Is Your Brain Running on Empty? The Hidden Deficiencies Behind Mom Burnout Transcript

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Intro and episode overview

Hey team, welcome back to the eczema kids podcast. If you've been feeling like you're holding everything together with duct tape between the sleepless nights and the special meals and trying to get your kids' skin calm, this episode is going to help you breathe again.

Today I'm joined by Lori Hammer. She's a neuro nutrition expert and hosted the Take Back My Brain podcast. Lori helps moms restore balance to their brain chemistry and calm to their homes naturally, which we're all about here.

We're talking about the real link between your nervous system and your child's and how amino acids can shift your moods and focus and what it actually means to nourish your body so everyone can heal faster.

And if you're ready for a roadmap that supports both your child's skin and your peace of mind, grab your spot in the eczema elimination method. You'll find the link of the show notes.

Let's dig into it. Is your child struggling with itchy nights and endless flare ups? I'm Andra McHugh, mom of four and host of eczema kids. Here you'll find natural solutions that actually work so you can heal your child's eczema without steroids, without the overwhelm, and finally see calm, healthy skin again.

Let's get into it. Hey team, welcome back to the XMA Kids podcast. Lately, if you've been feeling anxious or depleted or like your brain just can't keep up, you're not broken.

You're just burnt out. And there's a reason that your mind feels so overloaded when you're carrying everyone else's healing on your back. And when you're parenting a child with eczema or any other chronic condition, it's just so easy to focus on fixing their body and forget that ours needs a lot of care too.

And the truth is our kids borrow our regulation, our nervous system, up to like a very late age, about seven from what I hear.

Lori's healing journey and amino acid therapy

And when we're running on stress and survival mode, it's just nearly impossible to heal them fully. That's why I'm really excited about today's conversation.

We're joined by Lori Hammer, and we're talking about taking back your brain, how to nourish it, how to calm it, how to support your God-given ability to heal.

Lori is a neuro-nutrition expert and the host of the Take Back My Brain podcast, and Lori helps moms balance their brain chemistry and nutrition so they can show up calmer and clearer and more grounded for their families.

So Lori, I'd love to start with your story. What led you to become so passionate about brain health and helping moms overcome stress and anxiety naturally?

Oh, thank you, Andra. And first of all, thanks for having me. I love your mission. Your podcast is amazing. I know you're helping millions of people, and it's going to be millions more in the future.

So thank you for doing what you're doing. And when you said that we borrow, our kids borrow our nervous system until like the age of seven. I don't know the studies behind that if there's any like beyond that or if they've even tried, but I will say just having teenagers, they still borrow your nervous system.

I don't know that seven is super accurate. I just think kids, and I still think even my son who's married with two kids may even borrow my nervous system when I'm around because you can't have a bad day.

The dog is grumpy, the dog is anxious, the cat's anxious, something pukes on something. It's just like this cascade effect. So our nervous system is so, so important to learn how to regulate well because there is such a ripple effect everywhere.

And my journey started back in 1990. Six. So prior to that, I was bulimic. So I've been bulimic, anxious, depressed for about 12 years of my life. And then the last two years, they were like hell.

Like I passed out a lot. I had seizures because my electrolyte imbalance was so off. I'd ended up in the ER. I tried therapy. I tried groups. I tried all the regulation techniques.

I tried, you know, drugs. I tried pop, I tried everything. And nothing could help me stop. Like I just, I just couldn't stop. I was in nursing school at the time and had to drop out because my life was such a mess.

I couldn't make it to my clinicals, all those kinds of things. And I had a nursing professor, she was my psychiatric professor, her name was Penny. And she was amazing.

She kind of took me under her wing and tried to help me. She tried to get me into eating disorder clinics, you know, find me the right therapist, find me the right this right doctor, you know, all that kind of stuff.

And she was amazing. But I thought, you know, nothing is working. So I'm going to move away. And so I moved away thinking that would fix everything. And that just made everything worse.

And so then she sent me an article about This place in Mill Valley, California called Recovery Systems run by Julia Ross at the time. And they were proposing that you're addicted to what you're allergic to, meaning you're craving the foods that you're super sensitive to.

And so I read it, I called out there and they had an outpatient clinic. They're like, yeah, we can help you come on out. That was my first dive into this functional health world, which wasn't called that back then.

And I found out that indeed I had celiac disease, so everything that I was binging and purging on, I was sensitive to. It was causing autoimmune responses in my body.

I was sensitive to dairy, and I had yeast overgrowth, thyroid issues, you know, you name it, like, they found it. And one, they used amino acid therapy on me.

And I was taking targeted amino acids to target the neurotransmitters in my brain to fix those deficiencies because I was so depleted. Once those deficiencies were addressed, then my craving cycle stopped.

And then I was able to not eat the foods that were causing me issues. Right. And so then that whole healing cascade happened. So that was my first dive into it.

And it literally, literally saved my life. Wow. Wow. How interesting. And who recommended the amino acid therapy? My psychiatric nursing professor. Wow.

And then how do you administer that? Is that through injections or how do you do that? No, it's with supplementation. And that is what I do today. That's my main therapy that I use with all of my clients, almost without exception.

And that's what I teach other practitioners to do today as well. So in their practices. But you take targeted therapeutic doses of single dose amino acids.

based on your neurotransmitter profile and i use a form i don't do any blood testing i don't do any urine testing i use

a form of. People that came before me that were way smarter than me that have a set of symptoms in five different areas and then we assess those five different areas and then we try all the amino acids based on your responses.

to those five areas. So we have serotonin, which is like our inner sunshine, and we have endorphins, which is like our inner joy. It makes us feel yummy and good inside, kind of like putting on that warm, comfy sweater.

And then we have our catecholamines, which helps with our focus, our mental energy, our internal drive. Then we have GABA, which allows us to take that deep breath and just kind of let it out, let the stress roll off, right?

Signs of nervous system depletion

And then all of that is dependent upon glucose regulation. So there's amino acids for glucose regulation as well. So we test the amino acids on you in a Zoom appointment, kind of like what we're doing right now, where you open up the capsule, we'll say tryptophan, because tryptophan supports serotonin pathways.

And you put the powder under your tongue, and then we stare at each other awkwardly for like two minutes, and then you say, I feel something or I don't feel something.

I'll ask you, do you feel something cognitively, emotionally, or physically? Do you feel something that has changed? And oftentimes, with that one amino acid, people will be like, yeah, my brain feels lighter, or like my eyes feel brighter.

or like I don't hear as much noise going on around me or I'm focused at the moment, depending on which amino acid it is. But generally speaking, by the time we're done with that appointment, we'll have two to four, maybe even five amino acids that your body responded really, really well to.

And then we start taking those amino acids at specific times of the day and your mood lifts, your cravings stop. There's so many beautiful things that happen.

Parents, are you exhausted from battling your child's eczema? You've tried the prescriptions, the creams, the elimination diets and the flares keep coming back.

I'm Andrea McHugh, mama for and host of the eczema kids podcast. Two of my children suffered with severe eczema and I know the sleepless nights and the nonstop itching and the frustration of feeling like nothing works.

That's why I created this podcast to share what actually does from natural solutions that calm the skin to practical everyday tips that make healing actually possible.

You'll find hope, clarity, and a path forward here. Follow eXimaKids wherever you get your podcasts and head to eXimaKids.com for free recipes and resources to start your child's healing journey today.

So everyone that's listening today, I know they're just like leaning in. This is so intriguing. They're juggling a lot, right? They're in it. They're trying to heal their kids' eczema and they're not sleeping and they're juggling all the moving parts and everything is new and they're just doing their best to do right by their child and special diets and supplements and new routines.

So what are some of those signs that their own brain and nervous system are just running on empty, even though it seems like they're fine on the outside?

Well, you're anxious and your thoughts never stop. That's a huge one. You have a hard time falling asleep at night or you're waking up in the middle of the night and your thoughts never stop.

You tend to maybe lean towards comfort food in the afternoon at the end of the day or maybe even some wine, just something to help you wind down.

Protein, fats, and digestion support

You're really overwhelmed. You feel burnt out. You have a hard time staying on one task because you have 72 things going on. You bounce from those 72 things and you feel like you never get anything done.

You're probably a perfectionist. You have OCD thoughts. I mean, there's so many different things that can go on. You cry a lot, right? You just feel overly sensitive emotionally, physically.

Maybe you develop some chronic pain. All those things are signs of deficiencies and we can fix those deficiencies. So if you're listening and you're like, yeah, yeah, all those symptoms that you just listed.

So you broke down these categories, but in simple terms, just like what could we start to incorporate into your diet. I mean, like, I just don't think that there's a parent listening that isn't experiencing these symptoms, you know, they're dealing with so much.

And like, I just nothing weighs on your heart and your mind and your soul more than watching your child be unwell. And like, exactly. Yeah, I completely understand that I've been in that.

I haven't had eczema issues, but I've had other issues with my kids. So I totally understand what you ladies are feeling. Yeah. Yeah. So what are some things that you could easily incorporate like some high amino acid type of foods that you could easily start to incorporate into your meal.

Protein, protein, protein. So that's where amino acids come from. It's protein. I guarantee if all of you were to call me today, I probably would maybe find like two of you who are eating enough protein.

Like barely anybody eats enough protein. So it's hard. Yeah, you can't regulate, you can't heal, you can't do, you know, a lot of things with your nervous system without it actually being nourished.

And then making sure you're having enough good healthy fats. You know, eat the butter, eat the ghee, eat the coconut oil, eat the nut butters, you know, get those healthy fats in there.

So really, ideally, you're eating the same diet that you're feeding your child. And I know that's hard because- Yes. It feels like you're putting in the extra work and so then you don't want to waste that.

I remember feeling like that way, like you don't want to waste the food on yourself. You know, like my baby needs this pate and all the things, but like that will send you to burnout and the nuthouse faster than anything if you're making.

two to three meals every meal right to support like the healing child and everyone else. So ideally would you say that if you're really feeling these type of symptoms if you're you know like on the scale over here and where you want to be center is is like healthy in quotation marks and but you're feeling pretty pretty off.

Do you need more than an ounce of protein per pound of body weight or is that like a good guideline? I would say that's a good guideline because that's probably not going to fix your anxiety.

It'll help it. But most of the people I deal with, they still need the amino acid supplementation on top of it because the depletion is so deep. it would be really hard to get enough protein in to fix that depletion because you're probably also not digesting well because you've been so stressed out for so long.

So you're not breaking your protein down well. So people are like, I can't eat, you know, 76 ounces of steak a day. Well, no, you probably can't because your gut's gonna like scream at you if you do that.

So that's why we have to work on helping the digestive process so that the amino acids are there to fix the deficiency. And then we really want you to be able to maintain it and just use those amino acids as needed.

They're not like a medication. You don't need them forever. They're just there as a tool to support all the systems in your body. Yeah. So when you're already eating very clean, you're still just irritable and scattered and low energy.

What are some other things that you can do? So if you do sit down to a steak, what are some other things that you can do to just like help maximize your digestion?

Nervous system regulation and daily routines

Yeah, so eat in a calm state if at all possible. Alternate nostril breathing before you eat helps to calm your brain down. That's something super easy and free to do.

Get yourself some good digestive enzymes with hydrochloric acid in there so that you actually can break down your proteins. Um, you know, don't eat a really high carb or high starchy meal because then your proteins will digest a lot better if you don't have a ton of starches in there.

And, you know, eat before like seven or eight o'clock at night. You don't want to eat too late because then you're not digesting and then that disrupts your sleep.

So you want to get a good night's sleep, but you don't want your food to disrupt it. Yeah. And I smile because like we recommend all these things for our kids.

It needs to be like the family lifestyle. I had two kids with celiac disease, so we had to be super strict with everything that we do and I have it too.

So everybody just did it. We just learned how to incorporate all those things into our life and we homeschooled. One of the reasons was because it was so hard to feed your kids outside of your house.

So one of those reasons, I stayed home and I homeschooled and I worked from home and we just made it work. It just worked. But I also was calm. So, I mean, I've had the amino acids for years.

And when your brain is calm, all those moving pieces don't seem to move as fast, if that makes sense. Like it just is easier to take everything, you know, one thing at a time and not be so overwhelmed by everything.

Yeah, absolutely. You're doing everything right. You've cleaned up the diet, you've swapped out the soaps, you put air filters in every room, maybe even live on an organic farm.

And still your child is scratching, bleeding, awake all night. The flares won't stop and no one can tell you why. No parent should have to watch their child suffer, especially when you're already doing everything in your power to fix it.

That's why I created the eczema kids podcast. I'm Andrea McHugh, mama for health coach and the founder of eczema kits. Two of my own children battled with relentless eczema and I know firsthand how heartbreaking and exhausting it is.

Here we go beyond surface level fixes. You'll learn how to uncover hidden triggers. Prepare your child's gut and calm their skin from the inside out. You'll hear the real stories of families who found freedom and insights from practitioners who are rewriting what's possible.

Because eczema isn't just a skin condition, it's a message from the body. And when you listen, you can heal. So follow eczema kits wherever you get your podcasts and start your child's healing journey today.

So if you are feeling just overwhelmed and stressed and a little bit burnt out, how does that connection work between your nervous system and your child's?

Well, they just feed off of us all day, right? They just pick up all of our energy. And so if you are a worried mama,

that affects their immune system, that affects how they digest, that affects their healing process, how sound they sleep.

I mean, I hate to put all those things on us as moms, but that's just kind of the way we were created. And that's the beautiful bond that we have with our children.

And so we are created to protect them, to nourish them. And so they feel so connected to us in every realm, right? And the way we handle life does affect them on pretty much every level.

Yep. I feel like they're our greatest teachers because you just have to, like, to have a good- They're very reclining. Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's it's so amazing the mirror that you get shown back to you every single day.

And, you know, yeah, it's just a learning process every single day. It's so fun. And every day, thankfully, you get another chance. You know, you do as mercies are new every day.

Can you tell me what did you eat today or what did you eat yesterday to get in the protein and the amino acids that you can dietary? Well, yesterday was my fasting day, so I didn't eat yesterday.

So I fast one day a week just to keep everything regulated. It helps with so many different things. Today so far, I had yogurt and my homemade granola.

So I had sheep yogurt and granola, which is grain free. So it's just all nuts sprouted and dehydrated. And then right before I got in here, I had a little bit of some egg bake that had some sausage and bacon in it and some goat cheese.

So pretty protein, pretty good, fat packed. And what's like your favorite go-to lunch for say yourself and your kids? Yeah, so my kids are grown now, but they used to love, I would make just taco meat.

Amino acid examples and practitioner training

I mean, it's so easy, taco meat and salads and avocados and, you know, all the fixings that go with that with, you know, the things they could tolerate.

So it was without a shell, of course, and all those things. And then my favorite meal is to just open up a can of salmon. and add an avocado and some sauerkraut.

Nice. Yeah, that's fast food for me. So for the mom that's listening now, who's just exhausted and stretched way too thin, what's one small realistic step that she could take today to start calming and supporting her body that's not dietary?

I would go to sleep at the same time every night and I would try to go to bed by 10. And I know that's hard for some of you who are listening, but it is vital, vital, vital.

And it's free and you get to choose to do it, right? So we can choose our bedtime as long as your kids aren't, you know, babies and needing to nurse and all those kinds of things.

So I mean, I know there's different circumstances, but To the best of your ability, go to bed by 10 p.m. every single night. And once you have that specific routine, your circadian rhythm will start to regulate over time.

Yeah. I'm just so amazed. I feel like the most impactful elements are generally free and everyone has access to, right? Like the light and the bedtime.

Go have the sun, put your toes on the ground, go to bed at the same time. Right. Yeah. It's a really long way and so easier said than done. Like I'm in a boob right now.

Like I broke my little. Oh no. Two months ago. And so, you know, I'm just, I'm not getting the grounding or. Just put your other foot on the ground. It'll be fine.

You need to, but like right now it's cold, all the things. I get it. And I stay up too late. Even as someone who knows, who knows better. It's really easy to miss these things.

I just feel like you have to be so intentional about it. You do. And just set your alarm on your phone for bedtime instead of getting up. So if you can sleep till you wake up, I think that's the most beautiful thing you can offer your body, is to go to bed at the same time and then let your body sleep until it's done.

I think that's everyone who's listening stream. Right, right. I mean, and my wake up time is usually like 5.30, 6 o'clock. That's just, but my body has been in this rhythm for a long time.

So it's not like I'm sleeping till, you know, near 9 a.m. and I, you know, my kids are running around like Indians or anything like that, but. Yeah, yeah.

What do you think about the devices that are on the market, like like the Apollo and Muse? I mean, they're a device, they're a tool. So I mean, you can use them for sure.

I just generally don't recommend them because I have just a couple things that I'm like, hey, this would be really good. And I don't know, we can get into the weeds a little bit too much, maybe.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Just wondering your opinion. I don't know too much about them, but they sound great, right? Yeah, they can be super helpful. You just have to be in the space where you can add them in.

Can you go a little bit more into, you said there's these five sections that these amino acids help with. Could you maybe give an amino acid example that would help for each of these things?

What helps you produce serotonin? Yeah, tryptophan and 5-HTP. So tryptophan is amazing because it converts into lots of different things in your body and in your brain.

Every cell in your body needs tryptophan. needs serotonin. And then 5-HTP only converts into serotonin. So if somebody has a really big issue with their conversion process, maybe we would try 5-HTP.

But most people I start with L-tryptophan to see how that works, because it's the most nutritive to the brain. Yeah. What about endorphins? So that would be D-phenylalanine, DPA, or DLPA, DL-phenylalanine.

Is there anything that they could eat that would have those things in there? Protein? Yeah. It's all about protein. What about GABA? GABA would be GABA or L-theanine or tarine, maybe a little glycine.

Mostly I use theanine and GABA. And what would help with glucose regulation? L-glutamine. That's so good for many things between your gut and your glucose and your brain and it's just an amazing little supplement.

Yep, that's one of our staples around here, right? So we're healing. So we can try and get over eczema. That's so great. Thank you for all of that. So then people can dive in a little bit further and everyone who's listening is so resourceful too and like does their research and that's super helpful.

I know you also train practitioners through your Mind Thrive certification program. Can you tell us a little bit more about that? Yeah, so this is for anybody who's like currently a practitioner, maybe like a a nutrition coach or a chiropractor, but even just, you know, a mom who wants to take the next level and do some healing for herself and her family, maybe some friends, and then see what happens from there.

So I love to have mamas in the class. It's a six-month course, and we go through learning all about the amino acids. So I teach you all of those five areas, how to use them, how to assess them, what to do if they don't work, what to do if there's a negative reaction.

how to tailor the diet to get the best neurological health that you can possibly have, you know, what other tools to bring on to that. And then we meet every Monday night at 7 p.m.

Central Time and we have a blast. So we go over case studies, we build businesses together, we work on our own amino acid statuses, and it's just a lot of fun.

Closing thoughts and resources

It's a great certification course. How fun. For anyone who's just feeling inspired and ready to learn more, where can they find and connect with you? Yeah, so connect with me on Instagram.

The Call Mom community on Instagram sent me a DM, you know, let me know that you heard me on Andrew's podcast, or you can go to my website larryhammer.com.

All of that will be listed in the show notes. Laurie, thank you so much for your time today. This was excellent. Thank you, Andrea. So much fun. I loved this conversation with Laurie because it's such a powerful reminder that when our brains are nourished, everything else starts to fall into place.

And those amino acids that she talked about, those tiny building blocks that shape our calm and focus and resilience, Show us that our depletion isn't a character flaw, it's chemistry.

And if your brain feels like it's breaking from the constant eczema stress, the sleepless nights and the worry and the endless guessing, that's your cue.

It's time to heal from the inside out for both of you. You can join the eczema elimination method and create your own new beginning. It's the complete roadmap to reverse eczema naturally, rebuild your child's gut barrier and finally bring back peace inside your home.

You'll find that link in the show notes along with all of Lori's contact information, including where to connect with her and learn more about her work with amino acid therapy and brain health.

Take care, friends. I will talk to you next week. Thank you for helping with my eczema. Love you. Thank you for listening today, friend. I know healing your child's skin isn't easy, but you're doing it one smart step at a time.

If this episode gave you a little hope or a better night's sleep, leave a quick review so more exhausted parents can find eczema kids and finally rest easy too.

Follow, share, and let's help more kids heal. Take care.