How Mold Toxicity Intensifies Your Hormone Imbalance Transcript

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Introduction to Marcelle Pick and adrenal health

Welcome to another episode of Mold, Mycotoxins, and Chronic Illness. I'm your host, Dr. Ann Shippy, and today we get to visit one of with one of my dear friends, Marcelle Pick.

She has been helping women for decades and she's had such an enormous reach through TV shows, through her, her world renowned women to women, the clinic that she established in 1983.

She's prolific with writing and both blog for men and books. She really is on a mission to help women just really treat the root cause of their illnesses, but also figure out how to do the prevention.

And one of the things I'm most proud about her, because it's such a high bar, is she's on the faculty for the institute for Functional Medicine. And this is the material that she teaches.

It's all all about hormones. So she's extremely knowledgeable and we're we've got the privilege to have her talk today about adrenal dysfunction and stress and the role with toxic mold.

Welcome, Marcelle. Thank you. Thank you. We have a lot to say. We do. There's so much here that we can help with people. And maybe what the the place to start would be just with some definitions.

So you've done so much work around the adrenal glands and the role that they play and what happens with the body, the human body. They're just so pivotal in how the body works.

Maybe, maybe start there with what you are. You describe a renal dysfunction. Sure. Absolutely. So, you know, the unfortunate part is in the conventional world or in allopathic world, we talk about stress and we just said, well, you know, I just, you know, just deal with it.

And the reality is the body doesn't do that so well.

What adrenal dysfunction is and how stress affects the body

And if we have enormous stress for a long period of time, we then develop for different phases of adrenal dysfunction and we can just assume what it is or we can do some testing to find out where people are.

And what I found in my practice is that if people have stress for too long and oftentimes it starts in childhood, unfortunately, and it goes all the way up into adulthood because we adapt behaviors from their childhood that are sometimes dysfunctional, and then we have stress from the world.

We have stress for all of social media. We have our job and our relationships and our family. And then cortisol, which is the most important hormone because we can't live without it, starts to go a little haywire.

And when that happens, it causes havoc everywhere in the body. And our body is meant to adapt, you know, we're meant to have some some stress. And then we went to have this this shut up bout, which is the parasympathetic nervous system.

Most of us are in overdrive or fight or flight. We call that all the time. When that happens, we think you know and stress. I'll just deal with it. I wish it was that simple.

And we've just started to think it's normal, especially with I know going on the last four years. Absolutely. So what the unfortunate part is that when cholesterol I mean of when cortisol levels are elevated for any length of time, what goes up must come down.

And what we see there in the stage four is that people's cortisol levels are flatlined and they just are feeling exhausted all the time. And then we see consequences.

We see their immune system is affected, we see many more autoimmune disorders, we see thyroid dysfunction because adrenals adversely affect the thyroid and make T3 inactive many times.

Then we also have hormonal issues. I call it hormones from hell, pardon the language, but they really become dysregulated. And then we also have GI that really is affected as well.

And for years we didn't have any science. And I'm a geek. I like to see the science behind it. And as I teach for the Institute of Medicine, will always looking at the research every year.

And what we find is it directly is affecting our immune system with the studies. It increases your metastatic disease. If you have cancer, it increases autoimmune disorders pretty significantly.

It changes hormonal status with PMS and PND and it also upregulate cytokines or inflammation. So if you're dealing with toxic mold that's contributing to the adrenals or vice versa and you've got both at the same time, we have a very significant affect on our health and we can't get out of it.

So we might be treating them all, treating the multitude more. But if you're not controlling adrenals too, if they've been affected, which they almost always are, then you're left with, I'm still not feeling better.

I still, you know, I'm, I'm doing all the things you're telling me, and then we have to pull in the adrenals as well because they also affect glucose and fluid retention.

So we've got all these things that the organs either adrenals affect systemically and a lot of people don't understand that, you know, if we have too much need for cortisol, the body will say, Nope, I'm not going to produce estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, DHEA, and the amounts that you need.

So it it very adversely affects our hormones too. So it is a big deal. It is a big deal to have too much stress and it is a big deal to have toxic mold.

Where you just said so much hair. There's so much to unpack. This is a great overview of of the issues that need to be addressed. So let's go back a little bit to those earlier stages because, you know, even if you haven't gotten to the stage four and you're dealing with toxic mold, you probably need to be looking at those earlier stages.

Stages of adrenal dysfunction and why testing matters

So I'd love like just a little overview about those earlier stages and what you see is effective for being supportive for the adrenals in the early stages.

So I'm one of those that believe that we have to test. I am no longer able to guess and I know there's a lot of people that have written books recently that say you don't need to test and agree with that at all.

I've been taken so many times when I thought it was this and it's like, Oh my God, it's this. And how I intervene is going to be different if I see, you know, up and down cortisol, I am going to use herbs to really accommodate what those are.

I am going to make recommendations about. I don't like to use the word stress reduction because that's so overused. But what is it that for you is going to help you stay out of that mindset in which your mind's racing all the time?

I'm a ballroom dancer. That's where I get it. But somebody else might do something else. And with some people that's not meditation. And because they have such a hard time not thinking so it might be, you know, a tapping technique or it might be walking in the woods, it might be, you know, using a form of polarity or building crisis or

something that gets out of your body.

And then we have stage one that it's the body's just beginning to have reactions to cortisol and it's in fight flight, but not all the time. So you still have that ability then to use nutrients much, much more easily.

When we start getting into more stage two and three, the body's no longer able as well to shut into the parasympathetic and get that body to kind of respond.

And then we're willing to stage four and people feeling horrible. So I think finding out where you are is crucial because then we have a sense about, you know, how are we going to intervene?

And for some people it'll take me a year to turn them around. And what I found so often is that if people didn't deal with the stressors, the mold, the Lyme, the whatever and the emotions, because we do have emotions that are packed in here, perfectionism being really hard on yourself, having high expectations.

Women are terrible like that, multitasking, not knowing how to delegate those, perpetuate that cortisol without the parasympathetic. And I can use IRBs till I'm blue in the face to change it.

So in my opinion, we really need to test and find out where we are and I might again repeat the test to see did I shift it enough and do I need to intervene in a different way as well.

Which tests to like the best, which are most helpful for you? So I have been using diagnostics my entire career and I've changed and used other labs, but I found that this company so often says what I'm suspecting when I relive with the patient how they're feeling when I see the test results more than any other company.

And I've used them for 30 years, I think a long, long time. And with just magical results, when you're using the test results in conjunction with their matrix, their life story, you know, what are the the things that are going on in their life, what went on in their childhood, You know, what is their mold exposure and what are they doing about it?

Are they living in a mold infested house? All those play into how they get treated in the long run. Beautiful. So that's a great overview of the different stages of it.

The adrenal dysfunction. I'd love for you to spend a little bit more time on the stage for you, because I think that's when people get to the point where they really know that mold is an issue and they're, you know, really struggling with how to get well.

That's a lot of times where they are. And I totally agree it's good to test to see because there are some other things they can mimic stage for adrenal dysfunction.

So love to explore a little bit more with you on your approach there.

Supporting stage four adrenal burnout with targeted supplements

Sure. So I'm not a big fan of using cortisone. I used to back in the day and I found it was so hard to get people off. So I will use as many adaptogenic groups as I can.

I'll use cordyceps rhodiola ashwagandha and I will also use licorice. I'll either use DeCosta rice licorice and I'll use it often three or four times a day, not late at night because it'll keep them up.

So it gives them a sense of, Oh my God, my get up and go is come back. The other thing that's really, really, really important is DHEA. I use it quite often with my patients.

And what I say to them is, look, I want to get up and go to come back. I want to give you the wherewithal to be able to have the energy, to go do the work you might need to do with your home or even looking at the emotions, because they're always, always there together.

And if they don't feel well, they don't have the energy to do it. And I prescribe DHEA in a compounded form. I don't use over the counter. I use one milligram per drop and I use one milligram bid for four days and I increase it.

Then over the next days, every four days, until I reach generally about 5 to 6 drops twice a day. The physiological dose of DHEA is 25 milligrams. So we produce a day and I don't find I ever need that much.

And that's oftentimes how it is prescribed if you can get it over the counter. But the drops are fabulous and people sometimes only get to three. That's all they need to get to four.

They feel a little bit more irritated and or, you know, you wonder if is getting converted to testosterone. But generally five makes magic and then they help you build an interesting approach.

But yeah it's it's that's such a great way to really be able to very fine tune much fine tune. And then if they're finding they don't need as much and they can start tapering down to it's so much to taper down.

So that's really great. What do you use as a base? Oftentimes it is alcohol. So if people have a sensitivity to that, we can use olive oil as well. It doesn't work as well.

But the foundation is a small amount of alcohol and it is incredibly well-tolerated. And people notice it almost immediately. The differences and no downsides.

Do you ever see any downsides from just this low dose of a king? No, no, no, no. I really, really don't know. You'd have that occasional person who said, I feel angry and then I would a, converting it to testosterone.

And they probably have, you know, high sexual rebounding globulin as well. So those are people that you want to fine tune a little bit differently. But generally, I would say it's a game changer for people.

They will come in saying, Don't you ever take me out, This is what you want, need it, go that long, Give me a little chance here. But it really makes a huge difference for them.

Yeah. And it makes so much sense too, with every thing being so interconnected and that whole cortisol steal that happens where just the body's slurping up all the sex hormones to make the cord as a whole.

So yeah, this is a really great strategy. Yeah, now it makes a big difference. And then they feel like they're, their brains are back, their back and that they have the ability then to do the next things that they need to do, which is so important for them, because otherwise they just feel like I'm never going to get better and they lose all sense of hope.

That's so true. And that's what that's exactly what this summit is about, is helping people to find enough tools in their toolbox and the right questions to ask and the things to ask for so that they get that hope back.

Yeah. And the other part that I want to reiterate, too, is that 95% of our beliefs are unconscious. So it's bringing some of those understandings to the surface.

And, you know, again, there's something called the ACE score and looking at to see what your ACE scores, I have a little different opinion about that.

The ACE scores an adverse childhood event score and Dr. Phil, they kind of founded that in 1998 and look to see if you had a high score four or more on the questionnaire, your chances of early death, suicide, heart disease, cancer were much, much higher.

But that's looking at big T and little T. I think that we have micro traumas at a very significant that also affect our health status. So it's understanding that we didn't create this.

Nobody is that silly. No one would ever do this. However, some of the thinking patterns that we have, some of the

B automatic behaviors from the primitive part of the brain, the amygdala, they will sometimes create behaviors that cause more stress for us.

So it's understanding about yourself at the same time that you're working on your dreams.

Childhood stress, microtraumas, and unconscious beliefs

So that's why I say let me give you the energy that you need to be able to then correct the things through a balanced. And are you actually using a score in your practice?

It sounds like. I have a long. Lesson agenda. What are some of the things that you would like if you were going to have the micro, the micro terrors that questions?

What kinds of things are you thinking about? What these or what is your self-esteem affected as you're growing up? Were you as a young you know, particularly this is for women, were you ashamed about your body?

Were you, you know, obsessed with what you ate for your meals? Did you have a parent that was somewhat condescending on a regular basis? Did you feel like you had to had to become a perfectionist?

You know, had to be a really good girl? You know, I use my example in my home. I wouldn't have scored highly on that score, but my father was a rage aholic but never yelled.

It was just angry looking. My friend would come over. So I, you know, I established the same behavior I became a really good girl and tried to make everything just so.

The unfortunate part is you become precocious. Then in life, you're always kind of looking over your shoulder wanting it. And that's the thing that increases cortisol production.

So it's really learning a lot. And accepted. And correct? Absolutely. And always trying, I think was that is that what that look meant? It's like, well, check it out and see.

Is that what that look meant? Because you could be wrong a lot of time. And if you're feeling poorly about yourself, that's going to be the piece of take in to think, Well, he must have been mad at me.

No, he just got a flatter that's, you know, something like that. So it probably had nothing to do with you. Nothing to do with you. And you know, that's where it comes in to asking questions, you know, as embarrassing it might be.

And I see something to offend you or are you upset with me about something, you know, and then you do that enough. It's like, no, it's not about me at all.

But those are the small micro traumas. It takes a lot of courage to ask because sometimes you might not actually get the answer, you know the answer that you want to say.

You have to be willing to write the actual response. Right? Very true. But all of that, unfortunately, affects our biochemistry. And now if we look at the science, what we're seeing is that the ACE score is so connected to so many things, including autoimmune disorders, immune dysfunction, hormonal imbalances, PMS, infertility and premature bearing failure.

So we have some very significant things that we can connect the micro dots to as well as a big T little T. Now, is that all of this? Of course not. It's a piece to the puzzle in a piece.

So when you have that high a score or micro additional score from from what you can, a lot of times just read by sitting down with somebody, right. What are the most effective things that you see to help heal from those traumas?

You know, I don't think there's one effective thing. I think that's a key piece for me. And I'm going to say something outrageous. And, you know, I get to I'm old now, so it's like that is that I don't think that ongoing one on one therapy get you there.

I have to agree from just from what I see happening for people. It just doesn't change anything. I remember thinking this early on in my career when I had somebody that's been sexually abused.

I've been in therapy for 15 years and it still took me an hour to do a pelvic exam because they were so terrified. So I early on realized that there's we need to do something different.

I referred a lot of people to the health Institute, which is in California. They have over they've been in existence, I think now 70 years. They're in 40 different countries.

It could also be something like, you know, even Joe dispenser work. I mean, it depends on what works for you. Looking at what we need to do, it is helpful to understand therapy perhaps for a year or so.

You see the connections, but after that it's the body work, you know, why do we cry at massages and have a Feldenkrais? So polarity because a lot of our issues.

I have a chapter in my book Cure issues are in your nutrition. That's exactly right. Restore them there. So it's really finding out how do I do this in conjunction with the mold, in conjunction with the adrenals, because otherwise the adrenals won't get better.

It's really hard to heal with taxed adrenals. Yeah. Yeah. But it can be done. I mean, I have so many patients in my practice that are like, Oh my God, the ahas that I had and I can't.

I've never felt better in my entire life. And I realized all these pieces and did something about it. Tapping can work with some people and there's a lot of trauma work that's online now that can work.

Trauma healing approaches beyond traditional therapy

It depends on what your comfort level is, and sometimes it takes a couple of things to try out any helper as a program that's also very effective as well.

Well, I'm definitely a huge Distanza fan. I, I really think his work is incredible and all the things that you're listing I think are also really interesting.

It's one of the things that I'm saying. I don't know if you're seeing this in your practice, but that people are finding their academy therapies. Don't get me started.

So one of the last talks and I, you know, as I teach for the Institute of Medicine, I stay very on top of that at the annual conference with the psychiatrist.

And the psychiatrist was saying he's not using medication at all anymore and that he's now only using ketamine. And some people would even say ayahuasca and some of the other things very similarly that are suicidal.

They're very effective to help unravel, to unwrap some of those pieces and to give you a better spiritual connection and the relationships that people let go of and also the connection that they had with people they didn't have connections with.

So that was I think we put it in the water. We needed the water right now. They said no. So it was pretty impressive. So out of the things that you mentioned, the one that's the only one that's legal is the ketamine so far.

I think there's a lot in in I guess other than I think Washington or Oregon, maybe Colorado, some of the other psychedelic. Washington, not. At least not illegal, but can be.

It's an old anesthesia medication that given in the correct dose in the correct setting. So that's what I'm finding with the patients that choose to do ketamine is it's so. Important.

To really know the environment that you're going to be in. I've had a couple of people have really horrible experiences because they didn't have the right support when they were unpacking some really traumatic things.

So for for our audience listening, if that appeals to you, do a lot of research and then really make sure it's worth it to pay a little bit more to have an excellent team so that if some things come up that actually kind of surprise you, which often happens, we're so good at suing the experiences, emotions and beliefs in our tissues and not having them in our conscious mind.

So if those some surprises come up that that you have really good support with, you know. Hands down and also some of the programs have doulas, meaning that they have somebody that's a person that's with them prior to having the ketamine.

And I think that's probably the best option is to have your one person if you're kind of concerned about what's going to happen for you and then they're with you with the whole experience as well so that they kind of birth you, if you will, to a I knew you.

Haven't hurt them. I've just heard them referred to as counselors. So I love the idea of a tool because that means they're going to be with you through the whole process and they're not going to leave you.

They're going to make sure. You're ready. For. Right. Exactly. To the new awareness. That's beautiful. Well, I didn't expect we were going to get into this Segway.

No, I think it's an important thing to know about and especially for the, you know, really severe significant trauma is I think it can be so healing and like be one of those keys to unlocking the adrenals.

Absolutely. And also even for the micro traumas, because I think what I see with micro trauma is just as fine. My childhood was great and I keep seeing the back of their adrenals and other issues of a cycle.

Let's kind of revisit this and sure enough, they're the ones that are kind of sitting on a little bit more than they realized. Yeah, that sounds like your story's a perfect example.

Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. So is there anything else that you want to share about the this more stage four end stage adrenal dysfunction, like anything else to think about?

I mean, I think what's important is to know that you can get better. I mean, I think sometimes when people are in that it's like nothing I'm doing is working.

It's not it's not making a difference. And it it just we have to find the right cue. And when you do and we're all different, you know, it might be that you need more to make some craziness.

You might need, you know, more protein than Jane did or, you know, you're having to have just a teeny bit more carbohydrates and Sarah, but it's finding out the keys for you.

And maybe this Siberian ginseng didn't work and you have to try something else. So it's really being willing to know that we are unique and have very different things.

But it's also going to be impulsive to have somebody that really looks at your history, you know? How sick were you as a kid? What kind of stress did you have as a teenager?

Did you have lots of antibiotics, all those playing into that big puzzle as well.

Mold, Lyme, and the importance of treating the whole picture

And then, of course, looking at the adrenal results. So know that you can get better. I mean, that's my take home for this issue. Absolutely can. But we need to know the right keys.

And that's such a huge place to like. If you're telling yourself, oh, I don't I don't know. I don't think I'm going to get better. I can't do this. It's not going to happen. Your body's listening.

Totally. Your body believes every word you say. Absolutely. Absolutely. So reframing it. How did you say it exactly? I liked what you said. Which part?

I don't know. Which is like to. To the knowing. Like, I know I'm going to get better, you know? Yeah. I mean, I mean, it is that it's just really. But you're going to have to say that to yourself over and over and even perhaps use and tapping with it, which is that I, you know, I do have all that I need within myself to get better.

But it's going to be a mantra that you have to say, because when you're feeling down and dirty, it's like this is never going to get better. Well, that's not going to help you.

Never. I'm never going to get better. It's like, no, my body. If you think about our bodies, they're amazing. Really, They are amazing. And kind of really key into that release would be really important.

Beautiful. So there are there any nuances with the patients who have mold as a taxing factor and helping the adrenals to heal or even Lyme? Are there any like situations where you would think about some different things?

It's knowing all those pieces at the same time. I mean, I live in Maine and it's a very we have a huge problem here and people are not really good about diagnosing it.

So I have a multitude of tests that I do looking at antibodies for all the co-infections as well as line, and I pick it up pretty well. Even at Quest.

So you can do that. So finding that out for sure and then looking and having your house, I mean, all the things that you're going to be talking about in the summer.

Sure. But at the same time, we have to look at adrenals. And I think that's missed many times. Definitely. And it may be the piece that I start with first, and then I will do the other pieces to the equation and certainly the day to day so that they feel a little bit better.

It's kind of like, Oh, I have a real breath of fresh air, so then I can kind of tackle the other things and mold can be, you know, people can have die off and really not feel so well.

So it's like pieces at a time. And knowing that many people get better. So and then so you're probably seeing I can I haven't been to Maine, I need to come visit you, but I you have your high you probably have a lot of people that have both Lyme and mold.

We do we do especially with now be so airtight now. Absolutely. That they have those. Okay. And Lyme is such a such an interesting thing to to deal with too and I think both make use of the worse and you know all of that goes on.

So we're having to unpack all of it. But also, I think understanding the concept of Joe Dispenza is that even though all those things are going on, changing our mindset, understanding that 95% of our beliefs are unconscious, bringing those to the surface is amazing how you can heal, amazing how you can heal.

I mean, I have an amazing patient story who actually did. Georgia spends about, oh, my diagnosed with breast cancer several years ago and she just had a lumpectomy was just a small cancer, not a big deal.

She had a mammogram the following year, didn't do anything. And then a couple of years later, she had the cancer was actually coming through the scan when she saw a breast surgeon.

She did have a mastectomy, but she had metastases in her legs and she could hardly walk through, saw so much cream on pain medication about every 30 minutes.

But that didn't even help her. They wanted to circumvent her leg. And she said no one, her daughters got into this cancer and she had this healing session for several hours with many of the heroes.

And I called her to say, How are you? Because I was going to say goodbye because I thought she was in hospice.

Hope, healing stories, and where to find Marcelle Pick

And she goes, Hey, how are you? And she just went on a hike two weeks before that. And then I got another note from her saying, I've never felt better in my entire life.

I didn't realize how much I was holding on to and how much deep seated grief I had, and I let it go in the work she's doing, and now she's working on his team.

So there are miracles that are happening around us. And I want everybody that's listening to this and may not be feeling well is to know that whatever your avenue is, you can get better with no question about it.

Oh, Marcelle, I loved the waythat you put all this together and are so inspiring and so many pieces of the puzzle. Thank you for that inspiration. Yeah, absolutely. It's true, though, a lot of times that we see it.

Yeah. Seeing things that aren't actually even supposed to have, like genetic disorders that are neurodegenerative, seeing those heal at the dispenser workshops is like, Oh, okay, I guess you can heal from mold.

If you can heal something that really should be able to be healed, we can definitely heal from everything. Hands down. Is beautiful. So let's tell everybody where to find you because you are just such a wealth of information and I want people to be able to tap into that.

So this many places they can go to. Marcellepick.com and see me there. I also am one of the people that has a women's health series. I know we will, which is another website with practitioners and I will be very soon.

I'll be putting it on my Marcelle Pick Page I'm going to be doing a contributor for a magazine that's got quite a large audience, so I'll let people stay tuned for that.

So we'll be writing articles for that as well. But I thought that was an air on and oh, is there something else? So I also have a podcast so people can look at the podcast as well, but you can see all that on their website as well.

Okay, well you are just such a master at creating content that's so easy to understand, that's so impactful. So thank you for everything you're doing and thanks for joining us today.

Absolutely. It's always my pleasure. It's lovely seeing you again. So great to see you.