How Integrative Medicine Helps Solve Chronic Illness Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Introduction to Integrative Medicine

I think so many people have had a personal health tragedy or in their family that's led them here. Fortunately, I got that head start and it's just been a wonderful journey to have so much extra tools to offer our patients, more options.

That's really what we are about. We're not throwing out traditional things. It's good for immediate care. Traditional medicine does not have an answer for chronic disease.

So I think when it comes to chronic diseases, the tools the integrative professional has really sets them apart. Hi, welcome back to the Healthy by Dr.

Jenn podcast. Today we're going to be talking about integrate medicine and how you can get more involved in this awesome world. I'm Dr. Jen. Today we are here with Dr Eric Bourne.

He is a physician, a DO, and he is the president of the International College of Integrative Medicine, or better known as ICIM. So he has his own practice in Michigan that we'll find out a little bit more about.

And he had been practicing for how long? 35 years. 35 years. So if you need to know about integrative medicine is the guy to ask. Welcome to the podcast.

My pleasure. Yes. Tell us a little bit about your background and how you got in the integrator world. Why did you abandon conventional medicine a Yeah.

So when I was a medical student, we, as you know, have so many opportunities to spend time with many, many physicians and we're doing our rotations typically about a month and you go from office to office, hospital to hospital.

Dr. Bourneu2019s Path into Integrative Care

And then I had opportunity to. Spend time. With my uncle and he was, a family practice doc in Grand Rapids, Michigan. So all of a sudden I walked in there and he was getting things better that other docs were frustrated with.

In fact, sometimes they would blame the patient for the headache or fatigue or backache or whatever they didn't want to see. And he said, no, we're going to help you.

He did. It was just so eye-opening for me to go. from one office to another, and you would then see somebody who had an answer to these people's health problems.

So fortunately, I got this at a very young age as I was going to medical school. And then I, was able to get more and more training along that line because I just wanted to have more tools, more, tools.

and so I feel like I kind of a headstart. Yeah. Well, I like how you brought up how some doctors, they say it's the patient's fault. And I feel like I felt that a lot in the emergency room even and on rotations, but people that would come in with chronic pain or they're back here again for their headaches.

That's actually one of the reasons why I went back and did an integrative medicine fellowship. because I was like, this is broken. This doesn't work. They're following doctor's orders, and they're not being taken care of.

So I think that that is so common that people get, you know, gaslit when they go to their doctor. And it's not always the doctor fault. It's the patient's fault, it is a broken system.

I mean, I truly believe integrative medicine is the fix for that. I do. I think so many people have had a personal health tragedy or in their family that's led them here.

Fortunately, I got that head start and it's just been a wonderful journey to have so much extra tools to offer our patients, more options. That's really what we are about.

We're not throwing out traditional things. It's good for immediate care. Traditional medicine does not have an answer for chronic disease. So I think when it comes to chronic diseases, the tools the integrated professional has really sets them apart.

Core Lifestyle and Detox Foundations

What are some of your favorite tools that you have used over your career that have been brought into your toolbox from integrative medicine? I think it all starts with what we eat.

And I, think that there's different opinions out there on that, but I really think you've got to focus on getting the processed food, clean food clean water, and clean air.

I that's a big start. The other thing is we're getting more sedentary and we need to move. It's good for our brains, it's for good our bodies. Just having that conversation is so easy.

And in general, I think all of us are looking to what is insulting our body, what kind of toxic environment from food to metals to plastics to organophosphates and even some of our processed food, very toxic, and get those out of your system.

So I think almost all of us start by, what can we remove in this person's life that's offending them? And then we can start to, once we get the offenders away, we start building back up.

Sometimes it's a job or a boss, you know, I've noticed, like, when we talk about toxins, sometimes it is a toxic person, so repairing that relationship, maybe forgiving someone that did you wrong or giving grace or quitting a job.

I've had patients that have switched or changed jobs, especially women, honestly. Like, I'm like, what is this doing for you? You know, because they feel they're like run ragged, you know especially in perimenopause.

And I am like there has to be a balance. For me, it's kind of like ordering things, God, my husband, and my family and kids, then my job, not that I don't do my best at my jobs but I need to have time for that other stuff.

Me personally, and when I talk to patients, sometimes I ask about spiritually what's toxic and stuff. So have you ever told someone to quit their job?

Because I have. Well, I tell them, let's start looking for a new job. Great financial stress. It's time for you to really move on. I know it's going to be hard and you know, you just talked to them about it.

It is going be harder now, but you now it is gonna be better and we are gonna to here for. Sometimes they just need to hear that. That there is somebody else out there that does care about them.

And then toxins can be intimidating, too, to have patients cut out. You know, I had a pan that my favorite pan to cook only one dish in, like every few months, but it was Teflon coated.

And it took me a couple years to just throw it away because I'm like, But we only use it once. I don't like this is ridiculous. Like, why am I keeping this one?

It was a walk. But that can be hard. People might not realize that the ceramic mug that they're drinking their coffee out of has lead in the paint, right?

So how do you make it so they are not overwhelmed when you tell them this? Because honestly, they've probably been to doctors and have never heard this before.

Practical Tools in the Integrative Toolbox

I do like exactly what you were referring to. I mean, there are some integrative docs will do a big panel right off the bat, and it's just huge. And it can be a little intimidated and overwhelming.

My personal approach is exactly why you're referring, to take a good history. find out the priorities, and this start there, it's a journey. And we talk to them about that.

If I'm going to drive across the United States from here, I am not going worry about where I will turn when I get to my end destination. I want to start here.

Where do I start? Where I turn to get going here on my journey? So we start and each time we can start to peel the next layer back for the patient. Now, those are the basic tools.

So, what are some other tools that you have in your office that are maybe just different and fun things like supplements, for example? So yeah, it's amazing over the years how many different things we've added to the practice and you add it because And unfortunately, it's out of the usual payer system, you know, health insurances are really starting to dominate the way medicine is practiced.

So sometimes you have to go away from that a little bit. We often start by looking at food sensitivities and we look at gut and microbiome, what the thing all, we feel a property set, all the disease starts in the gut.

And so we often start to look at the gut first. I think that's a tool that most everybody here does. We have a good background in something called chelation therapy that is the removal of heavy metals from the system.

So we test for that and then look what we get and figure out what type of medication could help get those metals out of their system Other tools we're using, I happen to have a hard chamber hyperbaric oxygen.

And it's just amazing how that tool can make just anything heal better, particularly brains. It helps our brains heal and other tissue in the body. How often do you go in that, yourself?

You're like, I'm gonna sneak away. Yeah, depending on what's going on with my own health. In fact, just a couple weeks ago for several treatments. It does bring me back to what it's like to be a patient and step into that.

I still try to keel eight monthly. Yeah. So we all, as we get older, we're patients ourselves. Regenerative medicines become big. Personally, for me, the prolotherapy, platelet-rich plasma, those types of therapies too.

I love it because I try to explain to patients when they come to see me. I'm like, I have a plan A and then I a have plan B, C, D, all the way down to Z because it's layers at how we have to approach patients.

And, you know, prolotherapy might not work for every patient or not be the next step. They have do other things before. I try to explain to them that not every practitioner even is created equal.

How ICIM Was Founded and Grown

Not everyone has so many tools in their bag, you know, and you need to make sure when you're seeing someone that they keep collecting tools because that's what you do.

You keep building on. I mean, I can't imagine, like me 10 years ago, how many tools I have now compared to that in you 20 years ago. So I think that that is great to have a community to share tools and tricks with each other.

And that brings us to the International College of Integrative Medicine. Tell us a little bit about what this

organization is and how it was founded. You know, the founders go back to 1983 and 1984 where in Cleveland, Ohio, some doctors from the Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio area got together and they were very like-minded, very forward-thinking individuals and said, hey, we need to share our ideas.

So they named the group, the Great Lakes College for Advancement Medicine. And it really carried that name until the point where we'd really grown, particularly into the Canada, still in the great lakes, we had a little more and more Canadian members.

We had people from overseas starting to come. We just thought it was time for a name change, so we became the International College of Integrative Medicine, trying to reflect more as our organization was growing.

But it's still mostly a Midwest-based group and love to have people continue to come from outside that area. And as we start to add meetings further and further away from our base too, So these just were leading edge doctors that started this.

And you know, a lot of it was when I got a call from one of the doctors and said, hey, we got this meeting coming up. Hey, you ought to come. It was just a blessing to do that.

I'm on, I was on the board of American College of Advancement Medicine in the past too. So I've been a member of many organizations. This has a family feel to it.

You can learn as much from the doctor sitting next to you at lunch as you can in the classroom. So these are our lectures, our practicing positions. We were very broad from having PhDs and natural paths and course MDs, MDOs.

And we really welcome all those in this space to our group. Yeah, I was introduced to the organization. My friend Dr. Ellie Campbell was putting on the conference, the kidney conference in Atlanta last summer, and I spoke at it about peptides.

Conference Culture and Learning from Peers

And I kind of fell in love with just everyone there because it does feel like that family feel, but not only that, It's like you said practicing practicing doctors practicing practitioner You know, it's not just people come and they just have a big Instagram following and that's why they're there, you know to draw them in its actual doctors are so passionate about oh gosh, like thiamine and you Know be too and stuff like I just like You could just feel their passion and their seeing patients and there's seeing results and this is how I in residency, it gives that like M&M feeling, you know, grand rounds where we're all sharing what we learn from patients because we are not cookie cutter medicine.

We actually have to see how things work in patients and learn form that. So it is that family feel. If you are If you are interested in integrative medicine and techniques, it's a really good, kind of like a sleeper conference.

You know how in fantasy football you call it a slipper? Like someone's like, a sleaper ride receiver or whatever. Anyway, I feel like it is that because it kind a hidden gem when you look at all these different conferences you can go to.

I think once people come to our conferences, they often join the group once they hear the quality of what we have out there. And we're blessed to have had just some really great speakers like yourself.

You did a fantastic job and we really appreciate your expertise that you brought to out group. Oh, thank you. And the topics are based on integrative medicine too, and how you apply it.

There's also, once you remember, I think we have access to slides and past things, which is great. Yeah. We were trying to do a better, better job of using multimedia.

getting access to that and recording everything. So there's two meetings a year. And so those are going to be at different cities with different topics.

I think we really will broaden any physician's toolbox. Yes, exactly. Then how long have you been president? How long will you stay president Well, until the board, I serve at the pleasure of the Board.

Yeah, it's been one of longer. I've been president since 2018. That's amazing. So, yeah, toward the end of my term, there's no term. It's just the Boards of Directors keep selecting presidents.

And so I think we're heading in the right direction. We've got excellent leadership, excellent executive director now. time for me to force somebody else to step up.

We have to keep everybody, keep the young ones coming too. Right, yes. Well, what has the benefit of going to these actual conferences been for you? Like, how have you brought that back to your patients?

Yeah, well, the motto we always had was whatever we learn in a lecture hall, we want to be able to use on Monday morning. And that's Monday, going back to my office.

I want be to do that right away. That's our theory of how we're telling our speakers that let's give them tools that whatever they hear, they can start on a Monday.

So very practical things. And then they can also follow things, you know, now I think I just love that there's so much multimedia podcast and things you.

I often then follow some of the speakers we hear because they have a podcast like yourself and. Dr. McCullen, some of those others we've heard. So it's great to just say, gosh, I didn't know about that person.

We're really trying to introduce our members to a wide variety of individuals. It's so intimate and all that. You can not only ask questions, but you can have lunch with them.

Yes. They're not racing off to the airport after, they're hanging around and we're all, because we are all a community, we all are collaborators together because were trying to advance patient care in the integrative space.

Rapid Fire: Biohacks, Toxins, and Values

That's great. I'm going to ask you some rapid fire questions, so thank you for being here. What is your favorite biohack that actually works? movement, motion.

Hippocrates said motion is medicine. So it's been around that long. I think that's one thing that actually works. We've got some osteopathic background and we're trying to restore motion to the system and there's a lot of ways to do that with our hands and with exercise.

It could be that simple. Yes, I love that. That's a great answer. If you could eliminate one toxin from the world today, what would it be? Oh, boy. Microplastics.

I'm concerned that, so, you know, got a background in heavy metals, but I got tools to get it out. Yeah. And we're doing better on stopping them getting in.

But the forever chemicals, the PFASs and the plastics, We got to stop polluting our world and we got a start. Yes. You know, it's very toxic. The microplastic.

Well, we eat like a credit card worth of plastic. I forget how often, but it, yeah. And total plasma exchange is really the only way to get rid of these.

It's crazy. Yeah. That's like 500, 5,000 bucks. Yeah, that's actually a good one. Because glyphosate, people say

glyphasate and mercury a lot, but we can detox from that.

So I really like your answer. Last one, what is one word you would like to leave with the audience? That's just one-word. Put you on the spot. It's what we like do.

Just integrate. That's a good one.

Where to Find Dr. Bourne and ICIM

Integrate that mind, body, spirit. I think we overlook that. It takes the whole package. Yeah. So let's integrate, and that would be my one word. That is a great one, yeah.

Like I said, I don't think anyone said that one before, so you did good. All right, Dr. Bourne, how can those listening find you? Are you still taking patients at your office in Michigan?

So first talk about the International College of Integrative Medicine. We have our own website and icim.org and find us there, look us over, see what you think.

Would love to have you come see us. Personally, I have a Parchment family practice and born integrative medicine in the Kalamazoo, Michigan area. And we are fairly limited on our new patients.

Uh, we're very blessed to be. Pretty busy, but for some of our real special things, the PRP hyperbaric chelation therapy, there's probably some room for you.

Yeah, that's good. That's great. Enjoying ICIM and we'll probably see you then at the next conference then. It's going to be in Dearborn, Michigan in September, so looking forward to that.

I think that one will excite everybody. Thank you so much.