Introduction to Gut Health and Lyme

Everyone. Dr. Tom Moorcroft, back here with you for this episode of The Healing from Lyme Disease Summit. And you're in for a real treat today. I'm bringing in front of us for a nice conversation, my good friend and colleague, Dr.

Vincent Pedraza. And one of the things you know about me is I really want to get you in front of people who are going to stimulate you to think about what you thought you already knew in a different way, in a way that's scientifically researched, in a way that's going to allow you to sort of move the needle forward and really give you some of the powerful tips that allow you to move the needle at home.

And Dr. Pedri, it's got all kinds of super accolades. It's been all over the place, supporting development of supplements, treating patients. He's the founder and CEO of Happy Gut Life.

And so we're going to be talking about the gut today. And what's really interesting is he has this gut smart quiz and he's been doing this research with this gut smart, smart quiz for many, many years now.

And then with all the data and all the patient information he got, he's turned this into the gut smart protocol book that has a 14 day personalized gut healing program.

So we're going to dove into that. All the research. We're going to learn a lot more about your gut. And today we are going to talk. We decided that we're going to call our inflammation station getting gut smart about Lyme disease.

So, Dr. Petri, thanks for joining us. Thank you for having me. I forgot about that name. That's that. Yeah, that's a good one. Right. I think. Is the research fun?

Because, I mean, you know, and one of the reasons I you know, a lot of times you do the intro like are friends and stuff, but like, you know, we've been friends for a long time.

We've hung out professionally and personally. And, you know, one of the things that I've always loved is that very much like myself and my wife, Jill, is like, we want people to get better.

We we live and breathe what we teach other people. But we always go back to the science when it's there. And that's really, to me, one of the most key things, because in Lyme disease and a lot of other things, everybody says inflammation, they say gut, and then they're on a diet or a supplement. And it may not be as well researched.

People are very well-meaning, and that's the part that I really love about you. And all the work you do is you're combining that compassion and empathy for people who are suffering and bringing but never forgetting about the science.

So, I mean, you've written two books on this already. So I mean, you obviously extremely well researched. But to start off, like what really got you interested in the gut part?

Man, I was one of those kids that was taken to the pediatrician every time I had a cold or cough or sinus infection and ended up going home with the antibiotics script.

And this was probably 2 to 3 times a year during my teenage years. And as we know now, now that we actually know that the gut microbiome exists, it destroyed my gut microbiome, led to leaky gut.

I developed food sensitivities to wheat, gluten, dairy and other foods like tomatoes. And I was literally poisoning myself because these were all the foods I was eating pizza, cereal with milk, ice cream, milkshakes, you know.

And I just kept getting sick over and over. And honestly, it was one of the reasons that I decided to become a doctor was like to kind of biohacking, like, how can I not get sick? And, you know, there's not much that we learn in medical school about it.

It's called IBS, and we didn't learn a lot about the correlations between the gut and inflammation. The gut in the skin, the gut in the airway. The gut in the brain.

I had mental fog, I had fatigue. I had sometimes outbreaks of eczema. I certainly, you know, had a lot of gut symptoms, gut disruption and diarrhea, like running to the bathroom, never knowing why my gut was behaving like it did, you know, going even through residency training.

And I almost got to the point where I thought actually the point where I almost was accepting that this was going to be my normal for the rest of my life, because I just thought, well, I'm not going to take an antidepressant, which is one of the treatments in Western medicine for IBS.

And, and I don't really need anti spasmodic and I'm not going to be taking anti tidier reals. So I'm like, I guess I just have to learn to live with this, you know, like this is just part of my makeup.

Personal Gut Health Journey

My, my older sister has an iron stomach. I have the sensitive stomach. And I just thought, hey, I just got the bad lot in that sense. And then I discovered functional medicine and realized, Whoa, what?

There was a microbiome, there was a gut microbiome. What? It there's an interface, the gut interface with the microbiome that controls your immune system and how sick you get and inflammation in the body.

And I started going back and rewriting the story of my life and realizing that what had happened to me was all of those courses of antibiotics and then just eating the wrong foods for so many years and I just became really passionate about gut health.

You know, I you could say I was patient zero. I treated myself, changed my diet, incorporated probiotics, started incorporating fermented foods, started seeing dramatic improvements not within months, within weeks.

And then I took gluten out. And within two weeks, my my brain was back in line online because I used to have like a pizza or a sandwich for lunch when I was working in the clinic.

And then I could barely keep my eyes open at three or 4 p.m.. I felt like I had been drugged. I just didn't realize it was a little leaky gut and it was the foods I was eating.

So I just became really curious about patients who came in with gut issues or patients who came in with, you know, because patients don't come in with just gut issues.

You know, they come in with gut issues and allergies, gut issues and migraines, gut issues and a chronic infection. Lyme they come, you know. So I started realizing, wait a second, everybody has gut issues.

You know, almost everybody walking through the door. And I just really dial down and started working with patients on their gut issues and then seeing like, Hey, doc, my allergies.

I'm they're gone this season. My guts better, my allergies are gone. My energy's back, my skin has cleared up, my eczema is gone. My hives have disappeared, my brain fog is gone.

And and then I just thought, oh, my God, how many people are out there that don't know this? Because people kept referring their friends, their their family members, their work colleagues.

And that was the inspiration for writing. My first book is is my own journey, but also realizing that there's so many

people out there suffering with the wrong information and have no idea that they have reversible conditions.

Well, you know, it's interesting because as you're saying this, I'm just saying, like brain fog, fatigue, hives, you know, reactivity to food, leaky gut.

These are all things that people talk about in Lyme and Bartonella. They talk about in mold, and then we label them cats or whatever. How but I mean, the other part that's really scary is so many people really don't know and it's like I'm sitting here listening, going, Yeah, yep.

With you, I'm with you 100% got it. Yep. And I'm like, wait a second. But but I know already. And this is the part that I think is so powerful about this platform of of a summit and in your case, using the book to get this information out there when when you're looking at these different conditions that people come in with.

I mean, and the general I mean, it's rampant in the general population. But I mean, is is it healing kind of our gut, something that I mean, is accessible to everyone?

Because it seems to me like when you say gluten free all of a sudden or pizza free, people start to like immediately go, well, you know what I mean? Can have gluten and pizza. So there you. Go.

You don't have to be you can be gluten free. You don't have to be completely pizza free. Well, that's critical, right? As long as we can have our people know.

Hey, you know, sometimes you need those things. Like one of the one of my quest after years of being gluten free, was to find a really good gluten free bread.

Because I love bread. There's just something about bread. And that's one of the things that most people miss is like, what? I can have bread, you know, it's like you're taking away a child's pacifier, you know?

And bread is super addictive, you know, it's sugar and it's gluten. And it turns into these gluteal morphemes that make your brain both feel good, but also feel kind of drugged.

And then you've got this food coma happening after you eat and you think maybe you ate too much. Maybe it was the carbs fall. Maybe it was also the gluten and the morphine like metabolites that get formed after you eat gluten.

It's kind of interesting, though, because it's like so I mean, so many people are talking about gluten free, but is that kind of like one of our key pieces?

Because one of the things for me is like there's always a fad diet. There's this one, there's that one. Everybody says gluten, dairy, soy, corn, fun to flavor free, you know, and that which is which is kind of the path we go down. But are there corp like are there two or three really core pieces that people should start to consider?

Actually, let me back up a second. How does one know I mean, other than being live on planet Earth, how does one really know that their gut is probably a core piece of what's going on in their symptoms?

That's such a great question. And the thing is that you don't always know if you're only looking for gut symptoms because not everyone that has a gut issue has gut symptoms.

And I'll give you an example, which is an example that I know a group has repeated over and over. A patient came to see me. She had hives, she had fatigue, she had migrating joint pain.

And she was lighting up across the board multiple autoimmune antibodies and a double stranded and a shell. Gran's like everything. So the doctors wanted to put her on biologics.

They wanted to put her on prednisone. And, you know, thankfully, she was from India. She had moved to the U. S. and all these symptoms started after she moved to the U. S.

And thankfully, she she had the the courage, but also the foresight to ask the right questions and to do research. And she actually discovered my first book and then made an appointment to see me, but I didn't have an appointment slot for, I think, 4 to 6 weeks later.

So she read my book and by the time I saw her, she had read Happy Gut. She had started on a gluten free, dairy free diet and her hives were down by 50%.

Nice just by doing that, you know, and part of the way we heal the God is by taking away the obstacles to healing. Now, the question is, you know, she came from India and she was fine in India and then she came to us.

Obviously, lots of stress being an immigrant, being an older she was a new mom, five year old. So she thought, you know, maybe this is related to being a new mom.

You know, I'm tired, I'm fatigued. She had migrating joint pain. So, of course, ding, ding. You know, when you hear that, you think, did she get bitten by a tick?

You know, does she have Lyme disease? That was ruled out, actually, and she wasn't really at high risk. She had not been hiking or anywhere, although I know that.

I mean, you could probably still get Lyme in Central Park in New York City if you're not careful. Right. But when I saw her, what really was astounding to me is that she had no symptoms and she had brain fog.

She had fatigue, she had joint pains. You know, her body was screaming. Inflammation. Mm hmm. And yet she had no stomach symptoms. And, you know, as a doctor and you probably have done this yourself, we ask a question one way.

And if we don't get the answer that we're expecting, we'll ask it a different way. Just so you can get the answer that you think you want. And and if you don't get the answer yet, then we get sneaky and we ask it from a different direction because, you know, we think sometimes patients sometimes are unaware.

Patients sometimes don't report symptoms the way that they're actually happening in their bodies. So I always give people the benefit of the doubt that maybe what they've reported to me up to this point is part correct.

But maybe there are things that they just don't know how to express it. I've had it happen to me so many times as a doctor where a patient came back for a follow up appointment and said, You know what, Doc?

I told you that I wasn't having the symptom. But then I paid attention to my body and I realized that I am having this symptom. So she had no gut issues, no diarrhea, no constipation, no abdominal pain, no bloating, nothing.

But I said, look, you have all these gut related issues, including, you know, across the board, autoimmunity, your immune system is going haywire. We need to look at your gut.

And so we did a stool study. She was open to that. We did bloodwork, you know, ruling out a whole host of things that could be causing these symptoms.

She had a very common parasite that actually is not just found in India, but it's found in the U. S. blastocyst is ominous enough that if you go on Wikipedia, it'll tell you that it's believed to be a benign parasite that a lot of people have and it causes no problems.

But if you go into the literature, you'll find that studies have shown that blastocyst this hominins causes leaky gut. And then on top of that she had a yeast overgrowth, I think it was wrote it to rule out candida and so we started her on a regimen to treat the blastocyst this and I'm of the philosophy you know if it's there and person's presenting with symptoms then it should be treated you know and she didn't have the typical symptom.

I was I was in Africa right before the pandemic. And with this small group of people went in and basically we

camped out with the hots at the hunter gatherers for three nights.

Besides doing Safari and all these things, it was the coolest trip ever. Wow. And I got to know my my trip mates. And one of them was from India. And one day we were just talking, we were like over the Ngorongoro Crater or something.

He's like, you know, I've been having this itching like my hands, palms in my hand and my feet have been itchy for months and I've been going to doctors in India and they have no idea.

They've done testing, everything's coming back negative and they just have me on antihistamines because now I'm itchy all over. So the only way I can control it is to take an antihistamine.

And I told them, you know, itchy palms and feet is a characteristic sign of blastocyst as hominids. I bet that you have that and you should go back and get checked out and you need to get treated for it.

Well, he went back to India, got checked out, he had it, got treated, and then he went off the antihistamines didn't need them anymore.

Gut Symptoms Beyond Digestion

We treated the root cause while going back to this patient we treated her for blastocysts, started working on the leaky gut because obviously it was causing this ripple effect or domino effect in her body, her scrambling, her immune system causing joint pains, fatigue, brain fog, all these things which you can get also from the yeast treated, the yeast treated the blastocysts and the brain fog, the fatigue, the joint pains, everything disappeared.

And you're like, what? She had no gut symptoms. Like I asked her every time I saw her, she's like, No, I go to the bathroom every day. Perfectly fine.

Now, one thing to consider here is that the the wheat now, I think in India now it's becoming more western wheat. But back then they were using more of the ancient wheat, less reactive, less gluten.

So, you know, you wonder, you're asking, like, are there any like macro recommendations for people will look out here in the west wheat has been hybridized the amount of gluten wheat has increased by 30 to 50% and our genetics can evolve that quickly.

Gluten is a very difficult molecule to digest. Our enzymes do not have the power to break down that much gluten. So inevitably there are other reasons that people get gut leaky ness antibiotics, alcohol, taking over-the-counter NSAIDs, women who are on birth control, even acetaminophen, can increase gut permeability through its effect on the gut microbiome.

So, you know, inevitably these people were eating gluten are also probably been exposed to another factor that will increase gut permeability, even stress, chronic stress.

I mean, talk about what we're coming out of. And anybody with a chronic disease gets mentally stressed about the disease. It becomes their life. And then that mental stresses like an attack on the gut and it affects the gut microbiome and then affects your gut permeability.

So even if you start off as not gluten sensitive that gluten gets through the gut barrier, it's going to activate your Zombieland, that protein that controls gut permeability like a dimmer switch.

So once it gets through the door, gluten is going to tell your body, Hey, let's open the floodgates because I want to let more of my buddies in and then all this stuff starts coming in.

You start getting endotoxin, you start getting things that activate the immune system. I mean, they've done tests where they found bacteria and bacterial DNA in the blood people as a result of leaky gut.

So you have all these inflammatory factors that if your body is already inflamed, it's just like throwing more oxygen into the fire. It's really interesting the way you present it all because I agree, like, you see a lot of people have got issues, but they don't have symptoms.

It's just such a key thing to understand them, something as simple as just trying off of gluten and dairy could do it. I just think about what are the things I can't put down?

I'm like, Well, gluten, alcohol, sugar, they're also addictive to the brain and they're the ones that are doing the most damage. So you definitely need to be aware of that.

And I would say also one of the things I love to highlight for our Lyme folks and or the communities you just mentioned, all the symptoms that are classic Lyme symptoms.

So and you can have brain fog, joint pain fatigue from not Lyme. And a lot of people like, well, why am I not getting better when I've been treated so much?

Well, one year treatment with, as you mentioned, Vincent, the antibiotics could do it. But then also it's like, well, maybe you're feeling so bad, which is understandable. I've been there.

I've been laying on the floor, like in horrible pain from lying. But it's like then it's, oh, well, someone brings you a nice, like, sandwich or a pizza.

I mean, and growing up, I mean, pizza was every Friday night you couldn't eat meat. And then it was like and then, oh, you had a bottle of Coca-Cola, and you're like, These are food groups.

They're really not. But so it's just an interesting thing. And another piece that I love, the well, I also want to get back to what happened with her autoimmune markers, because I think this is such a key piece.

But one of the other things everyone when you're when you're thinking about linemen for in your brain fog and gut health in that direct connection, one of the things that I came across, Vince, it was when you're eating a standard American diet and you have all that leaky gut and the endotoxin that you're talking about, one of the things that every so many of us here in our community are talking about, limbic retraining, the effect of stress we got to work on the vaguest.

What is the exercise? What is the machine? I can buy and zap the shit out of myself to make it happen. They can all be good. What supplement can I do to detox my brain?

But the problem is, if you're eating a standard American diet, which includes the things that you've highlighted, there's research showing that it'll decrease our ability to remember three things in our hippocampus, which is part of this limbic system.

So if you want your limbic retraining to work, maybe you should start in the gut because the gut and the heart are the primary drivers of your limbic system, that the brain part of the limbic system is just where it lives and the response to those other contributors.

So I don't know if that's what you're saying, too. And the Vegas is a is a huge part of it also for the gut, you know, it's not this and this or this.

You know, it's it's diet and possibly supplements and mindset work and mindfulness and stress retraining. It's really the combination of the three. And that's what I'm trying to get across in my book because I think we're we're a world that's walking around with vagal nerve malfunction and especially in the last couple of years.

If we want to talk about political theory, a lot of people are walking around in dorsal vagal tone, which is freeze, you know, depression, anxiety, you know, and it's so fascinating that the vagus is like this.

You know, I think of it as a telephone wire, you know, like the old telephone wires are connecting our phones. If you can go back that far and think about dial tone and if you picked up the phone and there was no dial tone, you knew the phone is dead.

Well, there are people walking around with very little dial tone in their Vegas between their brain and the rest of their body. Very importantly, you know, we're talking about the gut, but also the heart.

And the Vegas is sending communication signals in both directions. We need to get into that. That ventral vagal mode where the body is relaxed, where the body can heal itself.

And most people are not in that zone, especially if you've been chronically stressed, chronically sick. So the nerve receptors in the gut, five receptors, vagus, get stimulated by serotonin being produced by our gut microbiome, then send a signal to the brain where that vagus then secretes GABA, an inhibitory neurotransmitter that then controls activity in the brain.

So it's basically helping your brain chill out, like keeping things cool in the brain. And a lot of that feedback is coming from the periphery. The vagus nerve is giving the brain a read on what's going on outside of the brain, but also at the same time controlling the brain through what we call the second brain.

I think it's our first intuitive brain, but the gut, right enteric nervous system has more neural connections in our own brain. That part, I mean, I've heard this so many times.

Every time I hear it, it blows my mind how our gut has more neural connections than our brain. And the other part that blows my mind is I do like trillions of organisms in our gut.

There's literally more cells in our gut than there are in our body. And it's something like that. It's, it's, it's that. And, you know, the way I like to think of it, because I think it's it's hard for people to visualize, okay, there's 200 trillion organisms more than the number of cells in our entire body.

Okay. Think of it this way. There are 400 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy and you've got 100 trillion organisms in your gut. So how many galaxies would you have inside your gut if each one had 400 billion stars?

Like it's wild.

Gluten, Leaky Gut, and Inflammation

You know, at least like, I don't know, it's like 200 and something galaxies. I mean, just think about that. Like, I think we we the gut has been kind of like that, that secondary system, the, the least attractive part of the organ systems.

You know, when I was in residency training in Mount Sinai here in New York, I was actually approached by the chief of GI to ask me if I would. He was really, I think, spent a week with us when I was an intern and was very impressed with me.

And so he pulled me aside and he said, if you want to become a gastroenterologist, speak to me directly. And and I don't know if you're aware, but Mount Sinai has one of the top gastroenterology programs in the entire country.

So it was quite an honor. And I just looked at him. I was like, No, not really. Little did I know that years later I was going to become kind of like a gastroenterologist.

I don't do procedures, but I'm a functional gut expert, and I look at the gut from a very different point of view than what I would have been taught as a gastroenterologist.

Well, that's that's crazy to me. Is that the whole system is built around putting you down that conveyor belt of your proton pump inhibitors, like so much of what we do.

And even the in the example of that beautiful patient you were describing her there, just want to put her in things that suppress how the body works, you know, and so.

Without without trying to figure out why is her body responding in this way? Why why is her immune system going berserk? And and instead thinking about, well, what are the obstacles to healing here?

What needs to be removed, and then what needs to be added in order to support the body in its own natural ability to heal itself? And I think, just like you said, like I think it gets very complicated with Lyme patients because one Lyme symptoms can overlap with a lot of other things, including gut related symptoms and to a lot of times more than one story is happening at the same time.

And you've got to deal with the two novels happening. You have Lyme, but maybe you also have parasites. Maybe you also have yeast overgrowth. Maybe maybe the antibiotics that you took for Lyme that you were bombarded with by the doctors have destroyed your gut now.

So you didn't start out with gut problems, but now you have a leaky gut. Now you have dysbiosis, an imbalance of good and bad bugs, and now you have to do a lot of gut restoration if you want to dig yourself out of the hole.

It's so I love that you're saying we could have actually two stories at once. I think this is one of the things that we get into the Lyme world, everyone, and have like, hey, I have Lyme disease and Parnell and then I also only have the things that other people with Lyme have, which is mold problems.

I'm like, well, you know, you're you could have been fine and then gotten like, you know, but you were eating a standard American diet and you were tolerating your gut imbalance, not healthy, but you kind of were getting by and then you get Lyme and we treat you appropriately from a conventional perspective and then your gut can fall apart.

It's like this kind of like, you know, the house of cards of the, you know, or the domino effect. And then and then you become a chronic Lyme patient, chronically inflamed.

And anybody who's chronically inflamed, you've got to look at the gut because that is your inflammation station. That's where inflammation can start and perpetuate in the body.

Well, and I think, Vincent, I love that you brought up Polly vagal theory, because one of the things that I tell people all the time is it is not like you get sick.

You're sick for a while and now you become a psychiatric patient. Right? Like, so maybe all you have a victim mentality. No. You've been sick for a while and your nervous system is trying to protect you.

And your heart's getting beat on a little bit. But one of the things I noticed in my literature review and all the work we've done is. You. Can do PET scans looking at metabolism in the brain and all the cues of safety.

If you have Lyme, it has the potential to screw up metabolism in those areas. So essentially what that means in English is you're safe, but your nervous system can't recognize you're safe because Lyme is preventing it.

And then, oh yeah, that's why I'm not getting better. That's not what I'm saying. And then I'm going to bring this back to the gut. What I'm saying is you have access to your nervous system and your emotions in your limbic system through many other pathways, including limbic and vagus retraining, including your meditative and gratitude practices and your gut.

Yeah. And, and I will also add that vagus retraining is a very important aspect of gut healing, because I've had those patients who come in and they do everything perfect.

They're following the diet to a tee, they're taking the supplement to a tee, and yet they're not getting better. Now, guess what type of patient this is?

They're type-A, they're super stressed out. They work 12 hour days. They barely take a break for lunch. And then they're off to meetings. They're overscheduled.

They never have a moment to breathe. They don't know how to relax. And they actually don't even know that they're stressed. Right. They think they're not stressed and that this is just the way they manage their life.

And I tell them, while your body is stressed and your body's saying, I'm freaking out, your body does not feel safe because you're not in ventral vagal mode and activating the biggest you know, I want to throw in there cold plunges.

Oh, yeah. Such a great way. You know, even just taking a 92nd cold shower at the end of your shower. But cold plunges or even just, you know, putting your face in a bowl of cold ice cold water, you know, because there are cold receptors on your face and on your neck that when stimulated, activate your vagus nerve.

And it's such an important part of stimulating gut motility. If you're constipated, but also the vaguest, the vagal tone controls things like stomach acid production and the ability to break down protein, which is one of the common things found in people with autoimmune disease and chronic inflammation.

They're they're chronically stressed and their vagal tone is down. They're not producing enough stomach acid, so they're not able to break down their protein.

And if they can't break down protein, they're not getting all the essential amino acids that they need to build all of the enzymes that power everything in every cell inside the body.

Mm hmm. Dude, I was just thinking, like, having a flashback as we have video of both of us doing six and a half, seven minute cold plunges. So this is legit. We're doing this.

But what I really love even more than having a flashback to a time when I did something that I wasn't sure I was actually going to be able to do and felt all the health benefit is.

You just highlighted that you don't need to do like you don't need to become Wim Hof or some other like cold plunger or join like my mom has been the Polar Bear Club and all that.

You can put your hands in your face and scientifically choose what to do. And these are the parts of this summit that I really love. And I think also really important for people to understand, you know, because I see a benefit in cold plunges for the gut for the rest of the body, but a cold plunge is a stressor.

Vagus Nerve and Nervous System Regulation

So if your body is already stressed, don't try to be a hero. You know, like don't bulldoze your way through it. And like you just said, like, you can put your hands in ice cold water and start to develop a tolerance there.

Or you can just end with a cold shower and just do 10 seconds. When I was recently in Miami for a couple of weeks, I was I joined a gym that had a cold plunge at 37 degrees.

And the first time I went in, I went into my neck, oh, my God, 10 seconds. My body is like, get the you know what? Yeah, yeah. And I got out a second time.

I went to 20 seconds, third time to 30 seconds, and then I was at 30 seconds for a while, and then I jumped to 45 seconds and then it got to a minute.

Then from a minute to minute and a half to 2 minutes to 2 minutes and a half, all using breath, work and focus, but also realizing that, you know, we're more powerful than our minds think we are.

But you have to build that resilience because the reason Wim Hof can do it is that for a normal person, if they get

into an ice bath or do a polar plunge, their body is freaking out.

It's causing a huge cortisol dump. Oh, yeah, but but if you train when you train yourself, what happens is you're able to keep your body calm and you don't get that.

You get a spike, but you don't get that that high spike, you know? And if your body's already really stressed, then you have to be careful about that.

But it's a great way to activate the vagus nerve. But you don't have to do that. You could do five minute meditation where with every exhale breath you hum on the way out and that humming vibration is going to activate your ventral vagus.

And that's also a really easy way to ease into that. And it's so cool how all this comes together. And I hope everyone watching is seeing the way we put together the summit because there's this through line we talk a lot about, you know, Vincent, about the meditation and mindset, but the simple approach and the humming I love.

Because not only are you getting the Vegas tone, but you're also it's a great way to increase nitric oxide. And we talked so much about the the nasal lymphatics and the nose with mycotoxins and pans and pandas and strep and autoimmunity in the brain and being able to open that and one of the great greatest and even our Raynaud's and stuff.

Hey, let's get some nitric oxide going on. And so the the humming is such a critical piece and I don't think anyone's really touched on bringing it in specific quickly as a practice like you just did.

So, I mean, that's so amazing and it's. Such an easy thing to do, you know, because, I mean, people think like it's hard to meditate, you know, just set a timer for 5 minutes and breathe it, set a timer for 5 minutes and breathe in deep.

And every time you exhale, hum. Yeah, it's those 5 minutes are going to go by so fast that I bet you're going to want more, you're going to want more.

I mean I, I, I basically have a meditation practice and I use an app called Insight Timer that has these really nice, like, like gong like bells that you can and you can program which one sounds when.

So I have like my middle bell that tells me that I'm half way through. Yeah. And, and then I have my ending bells and you can say you want three bells at the end and just two bells in the middle and, and whatever.

And when it ends, usually I'm in such a sweet spot that I stay because by then it's been 15, 20 minutes and actually once you get through that part, it's like getting through the discomfort of of like being in that cold plunge.

It's so interesting. Once you get through that initial discomfort, it's actually easy to sit there. Yeah, and I think there's two big things come up. It's like so many.

We define meditation a certain way. So then I immediately becomes hard. It's like, let's just get familiar with our breath in that state and just watch the journey unfold.

And what I love about the timer is I sometimes use a timer, especially when I need to be done, you know, which is kind of funny. I'm hurry up and meditate, right?

Hurry up and de-stress. But actually I find that that final gong because I use a timer, like I said, sometimes actually it becomes a cue to go even deeper, you know.

And so then I want to sit longer. So now when we go to the next one where we do it again and we have the gong in the beginning, in the middle, and then I'm training myself that that sound get gets me there quicker and quicker.

I place, it's the place for you where you dove in deeper and and the reason we're talking about this, when, you know, this talk was about inflammation in the gut and all that, is that all these things lower inflammation and it's it's a non-negotiable.

If you want to heal your gut, you've got to get your stress under control. And the only way to get the stress under control is you can't change the outside world.

The outside world is going to be what it is. The stresses that come in are going to be the stresses that come in. The only thing you can control is the way that the outflow from you, the way you react to all these stimuli.

That's why, you know, this this practice that I did, you know, and I don't advise. Like if you're, you know, if you're chronically ill, do not get into a 37 degree cold plunge.

Can I just interject one thing? I have watched Vincent jump into an ice water bath for 7 minutes. So when he's saying he was only in there for a few moments, this is really cold.

It was it was like, right. You a few degrees above freezing. But, you know, it taught me a very valuable lesson staying in there and being able to to increase the amount of time that I was in there showed me that I am more resilient than I thought.

But it also then built up my resilience for discomfort in other aspects of my life. MM And I think anybody who is on a cruise with chronic illness and a healing journey, I think as the illness chips away at you, it also chips away at your resilience and you become very sensitive to a lot of things.

And for me, the fascinating thing about having gone to Africa and been with the hot sun, spent time with them and camped out and and went hunting and foraging with them out in the wilderness is their resilience because they expose themselves to all these paramedic stressors.

They're getting rained upon. You know, they're not they don't wear a lot of clothes. And they're that they're running through the bush. And like the the they're exposed to the elements.

They were exposed to the dirt. It creates such a robustness of their gut microbiome. This is what's really fascinating about them and I think relevant to this talk is that, you know, microbial diversity is the Holy Grail if you want to lower inflammation.

And and yet we don't have a lot of studies yet, but every study that we have about the gut microbiome is pointing to the fact that the greater the microbial diversity, the lower the inflammation.

And they did a study where they looked at a high fermented foods diet versus a high fiber diet, and its effect on 19 different inflammatory markers, including intracellular cytokine activation.

This was done by Stanford University. And what they found surprisingly and this was a lot of ferment. So they were having the fermented foods group have 4 to 6 servings a day.

It was a lot. It was mostly yogurt and vegetable brain drinks. Well, guess what? The fermented the high fermented foods side increased microbial diversity tended towards increasing microbial diversity.

In this group, it was only a ten week study, but the more remarkable thing is that it lowered 19 inflammatory markers. Every single marker dropped, and they were looking at, you know, like cytokine activation of macrophages, things like that.

So not just regular, just. Not just a CRP or something. Yeah, no. They were looking at a lot of different ways that inflammation is communicated in the body.

So 19 inflammatory markers dropped and you know, how do we translate this into the Hadza? So they're not eating

fermented foods, but they have an incredibly diverse gut microbiome.

How do we know this? Because they've done stool analysis on them and compared it to an Italian group of controls. And now Italians. You think Mediterranean diet, they're eating like one of the most heart healthy diets on the planet.

They should have a really diverse gut microbiome. And yet it was not as diverse as the Hadza. And I think several factors there that we can learn. One, they're not really exposed to antibiotics if they get sick, they have their own remedies that they would not reveal.

To me. They're like, it's top secret and and they're out in nature. They're not washing their hands. They're getting exposed to the microbiome of the soil, which is an incredible way, not just to build resilience, but also to build microbial diversity.

And I know it's crazy to say this in a group of, you know, people who have Lyme who probably got Lyme by being. Outside in. The wilderness, but we we also have to talk about how important and how helpful that is.

Microbiome Diversity and Resilience

Even if you just have a garden in your backyard and you have organic soil and you get your hands dirty in the soil and and now, you know, in the season that it's spring, you know, getting out and gardening is is a great way to help diversify your gut microbiome.

And the more diverse your gut microbiome is, which can be through diet. And I do think that fiber is important and ferments are important. I think you probably augmented by combining the two, but you also have to get some nature exposure and all of that builds resilience, builds diversity.

And the greater the diversity in your gut microbiome, the lower your inflammation. Exactly, man. It's like music to my ears with everybody. Like, Oh, you had Lyme in BBC, AC, you don't go outside, right?

I'm like, No, I'm outside every chance I get. But it's it's very interesting. And I hadn't thought about this for a while, Vincent, but I used to get ticks on me all the time when I went outside the and through my healing journey and through yoga that that was that enabled me to learn about nutrition by listening to my body.

Kind of like you'd mentioned the very beginning before I knew about functional medicine, I just that's why I had pizza and coke, because that's what everybody did.

But what was really interesting is once I went on this journey and I made my health, I made my lifestyle healthy and I made my health a lifestyle and, you know, like a health style type of way.

I this is just the way I am. And I live. I developed so much resiliency that I could go visit some friends and jurors back, you know, some old school friend and have a pizza and not get sick.

But then I went back to my regular diets, had flexibility and resilience. But what was really crazy is I continued to go outside and take infested areas and I got less and less and less ticks on me.

And I'm not saying screw around that don't want you. So what do you think was a factor in that. I it I think it has to do with the pheromones because ticks are well studied.

There's there are there are probably genetic factors and different people that make them smell better to ticks and others. And I was like I was catching all the garlic, I started eating, but I ate a ton of garlic before I got healthy.

And it's so it, it really I think that we smell different. And so at the beginning of the pandemic, I said this, I told this to every Lyme patient, I'm sure that you're going to shake your head.

Say yes to is I become the world's worst viral bacterial parasitic host. Make yourself like if there's a group of people. Because that's one we can't live in a bubble brain these these organisms you know we're harboring bacteria and I'm sure the Hadza are probably we look at their gut in a lot of detail.

I'm sure they've got some parasites in there that they've just kind of like developed a symbiosis with because their gut can handle all those things. And and I do think that building resilience is where it's at.

That's that's the ticket. Well, I always it always fascinated me, you know, seeing the chronic Lyme patient versus the patient that would get Lyme take a round of antibiotics and then just be fine.

And but these these were kind of like usually the very resilient personalities, you know, the ones that are outdoors, they're chopping wood. They're, you know, they're they're kind of like, I'll I'll give you an example and I know we've gone a bit long, but all good this is I think this speaks a lot to humanity, you know, how many words do we have to to express a low mood, depression, sadness we have so many feeling down.

We have so many ways to express this in our language. When we ask the hugs through the translator, do they have a word for depression? They don't. It doesn't exist.

They didn't even understand. They were smiling. They're like, What are you talking about? Like it doesn't it didn't even compute for them, you know, and depression.

You can look at it as a chronic inflammatory state that's connected very strongly to got inflammation and to leaky gut and leaky blood brain barrier. So interestingly, the Hadza who have no diabetes, they have no heart disease, they get no cancer, they have no obesity and no autoimmune disease.

They also don't have depression. So well said. And I'm hoping that a few people right now are triggered by what we just talked about, because you're saying if I were more resilient before I saw the tick, I might not have gotten chronic Lyme.

The answer is really yes. And but that's not a judgment. That's just an opportunity to learn and grow because I got it and I learned from it and I became more resilient.

And that's why I'm on this mission to share this and bring amazing people like Dr. Vincent Pedrad to you, because this is the key piece, the whole something you just summarized, like the entire reason that this summit is going on it is to give the medical establishment at this point in most of the West, in the most of the developed world, has usurped the control of your life and your health from you and told you that it exists in a pill or a procedure.

And the thing is, everyone alive right now was born in the system. So I'm not saying we're guilty, but just like Lyme can impact your brain. And yes, there's a little bit of research that's coming out saying you could potentially get persistent Lyme like Lyme, persist yourself from the moment of your tick bite.

The difference, though, is what do you do with it? When do you take that information that Dr. Vincent shared with you that all of our amazing speakers have talked about and say, you know what?

Which one or two of these resonate with me? And I'm going to incorporate that into my personal responsibility practice. Because as Vincent said so well, yes, start with 15 seconds and then you do 30 and then you do 32 and then you do 27, and then you go to 45 and then a minute and a minute and a half and so on and so forth.

And you just have to do a little bit of the breathing or a little bit of the fermented, whatever it is. Don't beat yourself up, but. Start it. Totally in control.

You've got to you've got to start it because and I understand this. I mean, Lyme also affects the brain, causes inflammation in there, can cause depression.

And with that comes a lot of inertia, you know, difficulty initiating stuff. But I love this TED talk that I saw a while

back and it was a woman speaker and she said if you're waiting for the day that you feel like it, guess what?

It's never going to arrive. And I say that a lot to my son, who was a teenager, you know, because teenagers, they get into inertia. We all get inertia.

We all get their points in our life or there's something that's stuck. That's hard to get started. You know, if I traveled too much and I stopped going to the gym, I have inertia about getting back into the gym.

Right.

Personalized Gut Healing and Resources

We all feel that that laziness inside. But what I found is that if you're waiting for that moment when I told my son, if you're waiting for the day that the sun is shining, the birds are chirping and everything, just, you know, it's like a rainbow and it's perfect.

And now you feel like it. It's not coming back. It's not going to come. It's so true. MAN Push yourself past it. Because that day when you feel like it is not going to arrive and if that pushing yourself just means that you walk down the hallway and back, but that's more than you did yesterday, then that's what you're doing.

And then you build on that. They call them step wise activations, and not everything is right for everyone. And that's why I created the smart quiz and personalize the the gut healing program in the gut smart protocol.

Because if you have severe gut dysfunction, you can't have ferments. Now, I just told you, fermented foods are going to help you reduce inflammation. But if your gut is in flames and you've got a lot of gut dysfunction, dysbiosis, your gut might not be ready for fermented foods.

It might actually make you sick and they might actually trigger more histamine if you have massive activation, which is really just a gut issue. So I think the most important part here because obviously you and I could talk about this all night long, probably for more than just the whole night.

We got into flow where. I know. So here I'm telling you, I love this and this is what I want for everybody participating. And this is a thing that you can get into is get into that flow with yourself by playing with it and going with it and just being open to it.

So one of the things that I think is this is really going to stimulate for people's wanting to go out and learn more. Because I think you just said the magic words, the things we all talked about might not be applicable to everybody.

So how do they go take the Get Smart quiz and find out more about your book? Because I'm assuming in a big old book, we're going to you're going to dove into more than just what we've been able to talk about in this short period of time.

Yeah, absolutely. They can just go to gut smart protocol dot com. They'll be able to take the quiz on the website. If they order the book, they can come back with their order number and they can get a whole bunch of bonuses and they can just dove into my world of gut healing, which I think is is a really important part of any healing program.

Right. Healing Lyme healing. Healing mold. The gut is the foundation for everything. You wouldn't build a house without a foundation, right? So if you're trying to rebuild your health, then you need to rebuild it on the foundation of your gut.

Awesome. Dr. Vincent, Pedro, thank you so much for joining us, everyone. We're going to make sure it's got smart protocol dot com. The other part, though, is we're going to make sure it's on our summit resource page for you so that you can go get the gut smart quiz, grab the book, dove in and learn what's right for you, get a lot of those amazing bonuses.

And you know, as always, the deepest gratitude for you and Megan this time. Vincent It's always an honor and a pleasure. And I'm just you know, with all that, with the book that's just come out and all the other things that you've been doing, I know it's really hard to make this time, so thank you for sharing all this wisdom with everyone.

Thank you, man. And everyone, thank you so much for joining us for this episode of The Healing from Lyme Disease Summit. I'm really looking forward to seeing you in our Q&A and in our next episode.

And until next time, I'm Dr. Tom Moorcroft. Lots of love and healing.