Have Toxins Wrecked Your Hormones? Transcript

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Introduction and Guest Background

– Hello and welcome to this episode of the Environmental Toxicants Auto Immunity and Chronic Diseases Summit. I'm Dr. Wendy Trubow, your host today. And our guest is Dr. Kela Smith.

I'm so excited to be speaking with her. She is, she holds a phd in natural and Holistic medicine is the CEO and program director of the Hormone Puzzle Society. She works with women who are struggling with infertility, hormone imbalance and teaches them how to optimize their bodies and hormones to get pregnant, stay pregnant, have a graceful postpartum period and continue to eliminate any symptoms of hormonal imbalance. She's super, super accomplished and I know I missed a lot. So welcome, Kayla. Thanks so much for being here. – Yeah.

Thanks Dr. Wendy. I'm super excited to talk to you again. – That's very exciting. So this is personal for you, right? And you got into this because it was your own, your own. Basically, your mess became your message.

So talk about, talk about what happened. – Yeah. So this whole company started out of my own personal struggle with infertility. I was 36 at the time and trying to get pregnant and was told because of my age that I would need to do IVF and not that there's anything wrong with that technology. I'm glad we have it.

But for me, I thought I want to end with that. I don't want to start there. So I, and, and then I was slapped with when you have unexplained infertility, there was nothing medically wrong with me. So I said, well, I'm not gonna take that. I'm gonna see what I can do to get as fertile as possible with. Even though I was 36 I thought I'm not 56.

You know. So, so that's what I did. I walked out of that doctor's office thinking, well, I'm gonna do whatever I can to get as fertile as possible. So I dove into research.

I thought, okay, what do I need to be eating? What do I need to be? What is my exercise need to look like? What is my mindset needs to look like? And, and I said, I'm gonna take a year and do this and if it doesn't happen in a year, I can go back to IVF at 37.

Personal Fertility Journey

And so that led me down this whole rabbit hole of just research and law learning about my body and myself and my mind, body spirit and, and ended up getting pregnant. I got pregnant naturally.

I had my first at 37 ended up taking me about 6 to 8 months to kind of really get things moving and got pregnant at 37 with my first and did it again at 40.

So now those two kids are seven and nine and when I had a newborn and uh, you know, I think a 2.5 year old, I decided I was going to go back to school and I was gonna teach this and I was gonna say, start this company so that others didn't struggle the way that I did and that they, the other people knew that there, there's hope and there's answers out there. So that's what I did.

– That was so inspiring and congratulations on getting your phd. I know you just recently got that. So congratulations talk. So, so because we're on the environmental toxic and summit and, and fertility is not technically a chronic disease or an autoimmune disease.

But, but I feel like it ties in. There's a lot to do with toxins. So what can you talk about how you feel like toxins are impacting fertility and how, why now more than ever and what they're doing to our hormones?

– Yes. So I think toxins are a big piece of this equation. I mean, now more than ever, you see all these fertility issues, all these autoimmune conditions, all these things that are happening to us that weren't happening, you

know, 10, 20 years ago.

And I think toxins plays a huge role in that, you know, I have a statistic that I love to remind people of or, or tell people that we're exposed to more toxins in one month than our grandparents were in their lifetimes. So that's why I feel like fertility issues especially and hormonal issues are just so prevalent now, more than ever. And, and toxins are everywhere.

They're all around us. There, we breathe the water, we drink the food, we eat the products we use everywhere. And so the they're just, they get in us, they clog our endocrine system and we can get into little specifics in a minute. But um I just think that they're a main contributing factor to, to the fertility and health issues that we see today.

– Yeah, I'm reminded of the book by I think her name is Shauna Swan Countdown which looks at male fertility and male sperm count because it's not only women, it's men too and that their sperm count on average has decreased significantly over the last 50 years. And that, that the toxins play a role in that too. So I think this is a proposed for men and women.

So, okay. So how do toxins do it? Like what, what happens? – Yes. So there's a couple different ways. So the first thing that I was saying earlier is that toxins come into our bodies and it clogs are endocrine glands and our endocrine glands or the glands that are releasing our hormones.

And so I always like to use the analogy. It's like a lock and key. So the gland is like the lock. And so these toxins come in and go into the lock like the key and turn on all of these processes in our body, like, like the hormones should be doing. So it's kind of like it's clogging up that system and making it where it doesn't work the way that it needs to.

And once your body is clogged with all of these toxins and that's when you start to experience all the symptoms that we're seeing with gut issues with, you know, the auto immune that we said earlier with the fertility issues.

So it's like we're a big bowl of toxic soup walking around all clogged up in our endocrine system. The other thing that toxins do is they can mimic hormones. So our body and you know, they're called, you know, endocrine disrupting. I see this a lot with um you know, toxins will come in and mimic estrogen. And so instead of it being natural estrogen that our body thinks it is and wants to use its these these toxins that are mimicking estrogen.

And so that is again, can cause our body to think that we have estrogen when we don't or vice versa and it can cause all these symptoms to start to pop up.

And so, so that's a big thing.

How Toxins Affect Fertility and Hormones

So that's why I try to talk to my clients and patients about just making sure that the beauty products in general are super clean because that's where a big factors where I see, you know, these beauty products or endocrine mimicking our estrogen mimicking products. – I mean, if you think about it, by the time we have left the house were exposed to well over 100 and 50 chemicals men a little bit less because you're not using all the beauty products that we are but the makeup, the shampoo, the conditioner, the perfume, the lotion, the face facial products. I mean, it's just overwhelming. And so, so what are the ones that are the main effect? It can feel overwhelming when you're standing at the beginning? And that's what we wrote the book about, right? Because there's so much to pay attention to.

So I guess the question is when you're starting your day and when you're starting to level up your beauty products and your shampoo and conditioner and we won't even get into clothing and dishwashing detergent. And okay, we won't go there yet when you're, when you're starting to level up, what are the things that women want to pay attention to the most? What is our, they're your top 3 to 5 that go.

These are the ones. – Yeah, definitely things to pay attention to. But before I preface this, the one thing I like to remind people of is less is more.

So I feel like we're sold so many products. We need this for aging and we need this for shiny hair and we need this for clear skin and it's like, do we really need all of these products? No. So that's the first thing I tell people when you're trying to live toxin free and trying to minimize your exposure to toxins, just really take a hard look at the products that you're using and be like, I really need this. Like, what is it even doing?

So that's one way, really easy way you can say like, I'm just going to limit, you know, wear less products. So that's the first thing. – Hold on. Kela, I think we need to talk about this because what you're saying is that what I heard in that, that you didn't say is the body wants to be in balance.

And if you're able to get the body and balance, your hair will be shiny, it'll be thicker, your skin will be clean, your digestion will be good. So this, that they're not where you want it to be is the sign of, hey, I got to pay attention to something. – Exactly. Exactly.

Yes. If you're eating clean, whole nutrition and you're living a clean life, you're drinking good water, you're getting good sleep, you're going to have all the things that these products are going to provide to you naturally and that's free.

People save a lot of money just by living healthy. – Totally. I didn't mean to interrupt. Let's let's keep, but that was something I was like, oh, we're really struck by that.

– Yes. So that's kind of the first thing. We're less products and then there is a few offenders that I see that we really need to pay attention to. And the first one and I'm sure many people have heard, but it's parabens. Parabens are things, they're thickening agents. So think lotion shampoo, you know, thick, even in canned goods to thickening to thicken a sauce or, you know, so think thick. Um, and, and Parabens do just what I said earlier. They get into your system, they claw your endocrine system and they kind of gunk up things.

So your body is getting out of balance is not working the way that it should. And it's because it has these Paraben chemicals in it. So it's about reading those labels, seeing, trying to either eliminate products with the Parabens or choosing a product that doesn't have a Paraben if you're like, I have to have a body lotion like I can't live without body lotion.

Well, now more than ever you can find ones without Parabens without these thickeners that are just as good, if not better. So that's really one that I see a lot of Parabens.

– Let's just, this is a good plug for either think dirty or environmental working group. You know, it's funny my mom texted me saying, hey, how can I find this?

And I was like, download the app, download that I use the environmental working group. I'm just used to it. You know, because you can search by what are you using? How well is it rated or what do you need to buy?

Key Toxic Exposures to Avoid

And it'll give you some suggestions. So, I think that's a really great thing too. It's a good opportunity to plug, look at what you have because you might have done a good job.

And if, if you're like me, maybe you didn't do such a good job on something. So it's, it's an opportunity. All right. – And one thing I wanted to mention on that while we're on that subject is that marketing they're so good at like, you know, tricking you, you look at something and you're like, oh, I think this looks great. It says on the front.

No parabens, no blah, blah, blah, but then turn it over, read those ingredients. Sometimes they'll be hidden things in there that you might not have noticed. – Honestly. Yeah, I never, I it's funny because I look at these things and it's like a blur.

You know, I go, I don't know what half those things are. So I highly recommend looking it up on the environmental working group because it's very difficult to suss through every ingredient. And you might not be able to keep that in your brain. So I can't tell you how many times I've been green washed and I can't remember if I shared with you that uh my favorite one was I got all excited about the dive free scent free cardboard box containing laundry detergent. I was so excited.

I was like, oh my God, we've done it. Of course, I bought like a six month supply because we do laundry 18 times a day with all my kids. So I bought a ton. I was all excited.

And then like literally four months later, I went, I never checked that. And then I, in that moment went to environmental working group and found out it maybe die free. And it is in a nice cardboard box which is no plastic, but it's got some chemicals in it that I don't really want to be putting on my laundry.

So we used it up and got rid of it and that's, I think the message is use it up. Don't go, don't go crazy and forgive yourself. Right. I was, I was talking about coaches like, how could I screwed that up?

She goes, oh, are you not human? I was like, yeah, I'm human but so you're gonna screw it up. It's okay. Move on for sure. Okay. Parabens, we use less and parabens.

What's next? – Phthalates? Phthalates are anything that has for a gray, it is made out of plastic and it's what causes fragrance to stick to you. So you find it in anything thats in it. I would tell people things that you use like perfume and shampoo. It's what makes your hair smell good after you haven't washed it for two weeks because you got that they laid in your shampoo.

Um, but it's also in things like candles in the glade plug ins and the, you know, any scented items, you know, they put that in there. So it has that Plasticky stick factor.

Um, so again, trying to use less products, but then also trying to think if you're using a scented product, does this have the Phthalates in it? And is it something that I can replace with something cleaner?

Essential oils are a great replacement for scented products? I can't tell you how many times I'll dab a little rose oil on me or something with the carrier and smell like roses all day. And I'm like, this is better than the most expensive perfume that they have.

So that's one Phthalates for sure. – Any others you want to highlight? – Yeah, I think looking at, um, plastic is a big one and I feel like a lot of people are familiar with plastics, you know, B P A free making sure that you're not choosing products with B P A. But again, there's really tricky marketing and it might say B P A free on a plastic bottle. But if you flip it over, it will have a B P A B P B A B P C. There's different kinds of plastics.

So I always tell people if you can avoid using the plastic, just don't use it. Like if it's a choice between a glass water bottle and a plastic one, get the glass. If it's something you can't avoid like your coffee pot or your nutri ninja, then just do the best you can.

There. Sometimes it's unavoidable. If you have to use something like that. Try not to put it in the microwave. Try not to heat it, try not to leave your ninja bottle in the car so it can get all heated up and make your smoothie full of plastic. So just be really careful and do the best you can with plastics. But definitely the water bottles are a big one.

That's an easy one to switch out. – It's funny because I mean, your mom, you know, your kids go to sports and they come in the car and they're like, I'm thirsty. Ma so eliminating those cute little eight ounce perfect size for kids water bottles because those are terrible.

But then there's the stuff that you don't think about, like a lot of people like teas and those come in a plastic bottle, but you're not all people think about is the water bottles.

So the first thing is none of the single use use and dispose those are forbidden. But it's also the other stuff that you

drink that comes in single use water bottles or single use bottles, not single water. So that's something to pay attention to that.

I think a lot of people get sort of flummoxed. Oh, and even think about my kombucha comes in a plastic bottle. – So yeah, for sure, for sure. And I recommend just invest in a stainless steel bottle or a glass bottle. I don't do glass because I always break them.

Every time I get a fun bottle, it's glass falls out of my car and it shatters. So I get a really nice little and I think this is video but just a stainless steel water bottle. I carry that thing around with me everywhere.

And I also have those for my kids. So when we come out of sports in karate, I have them in the back there, you know, stainless steel little water bottles and it just works just as good. So, yeah.

– All right. So if we're, if we're looking at okay, we're going to eliminate plastic. We've eliminated the Phthalates and we've eliminated the parabens. Anything else that's major before we kinda go on? – Yeah, I mean, I think there's so many different chemicals and, and different things that we can dive into.

Those are really the main ones. I have my, my clients and patients look at, but I think it's just overall looking at every product that you use. And if there's something on the back of that you can't pronounce, it. Looks like some, you know, chemical mumbo jumbo, then it probably has a chemical that you don't want in your body.

So that's, you know, goes with stuff you put on your body around your body, then also in your environment what are your cleaning supplies? What are your, you know, your laundry, your dish, all of those things.

Estrogen Detox and Hormone Balance

So, if it's a word that you can't pronounce, it's probably a chemical and it's time to find something cleaner. Um, and on that note as well, I find it so easy to switch out for things that I have in my everyday environment.

So, like we're talking body lotion, you know, whole coconut oil, just dab a little on yourself and you'll have silky smooth skin and you'll smell like coconut all day, laundry detergent. I found making my own is cleaner, more economical, like it's so easy to do. So. So doing things like that when you start to switch things out is can be really helpful. – Do you test your patience for toxins?

– I do. Sometimes I will start with the foundation's first. And so I'm a big test on guest practitioner. But if somebody comes to me with a lot of symptoms and they're like, I'm eating mcdonald's every day and I'm drinking out of my plastic water bottle and I sleep four hours a night. Well, then we work on that first before I go into testing because testing, yes, it can tell us, you know, more of a root cause. But if you've got all those things we need to fix first and that's the base, we need to do that foundational groundwork.

But then I usually will, if, if we're still having some issues, I do like to run certain tests. Um I love to do a dried hormone panel um through Meridian Valley labs. So that's a really good one kind of looking at our, their hormones. Are there there especially their estrogen pathways or those blocked? Are they having issues with methylation?

Are they having issues detoxing their estrogens? So we'll kind of dive in a little deeper with that. – I'd like to talk about that actually because because that dovetails so perfectly with environmental toxicants, autoimmune and chronic diseases. Because if you have estrogen dominance, you, you're not detoxing properly. So, can you talk about estrogen because men can have estrogen dominance to do if you're a man? And you're listening, don't think that this only applies to the women and to now because that's God, I can, I can still remember when my daughter looked at my, my stepfather and we were on vacation, we're on the beach and she looked and she was four.

So she hadn't established that filter yet. And she looked at because you have boobs, do you know you have boobs? And he was like, and I was like, oh my God. So you know, if you're a man and you are having difficulty losing weight, you can have estrogen dominance too.

So can you talk about the pathway that this happens? And because it's so relates to auto immunity and chronic diseases. – For sure, for sure. So estrogen goes down to different, it's called phase one and phase two estrogen, you know, detox and how we get estrogen out of our body is first we methylated, which means we neutralize it and then we detox it either through our p through our poop, you know, making sure that our microbiome is where it needs to be.

So phase one, I always tell people and I heard this analogy, I really love it, but I heard it from Dr. Carey Jones. Um and she talks about how it's a bathtub. And so your estrogens are always flowing.

Your body is always making estrogen. There's kind of three pipes that your bathtub water, your estrogens can go down as they're getting out of your body.

So that's phase one. So phase one, there's some pathways are good, some pathways are bad. So you're too ohh pathway. This is your good pathway. This is your anti cancer pathway.

This is the one we want to go down. So you're 16 A, this pathway is good and bad. It causes things to grow. So it can cause cancer to grow, but it can also cause your bones to gets really strong.

So we want strong bones, but we don't want our cancers to grow if we have, you know, if we're susceptible to cancer and then we have our four pathway, which is more gene tonic. It's has a lot to do with our D N A sample entity in there. But so those are the three pathways that we want our estrogen water to go down. So a preferable pathways pathway, you know, or two ohh. So once we go through those first pathways or water is getting out of our bathtub, then we come to the drain.

This is our phase two pathway or phase two metabolites. So this is where the estrogen is neutralized and filters out through pee or poop, like I said before. So if your pathway, if your drain is clogged, then it can cause your estrogen to re circulate throughout your body.

And that's what causes a lot of the symptoms that we see the boobs, the night switch, the hot flashes, the inability to lose weight off all of those things. So making sure that drain is open and is able to detox. The estrogen is super important.

So how do we make sure our drain is open? Are we eating enough fiber? Are we eating multiple different varieties of fiber? Is our gut microbiome balanced and not in dysbiosis is our hydration on point.

And our kidneys working the way that we need is our pooping or our, you know, our colon working the way that it needs to. So we're pooping regularly. So I always tell people if you're not pooping at least once a day, you know, multiple times a day is preferable, but at least once a day, then you probably have some estrogen dominance going on and you can't get that estrogen out. – I So remember when I learned that in med school, they called it the oro anal reflex. And I was like, by that point, I was well down the pathway of like heading towards celiac.

If I wasn't already, I just wasn't diagnosed. And I remember thinking who poops, who eats and poops right away. But really like babies we should eat and poop.

And then the thing that you didn't mention that I want to put a plug in for is cruciferous vegetables which you can get in concentrated form in supplement form.

But eating cruciferous vegetables will also support the pathway in not binding that beta glue communities and preventing it from recycling your estrogen and pushing the pushing all these reactions to pooping it out. So big plug for cruciferous.

– And one other thing too is um eat your broccoli sprouts because broccoli sprouts if you're going on that fourth pathway will push you on over to that two pathway.

So definitely those broccoli sprouts eat the crucifix. And then yes, definitely, sometimes supplementation is needed,

but for sure, eating them.

Top Tips for Fertility and Hormone Health

– Yeah, that makes you poop every day by hooker by crook. – Yes. Exactly. Exactly. – So if you were talking to a patient, what would be your five top tips for optimizing fertility and hormones?

You know, we talked about living toxin free, but that's a total misnomer. We're never going to be toxin free. We're just going to be toxin optimized. Shall we say? What are your top tips for people?

– For sure, for sure. So I would be amiss if I did not mention my, my number one tip as a nutritionist is making sure you're eating whole food, balanced nutrition. So, and I always talk about what you get to eat, not what you can't have. So I feel like so many of us are like I can't have that. I can't have this wanna diet.

No, just eat whole food, eat clean whole foods, getting your cruciferous vegetables, getting lots of different colors of the rainbow with vegetables eating lean meat, eating lots of fish. More of a Mediterranean style diet is what I have found the most beneficial for. I don't care what your health condition is.

If you eat that clean whole food Mediterranean style, that's gonna put you, your hormones are going to be balanced. You're gonna have that clean, whole food nutrition.

Um So that's the first place and getting, getting the clean foods to choosing organic where possible, you know, if you can't do 100% organic, at least look at the dirty dozen list and the clean 15 that the environmental working group has put together, that will show you the, the foods that are the most heavily laden with toxins and then you can organic there. But I'm 100% organic.

I think it tastes better. I think it's not that much more expensive. So if that fits your budget, then just do 100% organic for everything and that includes meats and fish and things. The second one is water.

Make sure you're drinking enough water obviously to stay hydrated. But then also make sure your water is clean. Are you drinking filtered water? Is it, is it coming from clean sources? I can't tell you how many toxins are just in tap water alone to make sure you're filtering your water and it's clean fresh water and you're drinking enough water every day so that you're hydrated and your body, you know, has what it needs with hydration.

Um And then speaking on toxins choosing products wisely, we talked about this a lot here today but just to reiterate its so important just to make sure that everything that you're exposing yourself and your family to is clean, it's safe and, and don't get overwhelmed though because I see this a lot where people are like, oh my God, there's toxins everywhere. I'm like, I don't know what to do. So I freeze, just start small, think as you run out of your products, how can I replace this with a clean option if it's not clean and then turn it into a game, I always say have fun with it.

She was, you know, you get to try new products and it can be fun to turn it into a game. Um speaking of um getting um so kind of all the elements getting clean, fresh air on a regular basis, going outside, putting your feet in the grass grounding, taking a walk in nature. So this is not only going to be good for your stress and your overall well being, but it, it's gonna be good for your health.

So getting outside and being in nature every day, at least every day, getting some sun in your eyes first thing in the morning and eliminating your blue lights in the evening, this will set that circadian rhythm and, and just make you feel better, you'll sleep better and you'll feel more energized in the morning. And then the final thing I say is, it's really do things to manage your stress. Everybody is so stressed these days just from the state of our world and everything that's happening.

But so doing things to actively manage your stress, you can't always control, your stress, can eliminate it, but you can control how you let it affect you and how you respond. So doing things like some deep breathing, some meditations and journal just really getting in tune without feminine energy and, and limiting lowering your stress on a regular basis.

Five. – This is so amazing, Kela, because nothing that you're talking about a specific only for people trying to get pregnant. I know you're a fertility specialist, but this is really how do you live well and reverse chronic disease and feel good in your body and your skin and, and, and, and live longer.

So that's, that's pretty profound. This is great. Okay. How can people reach you? – Yes. So I am at my website and that is coachkela.com and Kela's K E L A coach, Kela.com over there, I have many different free gifts.

I have a free fertility meal plan, hormone plan, and a pregnancy plan. Um I'm also on social media.

Where to Find Kela Smith

So my favorite place to hang out is Instagram and I'm at Kela_healthcoach. I'm also on Facebook at Kela health coach and I was a health coach first. That's why everything's branded health coach, but now I'm a doctor. So we'll have to re brands in. – Exciting project.

I'm sure. Right. Right. Right. – One thing I forgot to mention my podcast is called the Hormone Puzzle podcasts everywhere. Podcasts are heard. – Beautiful, Kela. This is amazing.

Thank you for putting fertility in the context of toxins because I think that's something we often don't think about is the impact of toxins on how we reproduce and procreate.

So, thank you. And so Kela, thank you so much for being here. Thank you for joining us for this episode of the Environmental Toxicants Auto Immunity and Chronic Diseases Summit. Kela Smith is our guest and I'm your host, Dr. Wendy Trubow. Thank you, Kela.