they said, you know, you can never have children.

It would kill you if you even managed to get pregnant, considering that you had chemotherapy during puberty. You know, we don't. So it was just kind of like this thing.

And that was the first time I think I ever really cried for myself. And I think it was also because I was now a year away from becoming a doctor fully, and I understood what I had better.

When I was 16. We didn't have the internet, I didn't Google what I had. I only knew what my doctor told me, and my mom gave me a book. I got a chapter in and said, this is really depressing.

And I threw it away. And and so I really understood how serious it was, how much danger I was in. And I had made peace with the fact that I'd probably be physically disabled by my 40s, having had the business as a teenager.

But the idea that I could lose the only thing that was going for me was my brain. I was like, I could be in a wheelchair and I can practice medicine, but if a major stroke, I have nothing.

So it was about two weeks of crying. And then I went, you know what? I'm the comeback kid. Every time they tell me I'm dying, I take my medicine, I get better and I keep going.

And that's who I am. I take this shock my belly every day. My blood is thin. I'm still going to graduate. I just gotten into my residency program in California, and I was like, you know what? I'm still here.

How many people are living their dream? And, you know, and so I just kind of like, put it where needed to be and kept going. And so I was actually fully happy with living my life that way.

And you had mentioned in the introduction about how I, I had like, almost like I decided to try to find a way to get better and, and discover intentionally a way to heal. No.

Never did. I was raised with lupus, basically, and always relied on medicine and believed actually fully that there was no other way that I could survive without medication and Western medicine.

My recovery was purely an accident and it was the best accident that ever could happen. But yeah, I just felt lucky that for every disease that I developed, for every symptom I had, I survived and there was a medicine that could keep me going. And for me that was enough.

You just you reminded me that like I remember in medical school a residency actually how you know. Yeah they think you're a hypochondriac because everything you learn it's like I had that but I remember I got misdiagnosed and my gyn just totally was like, oh, there's nothing going on.

I'm just regular pap smear, nothing. And I'm like, And then one of my colleagues goes to me, she's like, all you do is eat ice. And I'm like, what are you talking about?

She's like, you're always snack. You're sitting next to me. And, you know, we had our cubbies where I was like all the other residents. She's like, you're just always eating ice.

And I'm like, well, that's pica. I guess. She's like, you should really go get your bloodwork checked. And I'm like, okay. And I was I was literally in residency doing call, doing everything with a hemoglobin, the hematocrit of six and 22.

I was so anemic when I went to the emergency room and they're like, oh no, we need to do a transfusion. And I'm like, I'm not doing a transfusion. I'm fine. I'm on call tomorrow.

I have slowly worked your way down. Then if you can walk around that way, I'm like, yeah, I'm like, I have to work. And nevertheless, there was a story behind that.

But it's interesting because if you don't know anything about how the human body works and what the signs are to look for, you're kind of going through and struggling this.

So my next question for you is that most people are taught that autoimmune disease is something that you manage, not something that you reverse. But you got off every medication and your labs came back clean.

So what is wrong with the manage it forever model? And why do you think your own doctors did not expect what happened to you? Well, I think that, you know, part of it is that chronic disease, the idea of chronic disease.

I believe that that's really man made. You look elsewhere in the animal kingdom. There isn't chronic disease. You don't see like an elephant with arthritis limping, you know, they can get sick and die.

They can get an infection, they can get a wound, they can get hurt. But the idea that you you get sick and stay sick, it actually goes against biology, right?

Everything in ourselves, everything in our system is designed to be able to repair damage. So you can get a paper

cut and not bleed to death, right? We have blood clots to seal off the wound and then our skin can regenerate.

We have enzymes that are released that allow us to have the immune cells that flow in there and repair damage, like our whole body is designed to repair itself, but we are not living in a natural way anymore, right?

Even simple things like getting enough sunlight to have vitamin D, which is actually a hormone that's necessary for our immune system to function. I live in this room mostly, right?

I have to supplement vitamin D to have my immune system work properly. Right. That there's little things like that changing our entire way of eating, that all of the things that we need to repair damage to ourselves, they come from our diet.

So it's kind of like the way I explain it to my patients. It's like a Lego set where you know, you have the instructions and then you have the pieces.

Our DNA has the instructions, our cells and tissues have the instructions. But if you're missing the pieces, you can't finish the set. You can't repair the damage.

And so in that way, we can get sick because of what I love myself because I'm always like, this is what you need to support. So we're going to get into it.

Yeah. So, you know, what happens is we get damage from many things. We get damaged because of environmental factors, you know, maybe exposures to things.

I was just just got off the line of someone who developed a, you know, issues with having nerve damage from exposure to a toxin, you know, a pesticide, right?

We can get damage from external factors.

Why Autoimmune Disease Can Be Reversed

We can get damage from extreme stress. We can get damage because we're not sleeping enough to repair the damage, because we not only need all the pieces, but we need the time to put it together.

And that happens largely while we're sleeping. We can get damage from eating things that our bodies are not meant to have inside of them. And so we have all these different types of damage, and then we have to have the things we need to repair the damage.

And it's one of the reasons why my protocol is very specific. It's something that we trademark called hyper nourishment. And it's about over supplying the supplies your body uses to repair the damage.

So to me, chronic disease means we have something that's damaging us either continuously or in the past caused damage, and we're lacking what it takes to repair the damage.

And it might be one or the other for some folks. I've helped a lot of people who are already plant based, for example, who stalled in their recovery until they added hyper nourishment.

So it was like, okay, I was getting better not eating animal products anymore, not eating processed stuff anymore. But then I never fully recovered. Okay, you're just missing some of the other stuff.

And but for most folks, they're still eating things, making them sick, and they're still lacking the things they need to get better. And then there's the emotional components as well.

We know that grieving and stress and anxiety, depression all create damage. Great inflammation. So much so there was a study where they thought they should give to people with depression to steroids.

I'm like, no, it's not good. But really. So it's humans are complex that way. And so because of that we can have damage that should have repaired itself, become chronic.

One of the most great examples right now is long Covid. I've had, you know, when I was I have these programs called Rapid Recovery where I work with people every day before to six weeks. I love taking care of people and being there for them and helping them recover.

And so in the when I was doing these programs during Covid, because we do them online, when we talk to each other online, people who had severe autoimmune diseases, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, who should have been the most vulnerable, they weren't getting Covid when their family members were all sick.

So we went, okay, something weird here, right? But also we've had people who had long Covid, right? So think of it, an infection. Most people would never think you get the flu and have it the rest of your life, right.

That would be the czar. But long Covid is like chronic Covid, right? Chronic disease caused by an infection. And we've had people come to us over the years who had had symptoms remaining for 1 to 2 years, and they disappeared once they added those other ingredients.

So because of the work I've done, it's really shown me over the past 20 years that chronic diseases mostly our fault, that we don't need to be chronically ill, that we can reverse diseases even when we've had since the beginning.

But that's not how we're taught as physicians. So going back to my doctors, doctors were amazing. They saved my life when I was a very seriously ill kitten.

It could have gone either way. And so my nephrologist, he was amazing. You know, being on the cutting edge using the chemotherapy, you know, this was before even we had the medicines we use now is mostly just high dose steroids.

Back then we didn't have, you know, any of the any of the current meds that they use regularly. Now when I was 16. So, you know, they were brilliant, amazing doctors.

And it's funny, my roots from back in the day, doctor Franklin, he sent me an email probably in 2016 or 2015 when Goodbye Lupus came out and roaming email saying, I'm so happy that you're not only alive, but you're doing well. This is so cool.

I love what you're doing. My nephrologist, who's brilliant, loving so much, Doctor Levy, was amazing. I went back to see him. Goodness, my boys were little and I went back to see him because I was in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, and he's now the head of the hospital, and I he came out and he saw me and he started crying and he hugged me.

He's like, I can't believe it. He was like, I had to look up your name to see, is this really the woman that. I think it is? Because there's no way she's still alive.

Like he just assumed it. And he saw the children and he was just, like, crying and hugged me. It was this beautiful reunion, and I thanked him for saving my life and told him about my protocol and how healthy I am now.

And I have normal kidneys and no lupus at the time for I don't know, it was over a decade at that time. We had a great reunion. As we're walking out the door, my younger son pointed to his candy bowl and I said, no, no, we don't eat that.

And he's like, okay. And my hands, I'm walking out. I remember I was holding the door and he goes, I don't know. I still think when it comes to food, moderation is best.

And I remember because I tripped on the door like I almost fell because I was just like, what? You just saw a miracle with your own eyes and your brain's like.

And he was the one who told me when I was sick that pizza was the perfect food because it had all the food groups. And my parents owned a pizza place and always gave him free coupons.

So it might be part of that, you know? But but he's still even in the face of a miracle. And I got to say, nephrologists have been the hardest to get on board, even when I help people.

Like my first publication was getting someone off the kidney transplant list doubling or kidney function in six weeks, and her nephrologist said, no way it's gonna work.

And then when it worked, he said, it wasn't the food. I don't know what it was, but it's just a miracle. So he found religion, but he still refused to believe that it works.

I don't know why nephrologists are my hardest ones. I'll get there. They'll get Alice's nurses. I have a dialysis nurse who keeps slipping people my website because they'll tell me I was complaining.

There must be a better way. And she just whispered in my ear, this lady has gotten some of my patients off dialysis and she just slides them the bar. So the nurses, that's actually how a lot of patients end up on my way to is, is the either the nurse practitioners and the percentage like just go to her.

Well, it's our training, right. Like my I learned nothing about nutrition and medical school. I graduated knowing so much about biology and physiology and and medications.

We didn't have iPods or anything back then. We had to remember all the medicines and their side effects and all our fairy giant books, and we're from the same generation, so I get it.

Yeah. You know, the big pockets that cause the chronic neck pain on the two three beepers, and you don't want to be the first. So, I mean, so it was just not in our training.

And so I think, you know, even I've had so many patients where their lupus went away, shoguns went away. Other autoimmune even miss. And the doctor will say, well, it's incurable, so you must never have had it.

And we just misdiagnosed you. Like literally. Didn't it be amazing? Instead of carrying a pharmacopeia in our left pocket, we actually had a nutrition guide in the right pocket.

I mean, I feel like we should just write it, right? It's changing. It's changing its medical schools around the world like I've had, you know, medical schools in New Zealand and Australia, like, have me do a grand round for them where they over zoom because they're looking for the info.

You know, I've taught at conferences with hundreds of doctors. They're like, it's changing. It's not fast enough for the people who need us right now.

But in my lifetime, I'm in awe of how quickly things have changed and how more acceptable it is. My published goodbye lupus. I was getting people slamming me online.

It's incurable. You can't. This is not true. You know, you're you're selling snake oil. I'm like, I'm selling nothing. Like I'm just telling you. Here's the information.

My husband and I decided to give it away for free. Like to just share the protocol just to save people's lives. But now it's, like, accepted. Like. Oh, yeah.

In fact, now everybody's got their own program, like, oh, we reverse autoimmune and you just need to take our parent type parasite, blah blah, and you know.

Oh well that's not go down the parasite route. Just. Yeah. But let's talk about because that's a whole other let's we won't get there hyper nourishment.

So you call your approach hyper nourishment. It starts at the level of the gut and the cell. And you've distilled this into six specific steps. Call the hyper nourishing protocol.

Can you walk us through each of them and explain why the order and the combination matters, not just the individual pieces? Like like, what is it about this that matters?

Yeah, absolutely. So the six steps to reversing disease using supermarket foods. Right. So that's called the steps sets in my book of by lupus. But I've shared it publicly a lot.

You can distilled into really two parts. The first three steps are really about don't get sicker right.

The Six-Step Hyper Nourishing Protocol

If you want to heal, stop getting sicker, right. It's like if you're trying to lose weight, stop. Stop getting fatter, right? Like you have to stop doing the thing that's making you sicker.

So those are the first three steps. And the second three steps are hyper nourishment. These are the nutrition items you need for recovery. So the first three steps are the things you need to stop eating in order to get better.

And those I think have been universally discovered, especially when you look at the plant based world. I didn't come into this wanting to be plant based.

I didn't even know it existed. My husband and I are scientists. We discovered this by accident. My husband is actually so. His master's degree is an exercise science and health promotion, and his research was focused on how to create a fast metabolism so that any person can have low body fat, high muscle.

That's all he was looking to do human esthetics. And when we met and he wanted to marry me, knowing that I couldn't have children and he'd be taking care of me when I died young.

I mean, he's incredible. I was like, well, if we're going to get married, I want to do your program so I can look great in my wedding dress. Like I never even thought about getting married, you know?

And so he gave me his protocol to do. But his protocol actually included meat free range meat. It's like, kind of like what paleo became. But I was a vegetarian since I was a kid.

I ate tons of eggs and cheese and process of junk, but I wasn't willing to eat meat, so he had to change it for me. And it was the first time he ever made a plant based version of it.

But there was no dairy because that increased people's body fat and there was nothing processed. It was high in raw foods and a mega three and water intake.

And and then for me, he's like, all right, well, just won't do the meat and see what happens. You know, maybe have some soy beans or tofu or something.

So I got the same results as everyone else in terms of the fat loss. I went from a size 11 to a size three. In three months, I was ripped. I was like, oh, I just so ripped.

But I was 28 years old. I was still under a lot of stress. I was in my intern year of my residency. I was working 30 hour shifts on a regular basis on call.

Thankfully, the law had passed, so I had 30 hours max. Right? Although who really went home with 30 hours? You still just signed all your notes and stuff, but still it was contained.

But when we went to go to our wedding, I was like, I've never felt this good. And at 28, I'd had lupus for 12 years straight. Even when I was told I was in remission, I took medication, I took blood thinners, I had positive labs with

antibodies and a and a dsDNA.

I had I had, you know, protein in my urine. And I was like, I just feel so good. I don't want to stop eating like this. I really, really like it. I have tons of energy.

I, you know, I would go on call and then go to the gym after like not normal for someone without lupus, you know. And so right before going to our wedding, I got I had a new doctor out in California and they ran my tests and he called me and said there was a mistake at the lab because he's obviously aren't your labs.

I got your labs from your doctor before, and these are negative for lupus, so they're not your labs. Go get married, have fun, come back. We'll retest it. And I was like, that's funny.

What happened? My wedding came back, retested and they were negative. And that was back in 2005. And I have never relapsed since 2005. It's been it'll be 21 years next month.

I have never realized there was no protein in my urine, negative A and a negative dsDNA. Normal compliment in every measure you can look at. Plus, I'd had high cholesterol since my 20s, which my doctor said was genetic.

Nothing to do with all the cheese I ate, you know, and my cholesterol was like 156. I was like, so that's that was what happened that started this because there was never a thought.

I was not smart enough to realize that maybe there was something more, you know, I was first a geneticist and then a doctor and, like, just wanted to lose weight.

And it worked. And then I don't know why my labs are better. Maybe a blessing for love, I don't know. But when I had my first son four years later with no relapse, no medication, that's when we went, okay, that's this is impossible.

Now, how could I still have lupus and have normal labs have a baby? No blood clots, nothing. And that's when we decided to research. How do the components that are creating the fast metabolism?

Because it worked. I had my son and within nine days I was back in my pre-pregnancy jeans. His metabolism worked. He has his own book, Miracle Metabolism. It worked.

But how does that have anything to do with my immune system and repairing my kidneys? Because I no longer have protein or how? And so that led us to really starting to understand how does nutrition impact cellular functions, cellular repair, immune function.

And that became this protocol. So just so people understand, it wasn't like I want to be plant based. What do people doing? But it just so turned out that those first three steps, every plant based after I met was like, yeah, processed foods, all the added, all the animal products.

Like that's definitely causing damage. I'm like, I'm all in on that. The part that I found that was more compelling, though, was that people are, are, are staying sick because of what they're missing, sometimes even more than what they're eating.

Because if you can't repair damage, then no matter how little, how much you avoid inflammation, you're still going to have trouble being well. So the thing a lot like the average human, especially in the US, when I'm looking, I'm like yourself.

It's like we're overfed and undernourished when it comes to our cellular health. Like our people are malnourished. Yeah. So people are eating. We just aren't.

We don't have the nourishment. Yeah, yeah. And that's actually when my husband was doing his research back in the day. He was looking he was working with them like scientists who create supplements, who were running

their own labs, looking at what people are deficient in.

And they were most efficient. And minerals, actually. And the only reason they weren't more deficient in vitamins is a lot of people take multivitamins, but they were really deficient in minerals.

Where do minerals come from? Minerals come from the earth. Well, what food do we eat that's in contact with the earth that has the highest mineral density?

Vegetables. Which vegetables have the highest content of minerals, vitamins, and actually all phytonutrients combined cruciferous vegetables. That's how cruciferous vegetables and other high nutrient vegetables like spinach, for example, became the first component of hyper nourishment.

Hyper nourishment is how do we supply what we need to heal as quickly as possible? Plus, my husband and I both come from immigrant mothers. Keep it simple, right?

So many people are told eat the rainbow every day. Who does that? In fact, even in nature, no animals eating the rainbow over day. We're eating whatever's right in front of us. Right?

Like wherever you are outside, there's a lot of green, right? But you're not having a rainbow, right? And so we're like, how do we make this simple and effective?

And so we found this. Cruciferous vegetables by far have all the vitamins and minerals that the other fruits and vegetables combined have. So if we get people to eat at least a pound a day of cruciferous vegetables, what happens is their level of nourishment goes through the roof.

Vitamins. Minerals. Antioxidants. Other phytonutrients. Now Johns Hopkins is discovering other things like sulforaphane and how it's anti-cancer and into viral.

And so we didn't even know all the ways in which it worked. We just knew that if we correct this deficiency, people's health changes in a measurable way quickly.

So high nutrient vegetables in the raw form, we tested cooked and raw cooked in work and then the raw did. So we're like, all right, this is so all of our protocols came from results.

First we had to test it in volunteers, which we did. We had volunteers from the Lucas Foundation and people were like, we didn't release it until we could replicate it in the volunteers.

We didn't want to just say, it worked for me, because what if it wasn't that? What if it was an accident? What if it was a miracle? Right? We it had to be reproducible.

So that was the first component. And getting people to eat it, that was the hardest part. That's how we came up with the smoothies, because it turns out people won't even eat vegetables to save their lives if you think they will do it while vegetables.

Right. So that's number one. Number two, severely depletion of mega three fatty acids. Mega three fatty acids are necessary for having cells that function properly.

You know, you showed that cell. You need it in the membrane of the cells to allow nutrients in and toxins out. And if you don't have a mega threes in your diet, they're rigid and they don't allow that process.

So you can eat the best foods and the nutrients don't enter the cell because you're Mega three deficient. There's a big barrier I hit when I first entered the world of this, because a lot of plant based people were anti all fat, were like, no, very important fact number two on mega three fatty acids become the anti-inflammatory immune system.

They're also necessary for nerve cells brain function memory, cognition. And so that was something we felt like

okay, we have to find a way to get these numbers up high. We're the highest sources of it.

And so now what we use is flax and seeds, which are super cheap cold pressed flax for people who can't handle the fiber but still need it. It works really well. So that's the exception to the rule.

And again, tested over decades, even even when I developed my autoimmune after my TBI, the dose of omega I was taking, well, not just from the brain health perspective.

I mean, I was on a very, very high, like, not something you're like GP is like, oh, go take an omega pill. I mean, I was like three times the amount because they don't work those pills.

You know, my husband taught a grand rounds back in the day at a family practice about a mega three, and he had them open up all the supplements and even the prescription, and they all smelled like rotten fish because they're rotten.

Yeah. So they oxidize easily with air and with heat. So yeah. So with if somebody's sick, we go for like a half cup a day of flax with to seeds or a few tablespoons of flax.

Well, if you're well, a handful of flax or seeds or a tablespoon of Blackwell will give you what you need. But the other problem is our immune system function is very much affected by the balance of a mega six to Mega three.

A mega six isn't everything. It creates our inflammatory immune system, but it's in boils. It's in every type of food. It's high in animal products, but it's also in other things like nuts and seeds.

But in Mega three, it's hard to come by. And so what was coming out at the time was about how the balance of 3 to 6 was causing huge amounts of health issues, making people get inflamed and stay inflamed because the mega threes help us come back to normal.

So we were trying to affect that balance. And if the ratio for health, they're still not sure anywhere from 1 to 1 to maybe 9 to 1 is probably good for human health.

The average human they were testing back 20 years ago was like 40 to 1, but I've seen 200 to 1. So that's why the mega threes are huge. And a lot of folks that I found people were resisting that piece of it were like, I feel good.

But if I eat one thing that's inflammatory, I feel sick. The next day I'm like, you're mega threes. You need them. And then that fixes it. And then the other component that was missing was water.

Most people are really dehydrated, and water is necessary for every single chemical reaction that takes place. It affects everything from kidney stones to vision to blood sugars, blood pressures, kidney function, everything, even glaucoma.

Everything you could think of head to toe is affected by water, and a lot of people are meeting. They're having whatever I accidentally swallow and I brushed my teeth, you know, or like, does soda count?

You know, and and I was teaching people to get these kind of jugs. And this is a gallon. That's a big one. This is a gallon. That's what I drink a day.

But getting people up to 96oz or more now that one I have to be careful with, because if you have tinny failure or heart failure, we have to give you the water that you can absorb if it's sitting in your ankles or make it in your lungs, it's not right.

But but generally speaking, and when we combine those together, it creates an incredible cascade of healing where we could get people, especially if they were only hyper nourishing, that people could have years, even decades of disease and symptoms go away in a matter of weeks.

So you were talking about my K series. That was one just looking at three women with lupus and active on medications who were completely symptom free between 2 and 6 weeks in the group, who were still symptom free off of medication years later.

And that was published a few years ago. I just saw one of the ladies who did it in 2021. She did at my program, and I just saw her to conference last weekend, and her mother and her sister were hugging me and crying because she still healthy today.

I saw her at the gym, so it was to show. Not only can they get symptom free in a short period of time, but maintain it for years afterwards without relapse.

One of the women in there for eight years, you know, that is the case study you published in 20 years. In 50 years. Right. And here's the nutrition. Was the three women with lupus and Sjogren's reaching remission.

Now, what did that look like for them? And why do you think mainstream rheumatology really hasn't caught up like what was actually going on with them?

It was basically your hyper nourishment protocol. But yeah, so they were. Yeah. So the cool thing about that article though, is frontier still has it as being viewed more than 99% of any other article in that in that edition.

So it is being looked at, and it's one of the reasons why I waited for something like frontiers, because there are lesser known journals that will publish, but I wanted doctors that are reading journals to read it.

I didn't want to publish for the sake of publishing, and it took about almost three years to get a mainstream publication to take case series and plant based nutrition.

Case Series Results and Remission Outcomes

It was hard to do, and it's one of the reasons why don't just publish every day, because the amount of time to work and and try to get someone to do it.

And even when we tried to publish it, they had to replace one of the editors, because one of the editors obviously had bias and they were like, well, you talk about what about if the carnivore diet, shouldn't she mention that?

And I was like, that has nothing to do with my case series. Who is this person? And then they were replaced. It was hard to publish, but all of them did something called rapid recovery, where one of them did a private program with me for four weeks and the other did.

The others did my Rapid Recovery group, which is six weeks where you do it as a group format. And so when we do that program, what we do is we actually only put them on the raw hyper nourishment program until they reach remission.

And then we add in other cooked plant based foods for maintenance. So we increase the food. So the minimum fiber nourishment is 16oz of cruciferous a day or more.

If that's all you're eating then it goes a lot higher. So we'll get them, you know, to 24oz or more, plus unlimited other raw vegetables. You can use as many raw vegetables as you want.

We add fruit for flavor with the smoothies, but otherwise keep it minimal. The omega three flax and chia seeds. They can use the oil if they prefer the water intake, and they're going to eat the fullness of these foods every day.

And so then we get to and then we do what I call step down where you can add other plant based foods. But we stay away from the animal foods forever. Whenever people relapse, it's because they start eating animal products again.

So it's like you already know that it took this severe of a program to get you. Well, just let's not do that. So. So they all became symptom free. Like I said, between two weeks was the and six weeks, almost four weeks by six weeks.

And then their own doctors took them off of their medications. So one of the things I did in that program is I'm not acting as your doctor. I am your nutrition and wellness coach.

I also, in that program, work them through every other aspect that will make them have an anti-inflammatory lifestyle. So the nutrition being optimal.

Step one I also make sure they're getting enough sleep every night, at least seven hours or more if they need it for fatigue so that their body has the time to repair damage.

I have them doing excessive levels, excessive high levels of self-care. I want to see moods that are anti-inflammatory. So if you're stressed, we got to reduce cortisol.

We have to increase mean. And and I teach them how to be in that state. That's always helped me survive. I think before I had nutrition, the reason my meds worked so well when other people, even with meds alone, still die, was because I stayed in that place of gratitude.

That, and happiness in my life. Right? That we found has been such an important part. When I first started doing this protocol, I found that nutrition alone worked for the people who are otherwise happy, but the people with anxiety and depression.

It was slower and I realized I've got to use everything I got to get them into that happier state, and then they don't have the slow result with the faster results.

So call it self-care. I call it cell care. Yeah, exactly. So so I make sure that every aspect of their life is healthy right now. My rapid Recovery group, I'm helping people with abusive relationships and making decisions about their careers and, you know, releasing past traumas.

And, you know, there really it's kind of it's an opportunity to really let go of the things that made us sick on every level. So it's a very intensive program with very, very high support.

And so when they finished the program, they all went to their respective rheumatologist. So it was in that way blinded where the rheumatologists were like, What's going on with these people?

And based off of their labs and their lack of symptoms, they were all taken off their medications by their rheumatologists, and they have all remained off all medications by their rheumatologist.

So now it's been, I think, since that study, I think is the shortest person is is like five, five years out and the other person is over eight years out.

And she's had two babies since and still never relapsed. So all of them had had active symptoms, even on medication, before changing their diet, and were completely symptom free within weeks of doing the protocol, and have remained that way off all medication with no relapses.

And so it was just to be able to show that it's because, you know, sometimes people can get results short term with little things, but being able to show that you can maintain it and then you can live this really full life where you can exercise, have children and really have a full life.

Because to me, that's what matters most. You know, to me what the best part of my life is, not that my labs are perfect, it's that I've been able to have such a full, beautiful life, to be able to have a family, to grow old with the person I love, rather than have him taking care of me right now, being disabled.

It’s just such an incredible to be able to make a difference in people’s lives and be a doctor in such a greater way than I ever thought I could have, actually helping people get well, I want people to have that.

And so whenever I meet someone, that’s always my goal. And I always ask them, like, what do you want from your life that you don’t have? What are you doing when you’re healthy?

And I want to help them create that life for themselves. And our health is such an important part of that. Yeah, I don’t think we’ve worked this hard in life in general, anybody to just spend the rest of their days being sick, right?

They want to live their life. So last question, and I want it to be concrete.

Practical First Steps for Autoimmune Recovery

So for somebody listening right now who maybe was just diagnosed or has been managing an autoimmune condition for years and is simply exhausted by it.

What is the first thing they can actually do this week alongside their doctor’s care? What’s their homework? Doctors love. Yeah, and I love being practical.

So I think one of the most important things people can do is start by adding what they’re missing. Right. So it was okay, I can give my website because I have free recipes.

So we have so one website, we have a small smoothie shred.com smoothie shred.com. And my husband created that as a public service is completely free. You don’t even enter your email. People can just use it.

And we have free recipes and videos for people to start hibernation. And we created as a public service. I say it’s to save your life. And he says it’s to save your life.

But for us it’s very important that people have this information. So I think a great place to start is you add what you’re missing. And and so smoothies are a great way to do it because you can put the high nutrient vegetables in there.

You can put your flexor chia seeds in there. You can put your water in there. Right. And then boom, you put a straw in and then you can drink that down and you can start getting nourished without having to think too hard.

And then what happens is if you’re drinking your smoothie, well, you have less stomach space. So you might naturally skip the bacon in it, and you might not need that extra bar that you normally eat.

Right. And then I would lean into the information and support. So we have a ton of free resources. Like I said on my social media every day outside of my work helping people, I try to help the public every way I can.

So every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. Pacific time, I do free Wellness Wednesdays on my Instagram and Facebook and YouTube and TikTok. Good lupus just to give public support.

And it’s really cool because people show up every week and go, thanks to you, I just had I was just looking today at somebody who said, thanks to you, my my alopecia, my Hashimoto’s is gone.

You know, I’ve never met this person, never met them. They just use my free resources. People just come on to say, hey, my kidney function is back to normal.

Like all this stuff. And it just it makes every moment I was ever sick worth it. Every time I see something like that. So I would start there what you’re missing and start getting the information.

Come show up and and ask your questions. And just know that there’s so much more that you can do that. Yes, you need your doctors. If you are sick, they can save your lives, and you can do something to make sure that your

body has the optimal ability to recover.

Because truly, if someone like me could get better with kidney failure or mini strokes, and years over a decade of illness can become healthy than anybody can.

And I've helped people in their 80s. 90s. My oldest patient who reversed autoimmune disease was 100 years old. And you know who said he got a positive immune marker?

And he goes, I don't want all disease. And he jobs. Now, I don't think he's fast, but he jobs you know like it's like jogging is in though. So tell him it's okay.

Yeah. Hey I'm here for jogging is a thing. And squats and eats big salads and feels grateful for his life. So I think that, you know, that's one. And I think the other is to look at it as an opportunity.

Sometimes people, especially when they're sick, the thing they look forward to is getting high off of some sugar or some cheese or whatever it is. And so it feels like, oh, great.

Now I have to have disease and I have to eat salad versus seeing it as an opportunity. Like, I can take my power back and I can get out of this hole and I can feel better.

And it's the best thing you'll ever do is just so worth it. Amazing. Thank you, Doctor Goldner. This has been genuinely moving. The idea that your immune system can be taught how to stand down, and that you have the data to back it up, is a message I want everyone watching to carry with them.

Doctor Goldner can be found at goodbye lupus.com, and I encourage you to look up her books, particularly Goodbye Lupus and Goodbye Autoimmune Disease, along with her recipe collection.

So here is a key takeaway for this episode. Your immune system is listening to what you eat. The question is whether you're feeding it calm or you're feeding it chaos.

So thank you so much and stay tuned for another episode.