How To Improve Your Egg Quality Transcript

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Introduction to Cultivate Fertility

Welcome back to the super fertility Summit. Cultivate fertility is here with us today. It was born from over 30 years of clinical medical practice in women's health and pediatrics.

Dr. Hillary Fredrickson and Dr. Kara Burkhart are specialists in natural medicine, dietary supplements, nutrition and acupuncture. They've curated a comprehensive guide to taking charge of your own fertility and are a trusted community for reproductive health and a woman's reproductive journey.

Their courses and programs walk you through the ins and outs and whys of dietary, nutritional, and lifestyle choices that can directly influence the ability to conceive.

Their mission is to help you plant seeds to help you grow your happiest and healthiest family, which is why they are here with us today. Welcome, ladies.

Thank you so much for being here. Oh, thank you for having us. Having us. So I'm. Oh, I'm so sorry. Go ahead. Go ahead. Please. No, we're just thrilled to be here. We love.

We love communicating and talking about fertility. It's our passion. So we're really grateful to be involved. So thank you so much. You're very welcome.

And I'm so excited to have you here. And I, I know we're going to be talking about a topic that women especially love to hear about. It's one of the most popular topics, which is egg quality and the relationship between egg quality and age.

So I cannot wait to dive into this topic with the two of you. So before we get into specifics of egg quality and how to improve it, I would love to ask you, what is the one thing that you want people to take away from this interview that we're doing today?

Oh, I have this one really clear for me. equality can absolutely be changed and it breaks my heart when women come in. They're so stuck on the AMH number in the FSH number.

And it just is limiting thinking. And we see it all the time in our practices. We see these numbers change. We see people get the baby they want. It might just take a little bit of extra work for that woman, but it's you're not defined by this.

This is not a static thing. It can change if given the proper environment. Your body wants to heal. Your body wants to make a baby more than anything.

You know, I have a big rooted in, natural medicine, and this makes sense.

Egg Quality Can Improve

So if we go along with our lives and we're in a toxic environment and not taking the proper supplements and not living the happiest lives, and in, in a way, not taking care of ourselves, our eggs will suffer.

And so we just have to get back in alignment. And I say that as someone who was terrified of not having babies and did IVF, at age 30 and got a baby, which was very lucky for me because I had terrible quality eggs, but then my second baby was totally naturally done randomly.

They're only 13 months apart. We were like, we better start trying because this first guy took years to get. And so

I'm just here to say, like, I didn't need to do that.

I just did that out of fear. And it was the only thing presented to me. And at that time, we didn't know anything about fixing air quality, but I really shouldn't have had that be that second baby, but was able to easily after healing my body.

So it's possible everybody. I guess I want them to know. So beautiful and thank you for sharing your story. That's really incredible. And you're right, I think that increasingly the answer is to run to intervention.

And of course, there's always going to be a time and a place and the moment when it's exactly right to do that intervention, especially if we've primed or prepared before so that we're more likely to be successful in intervention.

But there are also many ways in which you can heal your fertility on your own. And then you may not even need the intervention. So you're you're a living, breathing, beautiful example of that.

Thank you so much. So I love that you have really emphasized that no matter what your AMH level is, no matter what your FSH level is, there is still hope for you and one of the keys is to not become so identified with that number that you can't see yourself in any other way, and you can't see any other possibility or path for you.

Can you talk a little bit about the identity piece of this? Because one thing that we noticed at the Fertility and Pregnancy Institute, among the mamas who and and couples who come to prime minister with us, is that one of the most foundational things that need needs to happen is an identity shift from being identified as infertile, or in a place of struggle surrounding fertility, to one of being super fertile of having fertility that they feel confident will be able to work for them, and of stepping fully into the identity of of mama, which can be really hard and scary if you're someone who struggled for a long time, can you talk about that identity piece?

Especially when these numbers are so scary and you're maybe your reproductive endocrinologist has said, like this is it for you? Your AMH is near zero, and that's never going to change.

I think that for many women or couples, this is the first one of the biggest challenges many of them are up against. You know, many, many of our women that we work with have had great success in their careers, or they were really strong students and they did all the right things and they're kind of ready to now finally have a baby.

Or when they decide or if they finally meet their person or however it works and then they like, it's like, and all of a sudden they're up against something that it's the first time that it's like not achievable and they don't understand.

And the thing that we hear over and over and over again, it's like they stop trusting themselves or they don't. They feel like they're part of this thing and they don't know why it's not working.

And they have to kind of fall back in love with themselves and identify again as, like you said, as a whole and enough and not broken and not fixable.

Identity Shifts on the Fertility Journey

So there is this big spiritual path on, kind of forgiving everything that they've done up until now and going into a life where their big heart is open and we're asking them to work with men, we're working with patients, we're asking them to kind of work on their spirituality, in a sense, opening up into like living the best life that they can.

We find that many women become extremely reductionistic there when they come to us. They're on very limited diets, or they're on very strict programs that they've kind of learned out in the world about fertility.

If I just make it like this and kind of control it, and Dr. Kara and I are trying to, like, break those things open, like, how can you have the very best life because mothers and women who are laughing, I mean, it's the tell tale.

A woman goes on vacation and gets pregnant, right? And you hear it. And it's so frustrating to a woman on a

fertility journey. But there's serious magic and power in that, that it's like when you're having fun and laughing and relaxed and you let it go and you're in your you're in your, like, ultimate just highest resonance as a human, as a woman, as a mother, that that's when often the magic happens.

So it's trying to bridge that really tricky stuff of not getting exactly your dreams, your desires in the time that you wanted them. And aligning to, you know, what's really happening and what's possible in your life.

Right? And that is a big challenge in journey. And it's beautiful when women walk through it. And Karen, I always say, what you do in your fertility journey will allow you to absolutely crush motherhood in a way that you've already done some of the hard stuff you've let go of some of the things you can't control, all the things that young mothers have to learn, like you've already done so much of it, so you're going to be so much more of a competent, confident, loving, easy in your vibe, in your spirit.

And I just want to add to that because we have this is a very common theme, right? Women come to us in this broken state saying these heartbreaking things like, I don't trust my body.

My body has failed me. What did I do wrong? Why did no one test this earlier? It's this state of frustration and unknowing. And then you start doing Doctor Google and you start trying to.

Maybe I should do this. Maybe I should do that. And it's like you're trying to problem solve, like you've problem solve your whole life. I mean, these are these are women.

You all of you listening are so well educated in hormones and fertility by this point that you've found us and this summit that it's so impressive. Right.

But you can't necessarily fix it by getting all the knowledge and conquering it. And the kids that conquer bull. Right. So it has to come from inside.

And we're trying to get people to tap into their inner light in a way of like, okay, my body can heal. It wants to heal. What does it need? I'm going to heal it.

And it's that empowerment that is really where the fertility happens, where it wasn't happening before. So one of the mantras that we work with a lot is, you know, I am enough just just that one thing, you know, if you're listening and you can honestly say, like, I am enough and really that like, integrates with all your cells that will help get a baby.

It's so beautiful. Ladies, thank you so much for what you're doing. One of the things that I think of as I'm listening to you is something that we hear constantly, FPI, and I'm sure that you ladies do to cultivate fertility, which is that the mamas, especially sometimes the couples as a whole, but the mamas especially feel like I've done everything.

I've tried everything because like you said, they're they're they've been very successful in their lives. They're very educated, they're very proactive.

And they've done a lot of readings sometimes, like there's there are a lot of downsides, right? The rabbit hole of Google, you don't know the quality of the sources.

You could try a million things and throw spaghetti at the wall, but they come feeling like they've tried everything and nothing has worked for them. And so that becomes equated with the hope is gone.

There's no hope left for me. So when you hear that, how how do you respond to the feeling that they've done everything and because they've tried everything already and nothing has worked, there's no hope left.

I mean, I love just our job, right? Like, we we work with really hard cases. We work with really hard patients. We always have. That's what you. And so for us it's like, okay, we get to hear you get to say all those things and you get to have that experience.

And then we get to shift it, and then we get to just slowly start to figure out what are what are the things we can control and what are the things we can do.

And there's a long list. We're always looking for the thing that hasn't been found yet. The unexplained infertility to us is not a diagnosis. It's a it's a reason to keep looking.

And in our experience working with patients for for all these years, you know, we're looking for infections, inflammation, genetic issues like the list goes on and on.

Hydration and Cellular Nourishment

So we we get to support the woman. It's a yes. And yeah. You feel like that because up until now you've had this experience and we get to look into this, this, this and this, and we feel like there's an unlock and we get to unlock, your fertility, your equality and doctor care.

And I see over and over and over labs change. I mean, yesterday my patient went from an FSH of 58 and her FSH was in 9.8. I mean all the time. So like we're just we're we love sounding you people can we can hear their story and we love looking for what's the thing that hasn't been found.

Yeah. Where's the where's the unlock. How can we unlock this case and get people back on track and get like Kara said their body wants to heal. Their body wants to have a baby.

So what are the obstacles to cure? What are the obstacles to getting there? How can we unlock or remove the obstacles and let this woman find her way to healing and or man, it's it's both, right.

It's. But for both. Yes, absolutely. Can you tell us a little bit about how hydration affects egg quality? You should care. For the basics. Do you think I'm, Yeah, I know that this ice has probably done so much education around this, but let me just do the basics for someone who just, you know, the this conference.

Yeah. So your eggs are in your ovaries, their follicles before their eggs. You actually have them all when you are in your mama's belly. So they're already there.

And there's a lot of them. There's a lot more than you need. This is how nature works, right? You. Your nature works, but you want to reproduce. That's our ultimate goal from a biology perspective.

And so men have so, you know, millions and millions and millions of sperm, you have a lot of eggs. And so you're born with them. And the idea when I was trying to get pregnant and when we were in medical school was that you couldn't fix egg quality, that it's just damage.

These eggs, you have so many, but they just get damaged over time and at some point that they expire. And the first thing we found out this brings me to the hydration piece was that, wow, all of these follicles, these primordial eggs, it's like little tiny little eggs that are going to come every month when you obviously a lot of them are starting and then one gets chosen for ovulation, but you can actually change the quality of the fluid around that genetic material pretty easily, which is just shattering to all of us in medicine when that data came out.

Right. I'm sure you can talk more about this. but that's so exciting. So if we give those nutrients, antioxidants, things for eggs to repair, they will repair.

And you know what? This is one way where we're a little bit even better than the sperm. Because sperm, once they're made, they don't really have a lot of good repair mechanisms.

They're just made to like, swim and get there. Right. That's all they do. But our eggs can be repaired. So that's a really amazing thing given the right environment for the women.

So what are they sitting in? They're sitting in fluids. So if you're dehydrated beyond the stress signal, Hillary will

probably come back to that later.

You really are shrinking them up like raisins. So it's just incredibly important to get hydration there. It's it's like the first thing I think sometimes that is the only thing some people needed. It.

And when we say hydration, it's not just drinking enough water. Hydration includes moisture, fat, oil like all the nutrients. So it's that the fluid around it is.

You're bathing it in nutrient dense, delicious deliciousness. It's like taking a bone. Broth. A little. Bit of coconut oil or bone broth, like how there's it's this nurturing you drink it and you feel healed, when you're drinking some kind of more potent medicines or that's what we're trying to do.

So it starts, obviously, with a woman, not just, you know, we it's hard for us in our daily lives to get enough of the things we need.

Avoiding Extremism in Fertility Care

And so it's about really enriching your choices and and the fun part about it is, is that one of the women that we work with, they feel the very best of their lives, usually when they get pregnant, right?

They and their household has changed. Usually their partner has changed a lot of habits. And so you're coming into this in women all we hear it all the time like, oh my God, I feel amazing.

I've got energy from floor to ceiling, I've got this and that. And a lot of that just comes with creating that cellular hydration, moisturizing, nutrient dense, material.

You're just changing your biochemistry. It's pretty great. I love that so much. It's beautiful. Tell me, ladies, what do you see as being the best and worst fertility trends of 2024?

Oh, well. I I'll start with the worst and then we can end on the optimist optimism. I like it. The worst in me is the extremism. So what we do is we know that there are, we live in a very inflammatory world that's pretty toxic. And, and in our food sense, there's, there's issues with the food supply.

We have food sensitivities. There's a lot of things that come into play that in our mind create heat and toxicity in a woman. So what we're trying to do is nourish and calm and soothe and detox the woman before she.

And that is what we feel like really heals the air quality. However, it can be done in such an extreme way. So it's the extremism that we get really frustrated by these extraordinary restrictive diets.

And we find that many of the women we're working with and fertility, many of them have eating disorders or struggled with weight issues, or because we've been just trained as women to try to be as hot in pretty or skinny or whatever the hell the the patriarchy has been teaching has up until now, you know, that that we're really trying to heal that.

And in our mind, we we come in. It's the extremism that being on 15 supplements because we read research that each one's good for us, that we're only eating these five foods because they're inflammatory.

And so in 2024, I find that doctor care and I are trying to back off the extremism and stepping more into the nurturing holism. I love that nurturing holism.

That's such a beautiful term. And I feel like when you're talking, a big part of that is our own innate knowing of what's right for us. Instead of ignoring our body's impulses and yearnings and desires and following somebody else's rules, that what we're asking in 2024 and beyond is to reconnect with what we already, what we already know to be right and true for ourselves.

And I'll say, you are the mama bear like long before you have your super babies. You are the mama bear because you've been carrying them inside of you since you were a 20 week old fetus in your mother's womb, as we've already heard today.

And so the mama bear knows best, and the mama bear gets to trust herself. but this whole process takes away a lot of that power. So we have these conversations a lot with women because they don't trust their gut instinct on it.

And so it's always, well, what do you think is going on? What do you feel about that procedure that was offered or that that, you know, what is it, what what speaks to you?

So it's always really important to tap into that. But it's it has to be trained. Again, it really is hard because you lose that when you go to doctor after doctor, you feel like they're not listening to you.

It's, it's, it's that's that's where medicine has failed these couples horribly. And so we all get referred to it. You know, we go to the OB, then we go to the reproductive endocrinologist.

If this just isn't happening for us, and then everyone says they're so disappointed with their reproductive endocrinologist because they don't talk about diet or supplements. Really. Maybe they could be 2 or 3 things, you know, and really, that's not their job.

You know, like they do great procedures and I'm thankful they do because I have a son. I'm very thankful for them. And that whole field of medicine. absolutely.

And and the thing is, now we know in 2024. So here's the positive thing is that people know there is more to do outside of just your fertility clinic.

And so it is about the nutrition and finding the infection no one found or the mold exposure or whatever we're always looking for. Women are doing all of that and it is women led.

It's very rare that the man is leading this charge right. and so it's really important to pull in the men, too. And that is happening now. And that was not happening years ago.

Couples didn't show up very often years ago. I can remember them like I remember the couples that came together. And now couples are together. They're on our zoom calls.

We we work with individuals internationally. You know, it's like the couple shows up and that is so beautiful to see. So I love that it's it's that whole like this is our project together.

We're going to do this together. It's a really cool attitude actually. I love that so much. And I do see that evolving as well. And that feels really good.

Like we're moving in the right direction when if there was, if you could only tell somebody one thing to do to start today improving their fertility and the health of their future super babies, what would that one thing be?

I know it's always more than one thing, but if there were just one thing like the impossible question, but I know it really is. I'll throw it out there.

So I think one of the things that I wish we could get billboards for in the United States at least, is the early drinking in women, alcohol and the endocrine disruptors.

So I'm putting all the toxins kind of together. Like, I wish all of the children were taught this, like the lipsticks they put on the sprays. They're doing their deodorants like all of these things, the nails the girls are using, all of the things that could potentially be damaging their eggs.

One Action to Start Improving Fertility

But you know, when you're a 15 year old, you're not really like, well, I'm going to preserve my fertility. Do you know the thing? So, that is a big deal.

so learning about those things, you should not have the plastics and all of that. I think you really protect your equality if you just avoid a lot of the things.

We were at a conference once, and the doctor get up and he's like, women should never drink alcohol, ever. And Hillary and I was like, what have we? We had college.

That was an experience, you know, and and it's true because we know alcohol so toxic. So it's sort of like, of course you can have a glass of wine every once in a while for sure.

Okay, fine. But like the amount of drinking that people in the United States find as a cultural norm is not good for equality, and we just could avoid that easily.

That's absolutely right. I love that Hillary didn't. Like it when I when I go on, I'm. Happy about. In our night time. If there was one thing and this is why we are a team, because we have two different we're two different doctors.

We have two different years and years and years of experience, and we have two different perspectives and two different personalities. So people who work with us always know their thing.

If they know us that they're going to come out, I'm going to come out with the the one thing is that they have more fun sex. We have women trying to get pregnant who aren't having great, connected, fun sex and sexuality and deepening into your knowing and opening up as a woman and having fun and connecting and being joyful and finding your spirit and laughing and being passionate and finding your intensity and your intensity as a couple.

And, you know that to me, I'm always the cheerleader for really good, life big growing your or, making your spirit bigger. So yes, on all the things Kara said and the one thing to me is like, if we could just belly laugh and have great orgasms, like, that would be so fun.

And that would really. Help, I love that. So that's a foundational mantra. And the Prime Leicester Protocol as many moments of every day as humanly possible.

Step out of your stress, emergency traumas, past and present and into your peace, pleasure and self love and one of the most direct pathways to pleasure is our physical pleasure.

And really, we need to treat pleasure as if our fertility and our life depend on it, because they do so. I love that so so much. Belly laugh orgasms. growing, growing your growing the size of your life and your being.

I think that's really powerful and beautiful, especially in a world where I feel like as as women and in the feminine, we're taught to be as small as possible, you know, to shrink down.

I mean, I my, my family from the beginning of time is from Egypt and in Egypt. I am so enormous for a woman. There are no shoes that fit my enormous feet.

And I stand too tall. And it's really a bother to people. But even in America, which is my home country, my hair is too big, my presence is too big. You know, my my curves are too curvy.

I'm too tall. So I think we all experience that as as women in our, in our own ways. So I really, really appreciate both of those, those perspectives on the one thing.

And one of them is maybe a little bit more tangible and concrete, but they're they're equally foundational. So I love that so much. Last question before we wrap up, ladies.

And I love this conversation so much and feel like I wish I could talk to you for two more hours and ask you about

so many more things that you've said.

You and and and to be continued, let's do more. I'm so excited. So what does super fertility mean to you when you hear the term what feeling does it evoke for you?

I'm going to go back to that really basic science stuff for me because we always say, you know, it's like one egg, one sperm. So let's get the best, healthiest one possible.

And we do. We have the research on this. Like your child will be less likely to have depression, anxiety, ADHD, all kinds of neurological issues. If the parents prepare for.

So that's kind of one of the ways we grab the men involved too, because they get it. They're like, wow, okay, I my thing, I'm giving like one sperm cell and I can get it to be healthier.

You're saying buy the diet, the lifestyle, the supplements? Oh, I'm going to do that, you know, makes sense. So to me, a super baby is like your parents intentionally thought of it.

And they prep their bodies and their minds and their spirits, and they really got organized to make that baby. And I think you get the healthiest, happiest ones out of that.

I love that they got organized to make that baby so beautiful.

What Super Fertility Means

Sorry. Please go ahead, Dr. Hillary. You know, it's. And to me, it's like we do live in 2024 and we get to use a combination of things that we know. We know a lot about your genetics.

We know a lot about your nutrient deficiencies. We have very advanced testing looking for infections. And like if you're not finding your why, find it out.

Don't go on to be your own doctor. Like go get support. If there are holes in your bucket, fill the holes in your bucket and the holes in your bucket are different than the holes that were in my bucket on my fertility journey.

So it's extraordinarily personalized. and there should be a lot of your precision in your fertility journey in 2024 if you're doing what lots of people are doing it and you're not seeing results, change it.

Because this is about precision and personalization to help you get the results in your super baby and and all the spiritual growth that we had. Right. So it's a lot to hold.

But if you're not having results, change what you're doing. Like that's what Dr. Kara and I get. We sometimes get frustrated when people come in. They're like, oh my gosh.

For the last four years I've been in a Facebook group doing this, or I've heard about this or I've been on this really strict diet, but it's like, yeah, Dr. Kara and I both had I had PCOS, she had endometriosis.

We both had luteal phase defects. Our paths to healing were completely different. And so we, you know, you this thing is about precision and personalization in 2024.

And we have incredible tools to help get you healed up. And I would add to that, you know, time is not to be wasted here. And that's the thing that bothers us the most, is that we have wasted all these years doing this bad, or the other thing where this thing we find so easily to do, you know what I mean?

And that's the thing that needed to be dealt with. And it's such a shame to see that couple or woman doing it alone or whoever, just waste this time. It's it's do it now and do it well, you know, don't just sort of like haphazard grab different things, do it with certainty.

I love that. Do it now and do it well. Do it with certainty. So good. I told my daughter that when she did the the high jump in Sports Day yesterday, I was like, do it with commitment and certainty.

Like don't hesitate, right? I agree. And she cleared that thing by a mile. So I agree that's such an important, important message. Do it now, do it well and do it with certainty.

And don't try to mastermind it yourself, because that usually that almost never works. Even if we're the experts, if it comes to us, we need someone else to help us.

Right? That's why surgeons don't operate on themselves or on their family members. so, so, so beautiful. Ladies, what an honor to have you, this incredible dynamic duo, doing so much good in the world here with us for the Super Fertility Summit.

Thank you. Thank you so much for holding this space for these people. Yeah, yeah. We really, really appreciate getting to be here. Thank you so much. Good luck to everybody.

Thank you. It's an honor to have you. And to you mama Dada, person of any gender listening. Thank you so much for being here with us. And join me in the next interview.