The Role Of Diet When Healing From Lyme & Mold Transcript

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Introduction and Erica's Background

Welcome to this episode of the Mycotoxins and Chronic Illness Summit. I'm so excited to have Erica Schlick with me today. She's an AI and Certified Health coach, cookbook author of Wandering Palate, and Health Blogger.

She began her trail to health in 2012 after becoming chronically ill with Lyme disease, mold, heavy metals and multiple autoimmune conditions. What followed was a five year journey toward remission through various treatments, including stem cell therapy and lifestyle and dietary changes.

Once the licensed architect Erica found her calling and passion in helping others heal from chronic illness and autoimmune diseases, she shares her journey and tips for healthy living on her blog, The Trail to Health.

Erica lives in Venice, California and enjoys cooking, spending time with her fiancé, two French bulldogs, and traveling the world. A little bit about her blog The Trail to Health.

The trail to health is a place of health and healing through healthy living and clean eating. It's a resource full of answers, recommendations, and information about all things health.

She's the author and shares her delicious and simple paleo and gluten free recipes, as well as healing strategies for autoimmune diseases, Lyme and chronic illness recovery, as well as the latest health trends.

It is a trusted resource for readers looking to stay healthy and happy on their very own trail to health. Erica works with coaching clients privately, but you can learn more about her services and offerings on her website.

The Trail to health.com. Erica, I'm so excited to have you here. Thank you today. So Erica was once a time a patient of mine and now she's on the site on the other side of health and wellness, and I'm just so proud of her.

She is an example of somebody who, after being sick, is now out there. With her own resources to help save the world. So thank you, Erica. Thank you for everything you do and fluently and for being here on the summit with us.

Thank you. Very excited to be here and share some of my tips and tricks I learned along the way of getting my life back. Wonderful. So can you briefly share your journey with us and how you got here?

Absolutely. So my journey kind of officially started in 2012. I went on my third camping trip ever to Yosemite, and after that trip, I was never the same.

I had a weird flu that kind of would come and go, and that started triggering on different autoimmune diseases. One day I was trying my hair and I had a bald patch on my hair that just showed up out of nowhere, and it was alopecia that had been triggered on.

And that just kind of started a cascade of developing over 200 different symptoms. I had I had joint pain neuropathy. I became allergic to over 60 foods, fatigue, brain fog.

I used to forget how to get home.

Chronic Illness Journey and Recovery

I would run stop signs and I had to stop driving because it just wasn't safe and it just kept going on and on for about two years. And that's when I was finally diagnosed with Lyme disease.

And, you know, I was kind of relieved when I got the diagnosis. I was like, okay, well, I have an answer to what's

wrong with me. Instead of doctors saying, we don't know or we've tested you for everything, or you're labs are normal.

And I had no idea what the uphill battle was going to be getting out of that and all the other things that were going to kind of unleash and learn about.

So, you know, once I had one diagnosis and started working with you, which was amazing, we really kind of dug deep into some of the other things that were, causing some of my health issues.

You know, we uncovered mold, we uncovered heavy metals, a lot of toxicity and things like that that we had to kind of work through. So it took about three years, I think, to get into remission about two and a half, three years.

And, you know, we did tons of detox, everything natural. I never did antibiotics, which I'm really proud of. I know they work for some people. They don't work for others.

For me, it was just a personal choice that I didn't want to go down that route. So I really wanted to focus on showing people like how you can heal naturally.

And I kind of documented my whole journey, to give people hope along the way. And in late 2016, I finally did stem cell therapy using my own fat stem cells.

And that was my magic trick that he'll be. And and I don't know if I would have done so well if I hadn't done those other things before. I think a lot of that work I did before really prepped my body, really helped me prepare to heal in the end of it.

But yeah, I've been in remission since then. You know, remission is I haven't had any, like, symptoms in about three and a half years now. Almost four, I think.

So that's been amazing. You know, it's still a lot of work to stay here. I still take very good care of myself. I eat very clean. I live a very clean lifestyle.

My health is always my priority. And any decision I make and how it's going to affect me. But for the most part, I live a pretty, pretty good life. You know, I work again full time.

I've got my blog. I wrote my cookbook. You know, my cookbook was really kind of a celebration that you can get better and heal from chronic illnesses and you can do great things in the world.

I travel well. Pre-COVID, I traveled a lot, and I had one good year there. Hoping to get back into that soon. And I started creating gluten free travel guides for different cities that I would go to to kind of give people hope that, you know, even though you have a restricted diet and have all these health things that you're kind of navigating, you can still go out to eat and travel and enjoy yourself.

And I try to give people as much hope as possible that they can have a normal. It'll be a new normal, but you can have a pretty good and normal and satisfying life.

Even after a debilitating chronic disease. I love the way you just turn your life around. Erica. It's true. When I first met you in in the capacity as a patient, it was hard.

You worked on killing infections, detoxifying you and really prepping you for the regenerative medicine. And the timing was perfect. A lot of people when they do stem cells or exosomes, when they still have infections and, and, and a high environmental toxicant burden, it's like retraining an already sick system.

So it was perfect timing was for you. I've seen too many people crash when it's done at the wrong time. So I agree. Yeah, I've noticed that too. I think it really is about prepping yourself as much as possible.

And then that's kind of the last step to really kind of modulate your immune system and repair the damage and, you know, kind of finish things off for you.

Yeah. I'm just so happy for you to see you like this. The healthiest I've ever seen you. Yeah. And, what foods have you found to be the most healing and most detrimental when.

Absolutely not. Diet was such a huge piece. Especially since in the beginning, one of my first diagnosis was celiac disease. So I really dove into foods and how they made me feel.

And initially I went on a gluten free diet. And really it's just a standard American diet but gluten free version. So I would eat it, I would feel spicy all the time.

I would feel I was like, I thought, you're supposed to go gluten free and feel amazing. And granted, I had Lyme on top of it, but you know, the diet just wasn't doing anything for me.

So my doctor recommended doing a autoimmune paleo diet, and that was when I really was just shocked at the connection of like, how our food affects us.

Like I took out all the foods that cause inflammation. I had a pretty limited diet and was kind of adding one back in at a time. And I really learned.

For me personally, I thrived with no grains, grains, or just even today. I don't really eat that many grains because I feel like they cause inflammation.

I feel kind of spacey. I feel bloated, like I'll eat them as a treat now because my body can recover quickly from it. But it's not something I eat every day.

They just cause a lot of inflammation in me. For me personally, eating, paleo diet with a lot of grass fed meats, a lot of healthy grass for saturated butters and fats and things like that.

I really thrive on healthy fats. You know, we're getting a lot of avocados and ghee and things like that are really great for me. I can tolerate dairy.

Fortunately, I've taken it out many times. Some people, that's another one that can be very inflammatory. Sugar. You know, no one should be eating a lot of sugar.

And we all know we can agree that that's not a great ingredient. And another one that I find that people aren't as conscious of these days. And I think they're starting to be more awareness, but one that we really need to take into account is industrial seed oils.

They cause so much inflammation in our bodies. They're basically a byproduct of industrial waste that they figured out how to bottle and turn into, you know, healthy oils that are not good for you, particularly canola oil, soy oil, you know, cottonseed oil.

And then, you know, another thing that I really learned in my journey was looking at kind of toxins in food. So, you know, everyone's like, oh, drink your kale smoothie and, like, spinach, but those are very high in oxalates that can cause a lot of issues in people.

And plants in general have a lot of anti nutrients. And it's not anything that's bad. It's just the plant's way of protecting itself to survive. But it can be very hard on our gut.

It can be very hard to right our justice system. You know some people are more sensitive to those things than others. So, you know, taking a look at that.

And last but not least, is mold. I mean, we're here at the Mycotoxins Summit, and so mold in foods is a huge

problem. And let's continue. Who needs to be a trigger?

For me, it's something that I have to be very conscious of. Foods that can be really moldy, especially our coffee. There's a couple brands out there that are mold free coffee, but I do notice a huge difference in that.

So if you've ever had a cup of coffee and get kind of jittery or, you know, have a lot of energy and then crash and you're just like, oh, that's what coffee does, give me your caffeine.

It's not necessarily true. It can actually be the mold. And mycotoxins. Some countries have better standards for mycotoxins on their food or on their coffee beans.

The US and Canada are not one of them. And they actually did a study in Brazil. 90% of coffee beans in Brazil had mycotoxins on them. So this is just a huge problem.

We all wake up and drink that first thing in the day, right? More stuff most of the world does is you. And you might be getting a cup of toxins every morning.

So being really conscious of that, and I've had experiences with it, you know, I Europe is supposed to be a little bit better for mycotoxins on coffee beans.

So the last few times I was in Europe I was like, oh, I'm good enough, I'm healed. I'm going to have just a coffee at a cafe and had two different occasions where I got so sick from drinking, just a shot of espresso there, and I tasted it and it tasted really bitter, which is a sign that it's not good.

And I just felt so dizzy, so nauseous. Like it felt like I was like on a boat, like seasick, almost. And just like this wave of symptoms.

Healing Through Diet and Food Sensitivities

And I took a bunch of charcoal, took a bunch of glutathione on to try to get it out of my body and it, it cleared. But it was just so interesting to me.

You know, no matter how resilient you think you are, mold and foods can just really, really take you down. So that's something I'm always very conscious of and one that I think is, is is just it's the food industry just tries to trick us so much.

But, you know, you see citric acid in so many foods, especially packaged foods. It can be in even sparkling waters. Have it, you know, sauces have it, condiments and it and it used to be made from lemons in the early 1900s.

And in 1917, they figured out how to manufacture it from black mold and Pfizer. We all know Pfizer these days. Pfizer actually, in 1919 started manufacturing it for use in foods.

And it's black mold, like every time you see citric acid. Now, I don't think anyone makes it from citrus anymore. So, you know, it's just so prevalent in our food system and it's just something to be conscious of.

So I avoid anything with that as well. Thank you for sharing these things, Erica. I think that mold is just so prevalent. Yes. And or foods like you're saying and in, in water damage buildings where 50 to 60% of them in America are actually water damaged. And, people just don't know this.

So I'm happy you're shedding light on the food part right now. It's really prevalent in our food. And and people have sensitivities to maybe the mold and the mycotoxins, but not the food itself or something.

Exactly. Yeah. I mean, that's the thing with peanuts, right? Like we have this huge epidemic of peanut allergies, but it's not the actual peanut. There's some mold on them that people are reacting to.

And so I think that is more prevalent in a lot more foods than people think. And, you know, when you're sick with chronic illness and Lyme, it's so easy to blame everything on Lyme, like, oh, you know, the Lyme is causing this symptom, you know, or like the mold is causing the system, but it could be what you're eating on a daily basis that's flaring, that's symptoms.

So learning to really notice how you feel when you eat foods and you know, kind of having this conversation with your body, if you will, if like how you feel, how you react, I think is really important because you might relieve a lot of those symptoms that you've been treating Lyme with.

You know, you continue killing and treating Lyme, but it's not even what's causing that anymore. Right? Because when we have tick borne illness and mycotoxins illness, they create certain, patterns in the body, cellular patterns, biochemical patterns, neurological patterns.

And once we're able to remove the trigger, the triggers tick the tick borne illness, the mold, the mycotoxins, the body still has those patterns. And it's that for you, it was the stem cells.

For lots of people it is. The cells are exosomes that can retrain the body. But when the body isn't retrained, it still gets it still thinks it needs to fight those patterns.

So somebody with food sensitivities could eat a certain food. Once the Lyme in the mycotoxins have been healed. But the food will trigger that same response, that same biochemical pattern that the body knows.

And then people might think, oh, it's my tick borne illness coming back. Maybe it is. Sometimes it is. Some times it's something more simple, like what you're eating.

So, definitely like Erica saying, have that talk with your body. I remember you used to journal things. You probably still do. Yes. You're just so great about journal.

All your symptoms and and your diets. And so actually tell, tell people like this because there's a lot of patients, Erica, that are watching today. Will you talk to them about how you, how you log everything, even though it's not really directly related to mold or mycotoxins that piece, but it is related to the people that are watching, listening, learn a lot from you on this piece.

So yeah, absolutely. I mean, journaling and doing a food diary is one of the best ways to, you know, kind of find your perfect diet, if you will. A lot of times you eat something, you don't even think about what you ate, and then all of a sudden you're having symptoms the next day, or it can be even up to three days later.

So writing down everything you eat can really help you kind of gauge what foods are triggering symptoms of you know how you're feeling. And like I said, some reactions can be delayed up to 72 hours.

And I mean, I don't know about a lot of people out there. I'm sure you're all suffering from like memory and brain fog because those are some of my worst symptoms.

So I was like, I couldn't even remember what I was talking about. How am I going to remember what I ate three days ago? So writing it down is a great way to do it.

There's actually a new app. I forget the name of it. You can find it pretty easily on the App Store, but it's like a visual food diary. So you literally just snap a picture of your meals and your snacks, and then that's like a great way to document it without having to write things down, too.

And you can even enter in like symptoms or how you feel. So there's some pretty great tools out there. Now it is to simplify the process. But I really think, you know, doing an elimination diet is one of the gold standards to kind of figure out what your trigger foods are and what foods work with your body.

And there's definitely some tools out there now to to make it a little bit easier. There's one test that will test your

genetics and tell you kind of what your optimal foods are.

There is the biome test, texture to, test your microbiome to see, like what foods you need to kind of balance your gut. So there's a lot of things out there.

I think they can all be informative. I don't think that one of those tests should just be what you follow. I think they can kind of inform it, but I really think doing the elimination diet, documenting your reactions and kind of taking inventory on what you're eating and how you feel is really the best way your body's going to give you the most information, more than any, any lab test is ever going to give you.

And it's a valuable tool for the rest of your life to like, even now, you know, I'm like, my diet is like pretty clean, but I like, you know, indulge in things.

And now that I'm in remission and pretty healthy and sometimes I'll eat things, I'm just like, man, I like still using that communication tool to see, like, why do I feel off?

What did I eat? What was it? Okay, I'm not going to eat that again, you know. Yeah, I what you're saying is so right on, you know that the gold standard is really the elimination diet.

And, checking in with yourself. Absolutely. Yeah. Because what what the labs say might not always correlate with how you feel. Know and and check in with yourself is is the biggest tool and I think is brain beans that muscle with like other things too.

Right. You know like listening to your body and paying attention. If you go into a building or you're at work and you're like, I get a headache every time I come to work, you start to notice also your environments and how you feel.

And this can be with like people. This can be with your like in like physical environment or like cities or like anything. You start to kind of strengthen that muscle and get that feedback from your body that you become more aware of things and you can use it in different aspects of your life, not just what you're eating.

Yeah, it's really a tool, I think, for someone's evolution in general. So I really see you in so many ways after having been sick. Be an even stronger person than before.

Definitely think. And definitely more awareness of things like, I mean, I used to eat pasta every day for want, you know, I was vegetarian for ten years and I was so sick from like the foods, but I never associated, you know, what I was eating with, what could have been causing some of my issues.

And even before Lyme, you know, I wasn't I was healthy, but I wasn't really healthy when you think about it. Like, I ate gluten every day and compensated for, you know, animal protein by eating more gluten.

And then I would wonder why I used to drink five shots of espresso every morning just to get going. And then I was drinking Starbucks, which is moldy.

And I have the aging. So like, I was just so this is just destroying myself without any knowledge or any awareness. And I think this is a really important point to bring up because you were eating like this and didn't know this.

Lots of people do this. They just don't know exactly. And they get bit by a tick and their system is primed. Exactly. For chronic Lyme. Exactly. And I really think that's what happened to me, you know, in graduate school, that's I think when my journey actually really started, my apartment flooded and I used to get chronic sinus infections.

They didn't do a good job. They literally came in, lifted up the carpet, put fans, and then put the carpet back and after that I would get chronic sinus infections.

But, you know, I was in grad school. I was up late, like staying up late, studying, like not taking the best care of

myself. And then on top of it, I was a vegetarian, which was like we just talked about not good for me, eating a ton of gluten and drinking a ton of bad coffee.

So it was just like this perfect storm. And when I moved out of there, I did feel better. I didn't have the chronic sinus infections. I would get one maybe every six months instead of every six weeks.

And so I was like, okay, I'm better. Like, I'm in a good place. But then I got the tick bite and it was like you said, I was just the perfect storm for it all to come out and all to come to life and kind of show me everything that I had been doing wrong for the past decade.

No. Not wrong. You just didn't know. Didn't know. Unaware. Yeah, yeah. And and then but your body was inflamed and you may be noticed it in small ways here and there.

And there are a lot of people out there, maybe even watching this today who just might not feel right in some little ways minor. And then they get bit by a tick or they have a mold exposure.

The body is primed and already inflamed for that to, to lead into something more complex. Exactly. Yeah. And kind of bring it all out too. Right, right, right. And I'm focusing we're focusing a lot on today because you've, you've written this book, which I'm so excited about.

And so I want to bring it back to diet. What steps and tools did you use to find your ideal diet? So like I mentioned, the elimination diet was a huge, huge piece of that.

And as I've kind of gone on in my journey, you know, just because you do the elimination diet and like I said, I had over 60 food allergies in the beginning.

I could eat like 8 to 10 foods since I was on an AP diet and allergic to like half the foods on that. And I thought I was just destined to eat that forever, but I was.

I healed every six months or so. I would re experiment with some of those foods and see if I could tolerate them. Fortunately, when I did the stem cell therapy, it got rid of pretty much all my allergies.

Which has been a miracle. I was I had an EpiPen for Chili's, and I can eat chilies again. It's like, it's so crazy just how resilient your body is and how much it can heal.

So I always say, just because in that moment you can't eat something doesn't mean you're not going to be able to again, you know, try again in six months or try again in a year.

Once your body has had a little bit more healing. So elimination diet, I think is really good. I have used some of these other tools. Like the Geno palette is the generic one that kind of looks like your genetics, just as a baseline.

And it's kind of interesting because I did a lot of these tests, more kind of for fun for my blog or to be able to offer to to some of my clients and talk to them about it if they want to use that as kind of their starting point.

And I did it more to see if it's accurate, kind of right. So I'm like, I'm pretty pretty confident in what foods work for my body and what don't just from like my own journey.

And so it's interesting to do these tests and have them be pretty spot on. So all the ones I recommend I feel like are the ones that I'm like, okay, like they're kind of saying the same thing that I already know.

So that's a that's a good starting point. So, that one was really interesting. The Zella gut test I thought was pretty interesting too. So they it's a it's a blood spot test, but they look at, kind of like different markers, that will affect your gut and they look at it from like, immune system health and like fitness.

Health like strength and muscles like, you know, different things like that. And then they make food

recommendations and you work with someone there, to kind of go through the diet recommendations, and then you retest every three months to see if that's kind of affected your microbiome and your gut.

And you can tolerate more food. So I think that's a pretty, pretty good one just because it focuses on such a kind of gut health kind of component of it that I really like and I think is really important.

And then of course there's like allergy testing, food allergy testing, which I think misses a lot, but it can be a good starting point for someone, for someone that's like, I have no idea how to do an elimination diet.

I have no idea what foods work for me or not. It can be a good starting point to be like, all right, it says that you might be sensitive to these foods.

So when you eat is be hyper aware of how you feel and what feels good or like. If you don't feel good, you know, and start to document those symptoms because, you know, people think food allergies are going to break out in hives and that's your reaction.

But it's not. But it's so much more. It can be joint pain. It can be brain fog. It can be bloating or digestive and gut issues. So looking at all those kinds of things can be like neurological reactions.

Like for gluten, I get neural reactions, you know, so a lot of things that you don't even think about can be caused by the foods. So I think those are good tests to have a starting point.

And then really, if you if you feel overwhelmed with elimination diet, working with someone that is versed in that and can kind of help guide you and break it down and make it step by step and attainable.

To start diving into to how to do it. Erica, do you do that with patients or. I do, yes. I have a coaching plan or a program specifically to finding your perfect diet.

And you know, there is no one size fits all diet. Like sure, there's foods I agree that most people shouldn't be eating that cause inflammation, but I really work with people to figure out what their individual ideal diet is and what foods they thrive on and what foods they should not be eating.

At least now they might be able to eat them later. But you know, we got to have a starting point. And as you heal, kind of experimenting with those foods again.

Testing, Journaling, and Finding the Right Diet

And on that topic of how you work with clients, tell us more about what you do in your coaching practice. Yeah, absolutely. So I usually work with clients over a six month period.

And we meet every two weeks. And I find especially with people healing from chronic illness, that's a good window because we can kind of stir and set some goals and we have some accountability and check ins as we go through.

So, usually at the beginning, we'll work together to figure out, you know, what your top three goals are. And those might change and evolve as you're kind of going through it.

So if it's someone that wants to work on diet, you know, I'll walk them through kind of what steps are going to be good for them to find their diet. If it's someone that you know has a mystery illness and doesn't know what kind of doctor to go to and needs help getting a diagnosis and meeting the right doctors, you know, I've helped people with that too, and made recommendations to practitioners that I think can really help them and do the right testing to get them on the right treatment plan.

So that's another part of it. And then people that are kind of in their journey healing and they're like, 60% better, but like don't know what to do next.

And like, what else should I look for? Like, what other things should I talk to my doctor about to like try to uncover. And at that point it might be working on diet stuff or, you know, again, referring them to the right practitioner to work with, in their area to kind of investigate other things that I learned on my journey that I thought were valuable, and kind of finding those missing pieces.

And you have some of the best organizational skills I've seen in my whole life, hands down, Amber, from you to doctor to colleagues, you have that. So does that.

I'm a very OCD Virgo. Is very, very helpful for your clients. And, because a lot of the times people are too sick to, to stay organized is really, really difficult.

Or I have, patients in there, an entire family, and there's five of them, and they're all really sick and everything is on the mom to organize every organized.

And she's sick also. And so that's where where someone what? Not someone like you, you could really come in. Absolutely. Yeah. And when I work with my, my clients, I always tell them like, don't worry about what we're talking about.

I'm taking really thorough notes and I'm going to send it to you with some actionable items of kind of like what you need to do or next steps and keep it very simple and very organized for them.

Because like you say, a lot of people are struggling, with that. Yeah. And you've been there. You've been where they have been. I've seen you, you know, so I know how sick you were so you could understand.

You can understand them. And I think that that's, it's really important because a lot of times people who are as sick as my patients and the sick as you have been, they feel isolated.

People don't understand them. Friends don't understand them, or family members don't understand them. And so to have somebody who's also, a coach for them and, and helping them stay organized, who understands, who've been there.

Absolutely. You can give them hope and, and a certain level of compassion that maybe someone who hasn't been in their shoes might not be able to reach.

Exactly. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. I try to support you in whatever way you need. So that means, you know, helping you get organized. That's part of it, too, because that's a huge step.

You know, you have to organize your treatments and like how to make sure you're taking your supplements and, you know, appointments and getting the most out of the appointments that you have.

I mean, doctor's appointments are expensive, you know, and you have maybe 45 minutes every two months with your doctor. So making sure you're organized and have their questions written down, covering everything that's on your mind, making sure you kind of have, a to do list, long list, if you will.

Right. So I now that you are in remission, what does that look like? It's a pretty good life. I will say, you know, I still do a lot to keep my immune system healthy.

I go through phases taking supplements like, sometimes I'll be like, oh, you know, it's a winter time. I'm going to make sure I take some extra supplements.

Other times I don't take them for like a month or two. I do do IVs. Pretty regularly still. I'll get a time pass maybe every 2 to 3 months. Ozone has just been such an amazing thing for me.

I just love ozone. And I really feel like that helps me. I like to do a round of thymus maybe every six months or so. Thymus is another thing that just has been so good for my immune system.

And then, like, in between there, I'll do IVs if I need, I'll do some, you know, vitamin C or a little ozone or some sort of thyroid just to not because I feel sick, but so that I don't feel sick.

And a lot of times I do it when I'm actually feeling really good. I mean, it gives me kind of a super boost. And, you know, I work full time, I have my design agency, and then I do my blog on top of it.

So I am very high performing all day. I can work all day, you know, and I rest when I'm tired. I work out every day, which is amazing to like, work out again and exercise.

And I do SoulCycle, which is not an easy exercise almost every day. And that's just such a huge difference from, you know, when I had Lyme and, like, taking a shower would exhaust me for three days.

So definitely like, my energy is really, really good. I do struggle with gluten, as a celiac and I get gluten and it really takes me down. And I probably spend unfortunately about 30% of my life gluten.

So that that really is bad. Like, you know, I would go out on a limb and say that 30% of food labeled gluten free actually has gluten. I react to it and I test it with my sensor and it has gluten.

So I know I'm not crazy. I get very distinct symptoms. I get, like occipital neuralgia headache here that last seven days. I get brain fog, fatigue, like irritable anxiety, insomnia.

It's all neuro stuff. And so that's pretty frustrating. I'm really hoping somebody comes out with a magic pill, even though I'm not in the magic pills.

But for this one, I really want a magic pill. There's some stuff in the works. There's one study that they're currently doing right now that I guess is like an enzyme that you take when you eat.

That will kind of just encapsulate the gluten and get it out of you. So, something like that I think would be really amazing of some of our amazing scientists and doctors in the world can discover that.

Please. So, yeah, that's that's probably my biggest nemesis is gluten, and trying to live a normal life. And I find that I get gluten more at home right now, recently.

And this is actually started since Covid, which has been really frustrating. The FDA changed the labeling laws at the beginning of Covid to kind of not cause any issues with supply chain and being able to get food to people, which was a concern early on.

And so companies have been able to source ingredients from other vendors to prevent supply chain issues, but they don't have to update their, their labels.

So something might be sourcing a facility with wheat again or not have the same gluten free standards. And I'm finding that brands I have used for ten years I've been gluten free pretty much nine and a half, ten years now all of a sudden have a gluten out of nowhere.

Erica sharing that, that's, So that has just been a killer for me these past few this past year. It's like, you know, a mustard brand I've used forever, a mayo brand I've used forever, even an ice cream brand that I've used for ten years also.

And I was like, why do I feel gluten? Then I was in denial. I didn't even want to test them because I'm just like, why would I waste the tester on this?

And they had gluten. So things like that make it really, really difficult when you can't trust food labels. And I don't eat much in a package to begin with.

I mean, I try to stick very whole foods and, you know, mostly meats and wild fish and vegetables, but, you know,

you need mustard sometimes, you need mayo sometimes, and you need garlic powder sometimes, you know, and these things can just have gluten in them.

So that's probably my biggest frustration in remission is just navigating the gluten. More so than any issues still from Lyme or mold.

Coaching Practice and Life in Remission

It's the gluten. It's my biggest trigger and biggest obstacle. Thank you for sharing that with us. Yeah. Tell us about your sensor. Yes, I wish I had it here to show you.

So it's a little bit of a sad story. The company is actually out of business now. They got purchased by another brand. But it was a image sensor, and they kind of just left the community hanging, which was really frustrating.

And I kind of saw it coming their social media wasn't very active for a little bit. I was like, I don't know, something's wrong here. So I ordered a ton of capsules early on, to kind of get me through it.

Now there's a new company called Medline that is taking over and seems like they're starting to produce the capsules again. So there might be a little bit of hope.

But the sensor has just changed my life. And there's a couple other ones coming on the market. So I'm hoping something comes out soon, because there's a whole community of people that rely on this to eat safely.

But it's a little triangle device. It's called the Nema, and you get a capsule and you put a tiny, maybe about a pea sized amount of food in the capsule and put it in there, and it takes about three minutes, and it either gives you a smiley face if it's safe or it has a gluten free symbol, which is the dreaded the dreaded symbol.

And so, I mean, it's amazing because now I got was able to get some more capsules and they started producing some of them again. So I'm trying to make it a habit now of just testing everything.

When I open a new package, whether it's a brand I know and trust that I'm safe for a decade, or if it's a new brand, just to try to limit some of that gluten exposure on my body.

There is a new brand coming out called, Allergy Amulet. They released one, I think, for soy or peanut already. I'm not. I don't recall which one they've released already, but they have a gluten one in the works, so that seems promising.

And I just saw another one. I forget the name of it. There's a third one, that might be coming to the market. So if you're very sensitive to gluten, I highly recommend looking into one of these devices.

It can really save you from additional accidental exposures. They can be a little expensive, which I hope that they figure out a way to make it more, you know, available and accessible to people because it it shouldn't be something that you can just have if you can afford it.

I think a lot of people need this in their life. So figuring out a way to make it more accessible, I think is going to be the key with some of these things.

But if you do have access to it, I highly recommend, looking into one of these devices. It definitely has saved me from probably being gluten 60% of my life, honestly.

So for me, it's money well spent. You know, being healthy is expensive. Unfortunately. And but sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do, and, you know, and do it.

So finding sick is more expensive. I have learned that the hard way. So I'm like, I definitely do prioritize spending money on my health, whether that's IBS or gluten sensors or healthier food.

It was a lot less expensive than then. Treatments and being sick is true. Thank you for sharing that. Yeah. Tell us about your book. Yes. So yeah. Okay.

So this is my cookbook Wandering Palate. And it's 28 days of paleo meals. And it was kind of funny how it started. I basically I had a meal plan every week.

So I figure out what I'm going to buy at the grocery store order and what I'm going to make so I don't have to think about it. And I was like, you know what?

I'm so sick of meal planning every week. I'm just going to make a four week meal plan of my favorite foods. And if I eat the same food once a month, I'm not going to get sick of it.

And then everything is figured out. So as I started diving in, I was like, well, why don't I turn this into a book and have what other people have this too, so they don't have to worry about meal planning?

So it works as a traditional cookbook. You can go through and just pick out the recipes that you want, or it also has a four week, meal plan I'll show you here at the end, with all your meals, figure it out for four weeks.

That's great. Here are your organizational. Yes. I mean, you can and I have your grocery lists, so everything you need to order and have on hand for the entire week to make all the recipes. So.

And I took into account, you know, making it easy, you know, a lot of people work in the day, so they're going to want simple lunches. Or you can even make something the night before that.

You can kind of reuse some of the ingredients the next day in your meal to try to make it as efficient and easy for people to eat healthy. And yeah, and then the recipes are all paleo.

They're all gluten free. There's even IP modifications on about 90% of them for anyone doing a diet as well. And any there's some that have rice because rice is kind of a gray area and paleo. But you can also use cauliflower rice.

So there's options for people depending where they're at in their health journey. So yeah, it's I use this all the time. They're like my favorite recipes, like I said.

So, I just tried to make it as simple and easy for people to to join in that as well. This is something people need. I strongly recommend this book. If you're suffering from complex chronic illness because usually I recommend people do an autoimmune paleo diet and then after some time, maybe six months, maybe even three months, they can switch over to to more paleo style, that is anti-inflammatory.

And when people first start this diet, they don't know where to get the groceries necessarily and they don't know, how to put the ingredients together because they're used to just making a sandwich or making some mac and cheese or going to get some pizza.

You know, the standard American diet that we're trying to shift people out of and people need a lot of help. It's just it's just the way it is. And then once they find the rhythm, then they can do it and it's and it's fine.

It's actually easy and many of it, but it takes some time for it easy and for people to find their rhythm. So your book I think is a is a jumpstart into that.

So instead of taking a couple months, you can probably take a week, to become a rhythm. So yeah, absolutely. And the whole book kind of has like a structure too.

So I wrote it in a way to kind of empower you to start to fill in your own recipes. So, you know, like, I don't remember exactly the full structure, but like when it's like a baked fish the next, the next, they might be like a type of like healthy bowl.

So it's like you're like, okay, well now I have this kind of structure in place. Now I just can fill it in with like other recipes that I find or make my own recipes. Once you kind of get used to it.

So it's kind of like training wheels in a way, to get you to eat in a more kind of structured and clean way. And I always find like if you have the ingredients and you have the meal plan figured out, you're going to eat it.

Like when now I've become like a little bit more relaxed and I'm like, what? I don't have something planned. It's like, well, what do you want for dinner?

Oh, let's just order something, you know, because you don't have any they planned or defrosted. But like the nights that I pulled a fish out and defrosted it or like a piece of meat and I'm like, oh, we have this for dinner.

We're going to eat this for dinner, you know, so having that structure, having the ingredients and having like, what you're going to eat, figure it out, definitely makes it a lot easier to stay on track.

I bet you change your fiance's life as well. Like, you know, it's interesting when I, when I went gluten free, he went gluten free with me to be supportive.

And in that he found out that he's actually sensitive to gluten, to extremely sensitive. So. And yeah, I mean, even he's he kind of did the elimination diet with me because we basically ate the same thing.

So he discovered a lot of things that he was sensitive to. He was reacting to some, yeast, like brewer's yeast. It was in like, kombucha and like, you know, nutritional yeast.

He would get kind of like a breakout around his nose and some, like, patchiness on his eyelid and things like that, and learned that clearing those things out of his body and his diet, those things went away.

Cookbook, Gluten Challenges, and Closing Remarks

So, yeah, he definitely has learned about his his body along the way, too. He hasn't had a choice. Exactly. So this way eating is helpful for people who are suffering with complex chronic illness, but it's also helpful for people who are not exactly from a family members.

And you're making it enjoyable for people because a lot of the times, Erica, people are like, I can't eat like this. This is boring. But you're not. This is definitely not. Yeah.

Delicious. So we're going on a trip with some friends. Like a little reunion trip after not seeing people for a while, and I was like, should we do family style meals?

I was like, I can put stuff together and everyone's like, yes, please. Like, your food is great. Like you, you figure everything out for us. And I'm like, does everyone mind being gluten free for the week?

And they're like, no, it's fine. So, you know, walk, we're healthier. You start to educate people and they see that they can eat like whole foods and like, you know, when your food quality is high, when you use grass fed meats or wild fish and organic produce, the food itself tastes so good, you don't need to slather it in heavy sauces and condiments and things like that.

You can use some fresh herbs, which are extremely good for your immune system, some high quality fats, some citrus, and you have a delicious meal. And it's simple.

It doesn't take long to make and it's good for you. I can't wait to have dinner with you! Hurry up and come visit. Okay. Whoa. Oh, yeah. One last question, Erica.

I understand you got vaccinated. I did, and that can be controversial for for people, when they have complex chronic illness. So now you're on the other side of that, just patient who's in remission to patient who's in remission.

Do you have any, any insight for people? Absolutely. I mean, this is something you definitely want to talk to your doctor about. It all depends on your current health and you know what you're experiencing.

For me personally, the idea of having another long hauler symptom or, you know, I still struggle with, like, chronic inflammation from Lyme and mold and like sores and things like that.

Like I didn't want to have another condition set off another cytokine storm and risk coming out of remission, risk having chronic inflammation and having all those things come back.

So it was a difficult decision for me. But in talking with my doctors and kind of weighing the options, I felt like it was a right decision. I'm in a very good place with my health, you know, I'm healthy.

I did some things around it to, you know, detox and eat clean and, you know, do some extra vitamin C and zinc and things like that to keep my immune system really healthy.

And the first one, I had no issues. I had a very slightly sore arm, and I actually felt really good afterwards. And I don't know if it was part relief and stress relief that it went well or that I was like, there's like some light at the end of the tunnel.

I've been very strict during Covid. I haven't seen anyone. I've been very, very careful. I wore a mask everywhere. I just did not want to take the risk.

So Covid roulette was very wearing on me. And so getting the second one, I got the second one about three weeks ago now, and I did have the first day I was fine, the next day I had a sore arm when I woke up, and around noon that day, I got the chills and the ickiness and I was like, oh God, what have I done?

Like, am I going to be okay? And I made a deal with myself. I was like, everyone's reacting this way. Not just you. It's just your immune system activating.

It's a good thing because your immune system is doing what it's supposed to do. And I was like, I'm not going to panic. I'm just going to watch Netflix and snuggle with my puppies all day.

And I was like, If I'm not better in 3 or 5 days, then I could panic and give myself permission to panic then. But I was like, don't do it now, just like, go with it.

And the next day I was fine. So you went away. And then I've been feeling great since, and honestly, I feel like the stress relief from getting it and like what I can do now is just been life changing too.

So like I said, I was very strict during Covid and I was really wearing on me. My adrenals are a little bit taxed because I'm an extrovert. I haven't seen a lot of my friends.

You know, we're stuck here at home like it's just it's draining. I was like, ready to live my life again after I am. And here I am kind of trapped again, you know?

And so it's been so nice. I, like, went to the butcher shop and picked up my own meat again combo, which was like, amazing. And I started going to like, upgrade labs to do something like the biohacking things I was doing. Again.

I got my hair done, my nails done. Like I was just like, oh my God, this is like so nice. So that alone has just been such a huge stress relief on my body and immune system.

And the peace of mind. And you know, there's just there's it's just not something that I wanted to deal with. So the chances of me having a bad reaction to the vaccine, I felt like were much smaller than me getting Covid.

So I just felt like the right decision for me. And I'm very, very happy with my decision so far. So no unicorn horns yet? Oh, yeah. Well, it's so good.

Thank you for sharing that with us. Erica, do you have a gift that you want to share with our participants? Absolutely. So, I want to make the book more accessible to everyone and any of the merchandise on my site.

I have some cute aprons and totes, so you can use Code Summit, for 10% off. Anything on on the site, to make that more accessible and have you let me know if I see it come in with the summit, discount code.

I will send you a signed copy. Oh, that's so nice. Yeah, yeah. Thank you. Thank you for that. And thank you for this interview, Erica. Absolutely. So much fun to interview.

And just so happy to see you new to like this. Healthy, happy and balanced. And this is wonderful. Now we can go play and have fun again. Putting the baby in me.

Yeah, exactly. Well thank you Erica. Thank you so much. We'll talk to you soon. All right. Sounds good. Bye bye.