Is Coffee on an Empty Stomach Bad for Your Hormones? Transcript

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Coffee, GIP, and Hormone Basics

There are studies that show that both caffeinated and decaf coffee actually increase GIP, which is a glucose-independent insulin peptide, and that helps regulate our insulin secretion, our glucose control, and our appetite.

So if we lower GIP, then the body may secrete less insulin, and then coffee can kind of alter how glucose is processed. Hey, it's Dr. Jenn. Welcome back to the Integrative Health Podcast with Dr.

Jenn. So this is gonna be a solo episode and gonna do these a little bit more frequently, just having a discussion with you guys and with myself and answering questions, especially hormone questions that patients have and mistakes I'm seeing and just debunking some things.

please leave a review on Apple iTunes. I really need the reviews to get this good information, faith-based information out there because there's a lot of sketchiness.

There's just a lot and I'm learning more and more about how this industry is just infiltrated with people that are not in it for good intentions, let's just say.

Okay, well, today we're going to talk about is drinking coffee on an empty stomach pad for your hormones. And I discussed this in my book. So if you've read the perimenopause reset, go and go back to this part of the book and its little box out and read about it.

Now, if you have any other questions that are controversial, please also leave a review and ask that question in there and you can be featured and I will share.

what you say in there. So here's the thing, especially for women in midlife, it's kind of complicated. It's just not black or white. And I'm in the middle about a lot of stuff.

I personally do drink coffee on an empty stomach, but I will tell you how later.

Perimenopause and Why Coffee Hits Harder

So coffee can and will interact with cortisol, our adrenal hormones, our hunger hormones, our blood sugar, gut peptides like GIP and GLP-1, our insulin sensitivity, the nervous system, and circadian rhythm.

So all of these can shift and change during perimenopause. So this is why this is so important to learn. And what we're going to unpack during this episode is what the research actually says, why coffee is different as women age, what caffeine can do to spike cortisol, how coffee alters insulin sensitivity, and how you can do things to help blunt that response.

And why do some people feel anxious or shaky after coffee and some don't? So let's buckle up and get into it. So during perimenopause, our estrogen and progesterone fluctuate.

and our estradiol is unpredictable. It is going up and down like a roller coaster where our progesterone is going to be like a nice, easy sledding hill, okay?

And this is why when we look at replacing those hormones that we have to be very intelligent about it. So when our hormones are fluctuating, our cortisol becomes more reactive and then our blood sugar actually becomes less stable.

Our nervous system, which is our parasympathetic sympathetic system, becomes more sensitive. And so that the

adrenal spikes, cortisol spikes, they hit us harder.

We feel them more. That's why you might notice in perimenopause you just don't have a lot of tolerance for stress like you used to. And then when we have our fasting, you might notice you could fast when you were younger, but entering into perimenopause, your tolerance for that decreases.

And that's why I really am a big fan of cycle syncing and it works and the research shows it works. And then your caffeine tolerance decreases. And then on top of that, we're having digestion hormone changes going on.

So there's a lot of change in perimenopause. So, something as simple as a cup of coffee, especially before breakfast, before eating, has a much larger impact on perimenopause women.

And I often hear women say a lot like, coffee makes me shaky now that I'm midlife and never used to. or that latte, I never used to get anxious and now I do, or my heart pounds after caffeine.

And then people are like, I'm hungry after caffeine, but I'm wired. And these aren't like, this isn't personality change. This isn't anything like that.

This is a physiologic change in your body. So coffee, though, is not just caffeine. Some people use it just for caffeine, but it's not. There are over a thousand bioactive compounds like diterpenes, polyphenols.

Those are good for your body. And compounds that activate certain gut peptides and also stimulants that influence that adrenal access and that cortisol.

So coffee also, on a side note, we need to make sure that we are getting organic coffee because we can get pesticides that can clog up the liver and then affect estrogen metabolism.

Cortisol, Adrenaline, and Empty-Stomach Coffee

We also can have moldy coffee and I always talk about how mold can impact how we detoxify estrogen and estradiol in the liver and I see this time and time again and I talk about mold in the perimenopause reset book.

When coffee, it's going to impact our hypopatuitary adrenal access, the HPA access, and caffeine can increase ACTH, which then can increase cortisol. So that is something that we have to think about.

It's not just a cup of coffee. It has a downstream effect on our cortisol. It can also kind of raise and hyper activate our sympathetic nervous system.

And this is a fight or flight branch. And this is where you're going to feel systemically the symptoms such as heart rate and alertness is going to be increased adrenaline and blood pressure.

And this is why people use caffeine as a stimulant for focus to get them up and moving in the morning. You know, especially if you can't go without your cup of coffee in the morning, you're probably not getting a good cortisol peak and you might be burnt out or stressed.

And honestly, there's a lot of talk about this in the carnivore community because in the ketogenic community, because their body is so stressed out from eating the same way, they're not cycles thinking like they should or having refeeding for males and then they're just like chronically like low flat cortisol and then they need that like pickup of the caffeine because they can't get through and that's not healthy or sustainable long term.

You know people when they drink their coffee and they're like oh I gotta go to the bathroom right after, well it does stimulate gastric motility and this is why that can help but that should not be a crutch.

If you're having gastric motility problems, we need to look at root causes such as stealth infections, candida, SIBO, vagal nervous system and tone down there.

So you shouldn't use that as a crush. But yeah, sometimes it's nice, right? You're like, okay, cleaned out. So insulin sensitivity and glucose response.

So this is something that I really focus on because there's studies that show that both caffeinated and decaf coffee actually increased GIP, which is a glucose independent insulin peptide.

And that helps regulate our insulin secretion, our glucose control, and our appetite. So if we lower GIP, then the body may secrete less insulin and then coffee can kind of alter how glucose is processed.

So this is why some people, if they're wearing a continuous glucose monitor, they see an ultra blood sugar response after coffee. So that's also interesting.

So we need to look at coffee like there's a whole broad spectrum of it. make sure we're understanding benefits-risk and we're also using it wisely. There's studies that show that participants that consume caffeinated coffee before a glucose test had higher glucose levels because this is going to temporarily reduce insulin sensitivity.

And then another study shows that caffeine raises cortisol. So caffeinated coffee would have the problem of raising cortisol and that would increase cortisol and amplify like our stress response if we're already stressed out.

And this is more pronounced in women and I've seen this all the time too. And then it's even gonna be worse if you're under stress, it's like pouring gasoline on the fire.

So that is really concerned when you're having this coffee specifically too on an empty stomach. And then caffeine can increase epinephrine adrenaline response by 200 to 300 percent in some individuals.

And this is that shaky, sweaty, anxiety feeling and racing thoughts, all of that. And if people have that, I say, you know, let's dial it down, let's switch to half-calf.

Sometimes I will say, if you want that coffee and you want that caffeine and they don't want to go to de-calf well, then you can take L-theanine. So L-theanine, 100 milligrams, that can be something that can really calm that down.

And we're actually seeing that a lot now in these mushroom blend coffees.

Blood Sugar, Insulin Sensitivity, and Coffee

They're putting L-theanine in there right away. And yeah, that's totally fine. L-theanine is an amino acid found in green tea. It's actually really high levels in matchas.

And that's why matcha tea has been so popular, not just because it's color, but because people don't They get that alertness but without that stress response because the L-theanine is like calming that down.

And I actually give patients L-theanine a lot if they're just stressed out and they need to calm down, like sometimes before sleep, sometimes if they have a cortisol spike midday, which I see so much in perimenopause women in the life, like they always have that.

So then back to the GI track, coffee can also increase gastric acid. So this is why sometimes people get like reflux from coffee. Now that's a separate issue, like we should be making gastric acid, we shouldn't be on protein pump inhibitors, we need to fix the root cause.

But if you're already having GI problems, having that on an empty stomach could cause some difficulty. So the thing is that we see from studies is consuming caffeine in a fasted state can amplify increased cortisol significantly more than if you're having it with food.

So this is a problem and this is why I always say the solution is to have it with some butter or have it with some ketones or have it with some amino acids.

So that's how I mix mine or some cream. If you're trying to fast, you can do different things, MCT oil. make it where it's still ketogenic and then you won't have as much of a stress response but still stay in that ketogenic mode.

So what happens when you drink coffee without food? So this is what we're trying to negate. The caffeine hits faster because it's hitting your bloodstream more.

Your cortisol is going to rise more. have more of that adrenaline spike and feeling, it could possibly make your blood sugar more unstable in some sensitive people, then you're going to have that increased acid response.

And then your brain might interpret that cup of coffee as stress. And what would you notice? Well, you would notice the jitters or shakiness or restlessness or or heart palpitations.

So then you're like, okay, well, that's not smooth and you're having that stress response and then that could affect your glucose. So see how if we just have it like black, you know, on an empty stomach, that might be a problem.

So if we don't have metabolic support with like amino acids or fats with that or ketones and that could cause the perfect storm impairment. pause. So when you add these fats like MCT oil, grass-fed butter or heavy cream, raw heavy cream is what I have in my fridge right now, you're going to change that metabolic response.

So that fat slows that absorption of the caffeine. So the cortisol rise is going to be less and less adrenaline spike, less negative symptoms with that.

And then the fats also are going to carry it from your overnight pass. You're going to have some ketones. So that's going to give you stable energy and less blood sugar.

going up and down and roller coaster. And I love that. I feel so sharp when I have either butter, MCT oils or ketones and amino acids in my coffee, nice clean energy.

And then that carries me to when I am eating. So that fat in there is going to help support the satiety and you're going to have fewer cravings as opposed if you're having the caffeine that's affecting your stress response and your glucose response.

might have cravings and then make bad decisions. And then that MCT oil, that's like just rapid liver metabolism. It's going to give you that clean energy.

The fat is going to buffer that stomach irritation and have smoother motility. So, you know, so many people have told me once I've told them that, that like, I love coffee with MCT oil.

It's just great. They feel calm and focused. I love adding butter to my coffee. It was kind of weird at first, but then they liked it. And this isn't a placebo effect, this is like chemistry, this is studies.

How to Make Coffee Gentler on the Body

So like picture your body as a car engine, which I know nothing about, right? But coffee alone is like dumping high octane race fuel into a cold engine and it burns, it's going to rev up the system, but it's going to stress out the system and that's not good for the engine long term.

So if you're adding MCT oil or butter, it's like adding a stabilizer into that oil, into that high octane oil. And you're going to have a cleaner burn, more energy, and less strain on the body or the engine.

So caffeine isn't bad, but it needs to be in the right context. And even when we look at a new product, Parazanthine, that's been out the last couple of years, and I've used that, that is good for energy.

It's one of the byproducts of caffeine. but you still have to treat it like caffeine. Don't have it before bed. Make sure, you know, you might want to pair it with L-theanine, except you're not going to get as many jitters because it's a

cleaner breakdown.

So it's that focus without that jitter, but it's still technically caffeine because it's a breakdown. So I wanted to throw that in about paroxanthine.

So if you are drinking coffee in the morning, you're listening to this and you're like, wow, that makes sense. I want to try something new. So consider MCT oil, butter, or maybe both in there.

Some heavy cream. I like putting Perfect Amino's French vanilla in there. I have that on Healthy by DrGen.shop. That is like my go-to. Some butter, some of that.

Sometimes ketones and amino acids. I like to switch it up. And don't drink it on an empty stomach. If you're gonna just say, like, I like my coffee black, just have a little bit of protein or fat with that, like maybe some eggs or something if you really enjoy your coffee.

And this, we're talking about black coffee, you know, not like lattes or something like that, which has a little bit of fat and protein in it. If you're trying to fast, then having coffee plus butter or MCT oil, that is going to help you and support fasting and maybe opening.

If you want to do a longer window of fasting, that can support that. It's more of like you're doing continuous ketones. It wouldn't be like a real fast because you're having that fat in there, but really extending that therapeutic ketosis window, which I've done a lot because if I do a longer fast, I'm like, well, I'm still going to have my coffee in the morning, but count it as like a ketosis fast because I know I need this to get through and my body, I don't want it to be stressed.

So you really have to work with your doctor that knows a lot about this and maybe get some, a four-point saliva cortisol test and that will help. Now, if you're listening, you're like, you know, black coffee is totally fine.

Well, test not guessed. Why don't you wear a continuous glucose monitor and play around with it? and know your physiology and it may shift though with time.

You might not be fully impairing menopause or fully aware it is bothering you. So I just, I always want to draw in faith because we are strong in faith.

We are strong in health and we can do all the things for our health, but we have to work on our eternal health and our salvation too. So from 2 Corinthians 4, 18, Paul says, you know, we must fix our eyes on not what is seen, but what is unseen.

So when we're looking at health, a lot of the stuff that we don't see what's going in our body, and we have to trust, we have to seek wise counsel, people that we trust, you know, it seems like everyone is just selling something, you know everywhere we look and and it's like where where's their heart where's their heart posture are they doing in that because they genuinely want people to be better because a lot of times like we don't just fix our eyes on what is seen but we have to like what is unseen is our heart posture and what is unseen is um how the lord works in our house so For me, we can do all these things.

Faith, Testing, and Closing Prayer

You can have, you know, our coffee the perfect way, but also pair that cup of coffee with some morning devotionals or scripture and just Like, watch the Lord just change your heart and change those around you.

And it's such peace. And this goes with cortisol. We want our cortisol to be stable and we want to have peace. In perimenopause, it's just full of these unseen changes.

And this could bring us anxiety because our hormones are shifting, our stress systems are just recalibrating, not what we're used to. We're having different gut hormone fluctuation, different rewiring.

It's tough. So even something as simple as that morning coffee can be something that's like unseen in our health that we have to figure out. The comforting thing is no matter where you are in your journey, your health journey, that God sees what we can't and he guides us even though our internal world feels chaotic.

And you're not alone. This isn't weakness. Perimenopause is not weakness. This is why I say strong in faith, strong in health. It's invitations to dig in, know your body better, trust in the Lord, and surround yourself with people that are doing the same.

So thank you so much for being here for this episode. If you guys are like, okay, I kind of like this better than when you just interview people. Let me know because I could make these more frequent.

I can make them topical. I also have another case study coming up I need to record. Oh my goodness, I forgot about that for a second. I need to find that where I put that and it's going to be a good one.

And then also a lot of amazing guests coming up. If any of my friends are going to A4M in December, I am this month, next week, this week coming up. I would love to meet up and check out my lecture on cycles thinking on Sunday.

Thank you. God bless you all and I'll end with a quick prayer. Lord Jesus, we just thank you so much for the opportunity to make these solo episodes. Just Lord, help me.

Use me Lord with your will and just whatever I do when it comes to health and the gifts that you gave me and being a physician that I do it all for the glory of God, Lord, and just make connections that will glorify you, Lord, and just being able to share the gospel with whoever I can.

Lord, just thank you for all the blessings. Anyone listening out there, Lord, I just pray protection and peace over them, Lord, in this time of their life and perimenopause, Lord.

I just pray that they know anything that is going through their mind that is from the enemy, that they recognize that through reading scripture and through knowing what your voice sounds like, that that anything else that they ask to leave and they know that your word is truth and light, Lord.

It's a hard time to be in perimenopause, Lord, and just give these women peace and confidence and just rest under your beautiful rings. Just take shelter under your wings, Lord.

We love you in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Bye, everyone. Have a great week.