Sunlight, Circadian Rhythm, and Eye Safety

Our bodies need exposure to sun. We need it to set our circadian rhythm. We need it for vitamin D production. There are many health benefits, not to mention mood benefits.

I mean, there's just so many great benefits of sunlight exposure. What I would say is if you're gonna go out there to set your circadian rhythm, do it in the early morning between eight to 10 a.m.

before the sun gets too high in the sky, and go out, take a walk. But one thing, please don't look directly at the sun, because that is where the risk can happen.

If you're looking directly at the sun, it can cause a burn on your retina. So instead, if you want to do this, you know, this kind of trend called sun gazing, I tell my patients, if you're going to sun gaze and you want to look towards the sun for a few minutes, do it with your eyelids closed.

because with your eyelids closed, those beams will still get in. They'll still activate the retinal ganglion cells that will tell your brain what time of day it is to help you produce hormones properly on time.

So do it with your eyes closed. That way at least you'll be protecting your eyes and you'll still get those benefits. Welcome to Take Back My Brain with Lori Hammer, where real healing starts in the brain.

I'm Lori, a functional nutritionist and mom who's walked the path from anxiety and burnout to clarity and calm. Each week, we're going to dive into brain-based tools like amino acid therapy, gut health, fasting and faith to help you reclaim your energy, emotions and sense of self.

Welcome to Take Back My Brain

Hello, everyone. Welcome back to Take Back My Brain. I am so excited to have you for this episode. So this is something that we've never had on here before.

So if you are interested in your eye health, and how that's related to brain health and your overall body health, you are in for a treat. I have Dr. Rani Banik today and she is a board certified ophthalmologist and fellowship trained neuro ophthalmologists.

And so she focuses on integrative and functional medicine and the root cause of eye disease. So I am very, very excited to have Dr. Rani with us today.

She practices in New York City and she also is an associate professor at Mount Sinai. in New York City as well. So Dr. Rani, thank you for being with us today.

Thank you so much, Laurie, for having me. I am so excited to have this conversation because I never have met an integrative eye doctor before. So can you tell us what does that look like?

Yeah, so first of all, there aren't that many of us.

Dr. Rani Baniku2019s Integrative Eye Care Approach

I probably know only about two or three others. Wow. But basically, what we do is we're trained in traditional eye care, so medical and surgical treatment of eye diseases.

But we have additional training in areas like functional medicine, integrative medicine, or traditional Chinese

medicine, acupuncture. So depending on the person's interest.

They may have had various different types of training. And I love to use the word integrative for all of these different modalities, because it's not that when we treat patients for choosing only one or the other, we're really blending the best of both worlds.

Traditional eye care with a more holistic approach that's based in nutrition and lifestyle and mindset. And it really is what's, I think, the most important for our vision health is this combined approach.

Wow. What led you into this integrative approach? Like many other providers who discovered functional medicine or integrative medicine, it came about because of my own health issue.

I had migraines back since I was in my mid-20s, but once every year or every six months, not too often, not debilitating. But there was a time in my life when things were very, very stressful.

It was in my early 40s. We had just moved. We were doing a complete gut renovation. Work was very stressful. I was also running some clinical trials. I had a young child.

It was just a lot going on at once. I wasn't sleeping well. I wasn't eating well. And my episodic migraine turned into chronic migraine. And I can remember it almost like somebody flipped a switch.

Like one day I woke up and I had a horrible migraine and I had that migraine every single day for four years. Four years living with that pain. If you've ever had a migraine, you know it's not enjoyable.

You just want to crawl under the pillows and never come out. So I went to a lot of the top headache specialists here in New York City, and they would just prescribe me medication after medication after medication, and nothing was working.

And after so many years, I finally said, you know what, there must be a better solution. There must be a solution, first of all, but a better solution than taking these drugs that don't work.

And that gave me side effects. So I started researching and lo and behold, I came across studies that showed that certain supplements can be effective like magnesium and riboflavin and dietary changes can be effective and lifestyle modification.

And I was just shocked because not one of my doctors had ever asked me. What are you eating? How much caffeine do you have? How much do you sleep? So once that light bulb went off in my mind, I said, oh my goodness, this is going to be such an important area to tackle.

So I made some really key changes in my diet, in my supplement regimen, in my lifestyle, and slowly things started to get better. And I was just so grateful.

And I started to use those approaches for some of my patients, and I saw that they were getting better too. And then I decided to get certified. So to make a long story short, my own migraine journey is how I discovered this integrative path.

And now this is what I do. I love it. That's such a great testimony.

Migraines and the Path to Functional Medicine

So when somebody comes to see you, say they're having blurred vision or whatever it might be, what does it look like to come to see an integrative eye doctor?

Yeah, so first of all, it's not like your regular eye exam. It's not just about glasses or contact lenses. It is a complete eye exam. And the most important part, of course, is the history.

And I usually allot at least two hours for every new patient because I spent a lot of time with the patient with the functional medicine approach to figure out what was going on before.

What are the antecedents? What are the triggers? What are the mediators of a disease process? And then I do the exam, which also takes some time because I do a very in-depth exam, perhaps the most comprehensive exam that anyone will ever get because I do a lot of testing.

You know, we have, as eye doctors, we have a lot of fun tools in the office, a lot of technology that we use. So I use a lot of that to figure out, okay, what's the root cause of the problem?

And then I really explain to the patient, okay, this is what I think is going on. These are areas we can potentially address and let's decide together what would be a good treatment plan.

And usually that doesn't just involve like prescription medications or surgeries. Yes, I do do those things when necessary. But it really is based on diet and lifestyle, so much of it.

For example, macular degeneration. I have some patients where they're losing vision from macular degeneration and they're just terrified that they're going to go blind.

And there are things out there that people can do that most eye doctors don't talk to their patients about. And by educating my patients, okay, these are the different strategies you can use, and this is within your control.

They feel like they're out of control, like they're hopeless, but they're not. And so by just educating them about, okay, if you make these types of dietary changes, these types of lifestyle changes, adding these supplements to support your nutrition can make such a huge difference in slowing the disease process.

I see so many more eye conditions now. There are people coming into me as part of their whole picture than I ever have, especially in the last five years, a lot of autoimmune in the eyes.

Do you think that's a lot from the dietary thing or do you think there's something else going on? I think diet certainly plays a role, but stress is perhaps the elephant in the room here.

Whenever someone comes in with a flare-up, whether it be eye inflammation, which is called uveitis, in most cases it is autoimmune, whether it be corneal issues that are like dry eye that can potentially also be autoimmune, I ask them, what's going on in your life?

And almost certainly they will say, doc, I'm so stressed. I've been incredibly stressed over the past few months.

What an Integrative Eye Exam Looks Like

And that is the thread that runs through many patients' stories when they flare up, when things are really inflamed and intolerable and they can't function.

That's one thing. The other thing I think is contributing, and I hate to say this because we're all in some way guilty of this, is our screen time. We're so addicted to our screens, and it can really play a toll on our eyes.

Now, luckily, there's no long-term risk to vision. You're not going to go blind from being on a screen all day. That's not going to happen. But people can have a lot of short-term side effects.

They can have eye strain, they can have dry eye, they can have light sensitivity, they can get headaches, they can get migraines. So those types of issues definitely are aggravated by prolonged continuous screen time.

And again, this is something that is so within our control, we can manage and avoid some of those side effects. Yes. So how would you help somebody to manage their screen time?

some simple, simple things. Number one, and I'll just give you this kind of as background before I explain what the solution is. Normally, when we're just looking around, not looking at a screen, we blink about 15 to 20 times a minute.

That's our normal blink rate. And when we blink, we're lubricating our eyes. We're giving our eyes a little break. But when we're on screens, we don't blink as often.

We blink only about three to five times per minute. So that's 75% less than what we would normally be blinking or how frequently we would be blinking.

Blinking when we're on screens. And this is, again, it's involuntary. We don't really think about it. It's just our bodies focusing so much on what we're looking at on the screen.

We forget to blink. When we don't blink, our tears dry up and evaporate. And that causes the surface of the eye to become dry. It makes our vision blurry.

It can cause pain and discomfort or burning. It can cause light sensitivity. And so simply by blinking more, consciously blinking more, you can avoid a lot of those things.

And sometimes I tell my patients to do these blinking exercises, which are very, very simple, is you basically just close your eyes very gently for two seconds, squeeze for two seconds, and then reopen.

And when you squeeze like that, there's actually a pump in our eyes. It's called the lacrimal system pump. And when you squeeze, you're activating all the muscles that get the tears flowing.

And then you're getting the tears to spread and then drain out in the proper way. So it really helps tear production and just tear maintenance when you do that, when you do these simple blinking exercises.

That can make a huge world of difference if we just remember to do it. I think that's the thing is we have to make it kind of a routine. And so related to that, another tip that most ophthalmologists will tell their patients for screen issues is the 2020-20 rule.

And many people have heard of 2020. We think of 2020 as perfect eyesight, but this is a little bit different. It basically means if you're looking on a screen, you're doing work for prolonged periods.

Every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break, And don't look at your screen, look at something about 20 feet away. Or you can just close your eyes for 20 seconds.

So 2020, 20 minutes, take a 20 second break and look at something else for 20 seconds or close your eyes. And that basically resets your eyes. It allows you to relax the muscles that are focusing constantly that cause eye strain, so you're not focusing up close.

Stress, Screen Time, and Dry Eye

And also, if you prefer just closing my eyes, but then you're lubricating as well, you're getting the tears flowing. So two simple, simple things people can do to improve their screen endurance.

And this can be used by anyone, not just adults, but even kids. Kids can benefit from this also. Yeah, because there's so much screen time right now. Do you find any benefit in blue blocker glasses or specific things you can put over your screens?

Do those things really help your eyes? I'm so glad you asked that, Laurie, because this is really something I love to. This is a myth I love to bust. So there is no evidence that blue blocking glasses actually work.

None. None for eye issues. Now, some people love them for sleep. They really feel like it helps with their sleep,

which is a different indication. And yes, maybe there's definitely benefit there.

But when it comes to your eyes and in terms of relaxing your eyes, in terms of lubricating your eyes, What does work are nutrients, and you may find this interesting being a functional nutrition therapist, but there are two nutrients that are really important for eye health that a lot of people may not have even heard of.

You probably think like beta carotene, vitamin A, carrots, things like that, but the two more important nutrients are lutein and zeaxanthin. Gotcha. And these are what I like to call vitamins L and Z, even though they're not really vitamins, but I lovingly call them that.

These are antioxidants that our bodies don't mix. We need to get them from diet. They get deposited into the back of our eyes, into the retina, and they act as shields against various light rays.

So they block against UV light. They block against blue light that's coming from our screens. So the reason I talked about this, I'll just circle back, is blue blocking glasses have not been proven to work, but the nutrients have.

So when people have enough of these two nutrients in their diet, again, lutein and zeaxanthin, they can alleviate eye strain. They can help with their visual performance.

They have better contrast sensitivity. So all of those visual performance parameters improve with diet or supplementation. You can take a supplement too if you feel like you're not getting enough.

Unfortunately, with today's modern world, we're just not getting enough lutein and zeaxanthin. It's estimated we need about 10 to 20 milligrams a day for adults.

And most people get less than two milligrams a day. What kind of food are we going to find that in? So that's a great question. Number one, two, and three are leafy greens.

So you have to choose one. It would be kale, spinach, arugula. Any of those leafy greens will have a high concentration, but you need to have a lot of it.

You need to have three to five cups a day to get your 10 to 20 milligrams in. Other foods, corn, especially yellow corn, actually the scientific name for zeaxanthin comes from corn, the scientific name from corn, which is zea maize.

So corn, egg yolk is another great option. Think of like bright yellow or bright colorful green. If you think about these colors, probably that food will have some of these nutrients, even spices like paprika, which comes from peppers, has a lot of lutein and zeaxanthin.

yellow and orange pepper. So if you're going grocery shopping, you know, if you're buying bell peppers, most people gravitate towards the green ones. But I always tell my patients, think of buying the yellow and orange ones.

I know they're usually a little bit more expensive, but they are chock full of lutein and zeaxanthin. And you can get really a great source from those peppers.

And Again, if you think you're not getting enough and you're suffering from eye strain or maybe there are some eye diseases that run in the family and you want to avoid those eye diseases like macular degeneration, take a supplement.

Take a supplement and fill in the gaps. Right, right. And you have a beautiful supplement line, don't you? I do. Thank you, Laurie. They're actually right behind me.

But this one here is my signature eye supplement. I don't know if you can read it. It's called Fortify. And it's got the macular carotenoids, which again are lutein and zeaxanthin.

It's got some other things too like astaxanthin. It's another one. It's within the family of carotenoids and it's a very potent antioxidant. It's been shown to be helpful for eye health.

So it's got that combination. It's got some berry extracts that have been shown to be helpful for dry eye and glaucoma. So it's a nice like all-in-one eye supplement.

Awesome. Well, I'll have that in the show notes for everyone. So you can check out all of the supplementation that Dr. Rani has. I'm so curious, just because this is run in our family, is lazy eyes.

Does that have anything to do with nutrition and lifestyle or is that purely genetic? That's a great question also. So, lazy eye, first of all, it's a term that means different things to different people.

To most people, I would say, the lay person, lazy eye is when an eye is not straight, when it's drifting out or it's drifting in.

Blue Light Myths and Eye Nutrients

When it's drifting out, we call that exo, exotropia. When it's drifting in, we call that iso. But to eye doctors, lazy eye means something a little bit different.

it means when an eye is not seeing well, it's not seeing 2020, especially in a child. And it could be because the eye is drifting, or it could be because there's some obstruction of vision coming in, or it could be because the child or person needs glasses.

So there are different causes of lazy eye. In terms of your question about nutrition, I would love to say that there's a nutritional basis for this, but I have not heard of one yet.

It tends to be mainly genetic, sometimes even there can be a mechanical reason. So how the eye muscles are attached to the back of the eye. So sometimes if the muscles are a little bit off, it can cause a torque and cause drifting eyes or crossed eyes.

So there's there may be, again, like a genetic predisposition, there could be a mechanical reason with the eye muscle position. Sometimes people have had head trauma.

Okay. And that can cause a lazy eye. And in which case, perhaps nutritional therapies may be helpful to help improve focus and concentration. Because when people are better in terms of their brain capacity, their lazy eye is better controlled.

So it's possible that in cases of acquired lazy eye, that it may be helpful to consider nutrition in our supplements. I love that. Okay. It was interesting because my mom and all her siblings, every single one of them had a lazy eye.

And then my son had a lazy eye, but then they had him wear a patch and do some other eye exercises and he doesn't have that anymore. But it was just so interesting to me.

Yeah. And the good news is, especially when kids have lazy eye, they can outgrow it. Mm-hmm. They absolutely can. And yes, patching helps. Glasses sometimes can correct it in about a third of cases.

And then doing eye exercises can be helpful also. Yeah. So we did all three of those with him and he hasn't had any issues and he's 26 now. So that was good.

It didn't really help. What about sunglasses? Are sunglasses good? Is there any evidence that you should really wear them? I know I teach, I want you to get out in the sun and get a direct sun in your eyes for your circadian rhythms and all those kinds of things.

But what is your feeling on sunglasses overall? So this has been a controversial topic for sure on social media. I've

seen all kinds of things like, don't wear your sunglasses, they're hormone disruptors, they interfere with your melatonin and your circadian rhythm.

The truth is, our eyes are very delicate organs and they're very susceptible to oxidative stress. meaning damage from various things in the environment, especially UV rays.

And sunglasses are designed to block those UV rays. So I've definitely seen people who spend a lot of time outdoors in the sun. They don't wear their sunglasses.

They don't wear hats or anything, like no protection whatsoever. And they end up with growths on the surface of the eye, benign growths, or even malignant growths on the surface of the eye.

Yes, you can get eye cancer. I've seen people who develop burns on their cornea or on their retina. I've seen cataracts. So all of these issues have been directly linked back to excessive sun exposure.

Not to say that everybody will get them, but if you spend hours and hours and hours a day outside and you're not protected, then your risk is higher. I will never forget, I did my residency out in California by UC Irvine and we had, Disneyland was like down the street from us.

And we would see some of the Disney princesses come in with these growths on the surface of the eye, because they would be outdoors all day long in the bright California sunshine, not wearing sunglasses, and they would develop these growths.

So even young people can get them. But sunglasses can help protect your eyes from that. Now, to answer your question, what about the eyes needing sunlight?

It is absolutely true. Our bodies need exposure to sun. We need it to set our circadian rhythm. We need it for vitamin D production. There are many health benefits, not to mention mood benefits.

There's just so many great benefits of sunlight exposure. What I would say is, if you're going to go out there to set your circadian rhythm, do it in the early morning between 8 to 10 a.m.

before the sun gets too high in the sky, and go out, take a walk. But one thing, please don't look directly at the sun.

Lazy Eye Causes and Treatment

Because that is where the risk can happen. If you're looking directly at the sun, it can cause a burn on your retina. So instead, if you want to do this kind of trend called sun gazing, I tell my patients, if you're going to sun gaze and you want to look towards the sun for a few minutes, do it with your eyelids closed.

Because with your eyelids closed, those beams will still get in. They'll still activate the retinal ganglion cells that will tell your brain what time of day it is to help you produce hormones properly on time.

So do it with your eyes closed. That way at least you'll be protecting your eyes and you'll still get those benefits. Yeah. Questioned for you on how the sun affects your eyes.

So if somebody is nutrient deficient, say fatty acid deficient or something else going on, they tend to burn easier. So if we were to fix the nutrient deficiencies, do you believe that the sun would still affect the eyes in the same way or do you think they would be more resilient?

They may be more resilient, but still there are there is such a long list of things that can happen from too much sun exposure. So again, if you're going out for just a few minutes, it's probably fine.

It's not a problem. But if you're spending hours outside, there was actually a a study done called the Chesapeake Bay Fisherman's Study. These were fishermen out in Chesapeake Bay off of Maryland.

They spent their entire lives outdoors in the sun, and they didn't wear sunglasses. Because they're fishermen, I'm presuming they had a lot of fish. They had a lot of healthy omega fats in their diet, and a huge majority of them developed cataracts.

So even though they probably had adequate fatty acid intake from fish, it wasn't enough to protect them. So just be cautious. I mean, definitely not to say you shouldn't have your fatty acids in your diet.

You absolutely should. There's proof that it helps with dry eye, especially omega-3s. And there's an omega-6 that's helpful for dry eyes, also called gamma-linolenic acid, or GLA.

So not all omega-6s are bad for you, by the way. Right.

Sunglasses, Sun Exposure, and Eye Protection

So yes, get those nutrients, those core nutrients in your diet, but still like when the sun is really bright outside, especially like if you're out on the water, if you're skiing, if there's a lot of glare, wear some sun protection.

Well, that's good because I like to wear cute sunglasses. So it's good to know that it's still okay to do that. Yeah. And if you don't like sunglasses, wear a big hat.

I have some patients, they just don't like the feel of sunglasses on their face. Just wear like a baseball cap or a wide brimmed hat. You can do that too.

That's fantastic. Now, one of my favorite topics, as we talked in the podcast with you, is the brain. So how does your eye health affect the neurology of your brain and your overall mental health?

It's really a two-way street. And so a lot of people don't realize that the eye is a direct extension of the brain and it is part of the central nervous system.

So whatever, first of all, whatever's happening in the brain can affect our eyes. And what's happening in the eyes is a reflection of what's happening in the brain.

So based off of an eye exam, we can diagnose things like strokes. We can diagnose multiple sclerosis. And there's some early work to show that we can diagnose Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease based off of an eye.

Okay. Wow. Now that being said, the other side of this is that over 50% of our brain is dedicated in some way to our visual pathways. So they're so intimately connected, you know, how we process resolution and motion and contrast and color and movement and our eye-hand coordination and how we move our eyes, like that's all because of the brain.

So it's really a two-way street. And then you layer on top of that, our mental health. And I was saying earlier about how stress is the elephant in the room.

Certainly when people are struggling with mental health issues, their vision is not good. The quality of their vision goes down. They see blurry. They're not comfortable.

They may have more dry eye. They may have light sensitivity. They may see more floaters. So all of these types of visual symptoms can be exacerbated by anxiety, depression, it's they definitely like there's such an overlap between all of these things.

And the good news is you try to treat one aspect of this, whether it's your eye health or your brain health or your mental health, and the others will improve as well.

I love it. That's so good. So when somebody has glasses, so like I've never had glasses, my eyes are still I feel really good. But some people have glasses when they're six.

So what determines, you know, what I'm trying to say, like, what determines when you need glasses or why somebody would need glasses? And if you start with glasses, do you always have to wear your glasses?

Can your eyes improve? Because we hear all the time that your eyes won't ever improve and your prescription will just keep getting stronger and stronger and stronger.

So can you speak to that a little? To answer your question, I'm going to bring out my trusty eye model here. Oh, perfect. We'll do a little bit of show and tell.

So first of all, when somebody looks at the eye, we just see the very front part of the eye right here, right? We see the cornea, which is the clear dome-shaped structure.

We see the white part. And we see the colored part, which is the iris. But if we take a peek inside, the eye is very, very complex. You can see all of that.

There's about 40 different structures inside the eye that all work together to give us our vision. When it comes to glasses, there are a few things to consider.

light rays come in through the cornea. They pass through the lens, which helps us to focus. This is a clear structure right here behind the iris. And they get focused onto the retina back here.

This is actually where they should be focused, this white spot here, which represents the macula. And this is what helps us to see 2020. This is what is responsible.

This area is responsible for our 2020 vision. So Ideally, the optical system of the eye has to be such that when the light rays come in, they get bent, so they're focused perfectly to the back of the eye.

So when this optical system is not perfect, people may need glasses. They may be either nearsighted or farsighted. They may have astigmatism. They may have presbyopia.

So these are all technical terms for various different what we call refractive errors, meaning optical issues with the eye. So sometimes the cornea, you see it's dome shaped here, sometimes it's a little bit too steep or sometimes it's too flat.

And that's why the light rays aren't focusing properly. Or sometimes the lens, especially as we get older, it gets a little stiff and it doesn't want to change its shape and it affects our focusing ability.

How Eye Health Connects to Brain Health

So this may be the problem. Or sometimes the eye may actually be a little longer or shorter than normal. And so when the light rays come in, they're not falling exactly onto the macula back here.

So these are all the reasons why someone may need glasses. Interesting. To answer your question, does everyone eventually need glasses? Not necessarily, no.

It just depends on the anatomy of your eye and what you're looking at. Whether you're looking at distance or something like an intermediate distance like your computer, whether you're looking at something up close, all of that factors into whether one needs glasses or not.

Can you grow out of glasses? Yes, it is possible that some people as their eye develops, especially children, they may have needed glasses when they were younger, and they no longer need glasses.

Yes, that can absolutely happen, depending on as the eye is growing and changing. So again, to make the long story short, it's complicated. But the best thing to do is to get checked.

And a lot of people don't realize this, but it is recommended that we all get eye exams every year after well after the age of 40 every year and a lot of people think oh my vision's fine i have no trouble i'm 2020 i can see i can drive i can do everything i need to do but even though you may be seeing well you should still get an eye exam because there's so many things we can pick up early and address early before it becomes a problem.

So just like you go see your primary care doctor once a year, you get your lab work done, you go get your mammograms or colonoscopies, you go see the dentist twice a year, get your eye exam done once a year.

That's my PSA for today. I love it. So what can you pick up early? Why is that so important? So there are eye diseases we can pick up super early and prevent vision loss like macular degeneration, like glaucoma, like cataracts.

Then there are a host of systemic conditions ranging from high blood pressure that can affect the back of the eye that can cause bleeding in the back of the eye and vision loss when it's not well controlled.

Diabetes is a big one. There have been so many patients I've diagnosed with diabetes simply based off of an eye exam. They had no idea that they had diabetes, but they came in for something else.

I took a look, and lo and behold, in the retina in the back of the eye, there were changes that were classic for diabetes or what we call diabetic retinopathy.

Why Glasses Are Needed and When Vision Changes

Then there are those autoimmune conditions, some of which I was mentioning earlier, like multiple sclerosis, which is a big one. I diagnose multiple sclerosis probably at least two or three times a week.

Someone's eye exam, it's that common in my patient population here in New York that there are changes that happen in the eye with the optic nerve that could indicate multiple sclerosis.

Even things like rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, again, these are a lot of the autoimmune inflammatory conditions. We can pick up on an eye exam and we can pick up cancers.

I've also diagnosed cancers in other parts of the body where it was affecting the eye and patient had no idea that they had cancer. But we saw something on their eye exam in the back of the eye and the retina that led to a workup that ultimately got them the diagnosis and luckily they were able to be treated before it became a problem.

Again, I can't underscore enough how an eye, a lot of people say the eye is a window to your soul. In my experience, the eye is really a window to your overall health and we can diagnose like at least 200 medical conditions.

So get your eyes checked. It's a simple thing to do. Yes. Yeah. That is amazing. Well, Dr. Rani, thank you so much for all this amazing wisdom today. Is there anything else that you would like to leave my audience with?

I would just really underscore the importance of diet. We were talking a little bit earlier about those two nutrients. Make sure you're getting them because they are your protection for life and they can guard against so many potentially vision-threatening diseases.

So make sure you're getting those nutrients and eat other nutrients as well. The eyes need so much in terms of dietary support. So have a diverse diet and that will help to support your eyes, not just carrots.

Don't just eat those carrots. What is the big deal about carrots anyway? So carrots have beta-carotene, which is like a cousin to vitamin A. So beta-carotene gets converted into vitamin A, and we need vitamin A for our retinas to process light energy.

And so if we don't have enough vitamin A, then we can develop night blindness or even corneal issues. There's

actually an interesting story about this urban myth about carrots and vision, if I could just share it really quick.

It's a fun story. So it all came out of World War Two. And what was happening during World War Two is that the German Nazi planes were coming in and they were dropping bombs over England.

And they were doing this at nighttime. So, you know, the British then developed something to help stop these, you know, these fighter jets come in, they were able to shoot them down.

And the Germans couldn't figure out like, how are the British detecting our planes at nighttime, you know, the sky is black, how are they finding us and shooting us down.

And so the British started spreading this rumor, it wasn't really a rumor, but it was partially true that their pilots were all eating carrots. And because they were eating carrots, they had excellent night vision.

and they were able to see the German fighter planes and shoot them down. The truth is the British had developed radar technology. So that was really their secret, but they attributed it to carrots.

And then that stuck over the decades.

Early Eye Exams, Disease Detection, and Nutrition Tips

And yeah, most people associate carrots with good eyesight, but that's where it came from. Definitely. Oh, that's funny. I never heard that story before.

Yeah. A little piece of history there. A little piece of history. So where can people find you? So my website is probably the best way, drronnybanik.com.

You can find my supplements there. I have a few books. I have a book on nutrition called Beyond Carrots, Best Foods for Eye Health. So you can find that there.

I also have a podcast called the IQ Podcast. So if you enjoyed this, please subscribe to my podcast as well. And I'm on Instagram at dr.ronnybanik. I love it.

I love it. All right. Well, thank you everyone for listening as well. And I hope that you like, subscribe and share this with everyone because we all need to have a good eye health.

And I know I learned amazing things today and I know you have too. So Dr. Rani, thank you so much for being here. Thank you, Lori, for having me. It's been a pleasure.

Awesome, and I will see all of you in the next episode. God bless. Thanks for listening to Take Back My Brain. If today's episode helped you connect with hope or direction, I want you to follow the show, leave us a review and share it with someone who needs it.

And if you're ready to start your own healing journey, explore our courses and our coaching programs at lorihammer.com backslash store. So until next time, remember you cannot medicate away a nutrient deficiency and healing your brain isn't just possible, it's powerful.