One Family's Journey Through Mold Illness and Lyme Disease...A Story of Hope and Encouragement Transcript

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Podcast Introduction and Guest Welcome

Your genes hold the answers to your family's overall health. I'm Dr. Paula Kruppstadt and on the Get to the Root with Hope for Healing podcast, I sit down with experts in genetics, functional medicine, and family care to explore what's really going on beneath the surface so you can stop guessing and start healing.

From personalized insights to practical tools, we bring you whole family wellness that starts at the root. Welcome to the Get to The Root podcast. I'm your host, Dr.

Paula Krebstadt, and I have a very special couple that I am going to be interviewing today. Here at Hope for Healing, we care for families, children that have complex medical problems.

And Leanne Joyce and her husband Chad have agreed to let me pick their brains and have them walk through what has happened in their life. Another thing that I think is really significant, we're just really blessed to have Leanne as our triage nurse here at the office.

So if you call and you talk to our Triage Nurse as a patient, she understands what it means when you have a water damaged home. and you lose everything.

When you have a child or children or yourself that has vector-borne illness like Bartonella or Lyme and what that can show up as and common things that happen when you're breathing in, you know, stuff in a water damaged building like asthma and recurrent ear infections.

So I really want to thank you guys for joining me today. Thank you. Yeah. So I think it would probably be a good idea for you to just kind of start out and describe when this journey started.

Back in 2015, we were living in a home in Conroe. We had our second to youngest son. He was brought home to that home and everything was pretty okay.

Jared's Early Strep Infections and PANDAS Signs

There were some developmental delays that I noticed, but when Jared was 10 months old, he was diagnosed with his first strep throat infection. And we did the typical course of antibiotics.

I think it was amoxicillin. he ended up with a rash. So that's when they changed him to ceftanir. We did the ceftonir and he got over it. And then less than a week later, he was exhibiting signs of strep throat again.

So the pediatrician was a little confused by this and asked us to go to see an ENT and we went and saw Dr. Burke, who I think you are familiar with. And I was also working with her at the time at Herman, where she did her surgeries.

And anyway, she put him back on, I want to say, seftoneer again. That cycle happened three different times where he'd go off the septoneers, come back with streptote within a week.

So after about the fourth or fifth time she said, He, you know, and we were noticing other signs that really restricted eating. So even at a very young age, because he was our fifth child, he's our 5th child.

Just noticed that he had unique characteristics that our other children had not had before. And it, whenever he'd be developed strep throat, all he would want were strawberries.

He would not eat anything else. His separation anxiety went through the roof way more than a typical toddler's that you would expect. And so he was kept on ceftanir for 15 months.

Oh my gosh. Especially his TNA done at 25 months old. Can I stop you there? So it sounds like classic pandas and the clinical definition says three years and above, but he obviously had the signs of pandas.

And Chad, what are you thinking during all of this when you watch your son on chronic antibiotics? Because everybody knows you shouldn't have to be on a chronic antibiotic.

But you don't want to take the tonsils out of the kid that's really, really small either. So what do you think as a dad? During this time, I was beginning to wonder what really was around us in the environment that really made things happen for him because, you know, try to keep a clean home.

You try do maintenance and everything to, keep everything in a normal standard and your child's still getting sick. Yeah. And then you question, is it something that we have been carriers for or what's missing that were not identifying?

So we tried everything that could think of to, you know, go through and ask the doctors that, we saw and anybody else, typical questions. Yeah. It was a lot of the same stuff that most people deal with.

Now your house, could you see any visible mold at that point in time? Could you smell anything abnormal? We didn't, we didn' t notice anything. Like it wasn't no, at the point and time we hadn't put two and two together.

Okay. During this time when I would talk with Dr. Burke in between and I was here at work, she's the one who mentioned pandas to me. And that brought us to a panda specialist up in Plano whose name is Dr Raul.

Yes. We took to see Jared and one of our other children, Kylie, who was probably 13 or 14 at the time, because she was exhibiting very similar symptoms where she went from being a very bubbly straight A eighth grader to couldn't get out of bed.

Kylie's Lyme Diagnosis and Colt's Severe Respiratory Illness

You know, on occasion told me that she wished that, she could just go to sleep and not wake up. I thought she was just not transitioning well to high school.

We took her to Dr. Rao, had labs drawn, and about two weeks later, I had the Montgomery County Health Department calling me, telling me my daughter tested positive for Lyme disease.

So then we have this. In between all of this time, we had our sixth child, our youngest son, Colt, The first time we were in the ER with Colt, he was six weeks old with RSV, very severe respiratory distress.

And Colts, He was in and out of the E. R. and hospital multiple times. His first year of life, I was able to get him like with steroids and nebulizers and everything, be able keep him at home.

When he was about 17 months old, we were admitted to Texas Children's for severe respiratory distress. He was put on a CPAP. he tested positive for the human metanoma virus.

We got over it, got sent back home. And then about two months later, I was nursing him on our bed and I looked up at our vent. And I told Chad he needed to come clean the vent because it looked dirty.

So he just kind of tries to wipe it off with a towel and it's not coming off. Then he takes the vint down. And that's the picture I've shared with you that this was the vents that was over Colts Creek.

Yes. Yep. You know what? And then he spent his second birthday in the ICU at Texas Children's Hospital on a ventilator, right? Okay. I mean, what we do here at Hope for Healing, we teach families about what call chronic

inflammatory response syndrome.

And I'm going to share with everyone this picture, and this is what you found. Is this 2017 now? This is the summer of 2018. Okay. Let me pull this up and I'm going to share this right here.

So this is, the outside of the vent and then the inside. All right. So what happened then? Because I mean, that obviously rocked your world and you're like starting to put the pieces together that this is why one of our son had chronic strep and needed chronic antibiotics.

Why our bubbly teenager wants to die and wants stay in bed and why our little boy is so critically ill. He's been in the hospital in that ICU three times.

What's going through your mind when you see this garbage growing in The Bent? When I first opened that one, I was like, at first I thought it was dust originally.

And then when I pulled it down, and I'm like. This is not dust. Like this is mold. and as like let's see what's in the next one. So I went room by room and every single vent cover that I took down throughout the whole entire home had similar pictures.

Oh man. And it was blowing throughout the whole entire house. Yeah. So what happened then? I mean, what were the steps to get you out of that house and who helped educate you on what to do?

Well, so kind of going backwards a little bit, Kylie, that was our daughter with the Lyme disease. She ended up having a pick line for nine months. While she was going through the PICC line treatments for her antibiotics, I was researching other ways to help heal her and mold kept coming up over and over again.

I don't think Hope for Healing had quite established yet. And then when you guys came on the radar, we were just at a point financially that I could not, everything had to be covered by insurance.

stays and all medical bills, you know how it goes. And so unfortunately we're, but your name and clinic didn't start populating. So I kind of started researching more what mold does, how mold affects the body.

Along with those three kids, we had two other children, Jessie, who was almost an adult. She tested, she tested positive for the. Yep, EOE, which is inflammation of her esophagus, chronic inflammation.

Eosinophilic esopagitis. Yeah. She tested positive for that. And she had the biopsy done in downtown because we couldn't figure out why she kept having serious stomach issues.

She developed vitiligo, which is an autoimmune skin condition where your pigment leaves your skin. And she also was diagnosed as being bipolar during this time.

Discovering Mold in the Home

So all five of our kids were going through something all, all during that time, so when we finally saw the mold, we of course brought in a, you know, an inspector who confirmed that there was mold all in our ventilation system.

The air conditioning unit was upstairs in the attic and had leaked. And we did not know that. And it had a drain pan. So it leaked into the drainpan, not come through the ceiling.

That's why we didn't see it. But we don't know when it started leaking, how long it has been leaking. We started with cleaning the vents and trying to get that remediated that way.

Then I want to say in July or August, we started looking for a house to buy because I just knew we were not going to be safe in this house. Yeah. And then Colt just kept getting sicker and sick and until that November, we were in and out of the ER several times and then they finally admitted him because he went unresponsive on me at the

house.

That's when that was his second birthday when he spent 30 days in the hospital. I looked at those on a ventilator and during that time period, We were able to close on brand new build.

Yeah, that we moved into, so Colt never returned to that house. He was just brought home to our new house." Now, our boys at this time were two and three, and they were non-verbal.

Jared had been diagnosed with having autism spectrum disorder and had enrolled in ABA and all the other therapies. some developmental delays as far as motor skills and things of that nature.

And so that was the biggest thing is just getting them out of the mold. Yes. Was this 2018? Yes, ma'am. Yeah. At that time too, Leanne, I did not know near what I know now.

I didn't know that every single one of my children had chronic inflammatory response to, nor did I know that all four of them have Lyme disease. Also, with the whole neuropsychiatric picture, antidepressants sprinkled around the household, eating disorders.

So I appreciate you guys being vulnerable and sharing this because people need to know they're not alone when all this takes place. So, okay, so let's go.

It's November 2018. You bring Colt from the ICU into this new house. Then over the next year, what starts happening to, say, Jared and his language and these other things?

So within nine months of us being at that house, both of the boys had started being verbal, where they were able to communicate their needs verbally, not just using sign language or using the picture cards they could point at.

And they also both potty trained. Within that first year, they had, were not pot-ty-trained. And once Colt was in, like, come home to the hospital, he has never been in the ER since.

All of his respiratory things went away, just getting out of the mold. Jared's development picked up substantially. Kylie went on to complete most of high school.

She did, you know, and, go on with her life where she didn't have those suicidal ideations. And then, like, we started on the path to healing. We didn t know about the binders and everything like that.

But at that point, We started a very clean lifestyle, trying to incorporate as much as we could as far as organic food and, you know, clean water, all of that to try to help support their bodies.

I did do some detox stuff with the glutathione and the NAC. different things along those lines. So that following year, we saw just a substantial improvement in our health and emotionally and physically.

Or maintenance on the home, you know, brand new home. You just want to keep a good clean environment because you knew what you left. Yeah. You don't want to go back to that because of all the problems that came through with it.

So the maintenance issues really were fairly simple, you know, keeping the environment clean, changing the filters out regularly, sometimes even to the point where you think I just did this.

Moving to a New House and Early Recovery

And when you get up there and you take them down and it You're like, they are dirty again. That's just normal. We live in Texas where the dust blows and humidity is up all the time.

Holland's in the air. Everything is in here. So it's a good thing that you're changing it out. Yeah, Chad, you offer a

unique perspective because, and this is where I kind of wanted to hear from you too, because earlier this week we had a little child in the office that several years ago they tested their home.

And they were still in the home. And then this child had pretty much an overnight decompensation where they weren't wanting to wear clothes. They weren' eating severe OCD.

When they brought the child to the office where they almost couldn't even get them into the Office, I'm trying to be very protective of their identity and stuff.

The first thing out of my mouth, looking back at they did a simple dust collection, there hurts me too, which is a measure of five molds. There's only five mold that tend to make people sick.

grain that's got something in it. But that number was 23 and what it should be is 10 or less. And then when we started talking about this little girl's stuff of what was happening, it ended up that it was a waxing and waning for several months.

So I really feel like when a dad accepts the charge and takes over. That really, really helps. So I would love to hear what you would have to say to the men in the audience, to dads, you know, because you were watching all this happen.

You're watching your wife sick. Your kids are sick, your paying hospital bills, and you're dealing with this house. What words of encouragement and kind of like where to ground yourself?

Would you talk to the dads in the audience? Well, what comes to my mind right off hand is as a man and a husband, you're supposed to be the protector for your wife and your children.

That's been the basis of existence throughout history. And if that means that you got to get up and go clean or go do something, to keep your family, you know, safe, then you've got to do whatever it takes to get up there and do it.

And if, if it means just helping out by doing a little bit more dusting or doing it a bit changing of the filters, your helping more than what you really realize.

Yeah. Because what happens is if you let that stuff linger, the moisture that's already in the Houston area, you know, in Texas in general, that it's going to form and that bacteria is just going build and build.

And then it just becomes a cesspool for everything else. You may end up with a bigger problem rather than just keeping your home clean and changing a few filters out.

So simple preventative maintenance can help, but also you have to understand that when your family is exhibiting symptoms, they're not exactly crazy or something's off.

You have be able to identify that and say, okay. How can I help? What can do? Because for me, it doesn't bother me as much, but what's happened to me over time is after repeated exposures, you become more susceptible.

So you have to take care of yourself as well while you take of the family. I'm so glad you said that. You know, moms I think are the worst about taking care of themselves, but what you just said speaks into men.

And let me just probe a little deeper because we know that our physical bodies can't heal unless we take care the mental, emotional, spiritual, maybe sexual abuse and trauma that's taken place.

Dad's Perspective on Protection and Prevention

So let's just say that you're talking to a man who all he's seeing is dollar signs. I'm wondering what you would say to convince him that this isn't just money.

What words of wisdom from having lived through this, looking at the illness of your wife and your children, what would you want to maybe draw on, let's say that you're getting coffee with one of these dads and he's just devastated.

He's like, I don't know how the heck I'm going to afford this. I just don' know what to do. You're talking to him as a friend and as man, you know, what would you say to kind of get him grounded or, just where to dig deep.

And I am open to anything you want say, because I know that Spirituality means so much to you and Leanne and to me too. And when the bottom drops out, you know, we are all turning to a source that can infuse us with hope and give us life.

So you're at the coffee shop, a dad tells you, my gosh, We just found this devastatingly huge amount of mold. What am I going to do? I'd like to thank Fagran Genomics for sponsoring our podcast.

Without knowing what your precision genetics are, you don't have a roadmap. So please log on to our website, schedule a welcome call, and see what the Wellness Blueprint can do for you.

That's the premier and proprietary genetic panel that Fogran has allowed us to create. All right, first thing I would say is you're not alone. And what you need to do is find a group of people that can help you, either physically or emotionally, because the emotional pull is going to pull on you a lot more than the physical.

As your family starts getting sick or stays sick because of the environment, That's going to weigh on you and make you think that you're not doing something and you may be doing everything that can.

So if you have people that have been through this, you can bounce questions off of them and say, what did you do? What can I help with? Even then. know, thought that just came to my mind was you could call somebody and say, Hey, can you come help me clean this stuff so my family can be safe?

And if they answer no, then they're not your friend. Yeah. Honestly, you know, cause we're here to take care of each other and we do it in love. Everything should be fine.

If you ask me to come help do this, I'll be right there. We may have to find some PPE, personal protective equipment, but we'll get into it. And that's really beautiful to hear.

And I think that, you know, when we think about it, there's a lot of men that feel like they have to do things alone, like the friendless American male, and they to suck it up, pull themselves up by their bootstraps and not ask for help.

But when your children or your wife or even your own health is crashing and burning, it's so hard to… Community is what you're talking about and vulnerability and transparency and just asking for help.

And sometimes even our own families are our worst enemies. I mean, if they never experience sickness. And you've stayed pretty healthy through all of this, right, Chad?

You've kind of just been the stabilizing force. You probably don't have a vulnerable genetic makeup for all this junk. It's slowly coming around as more exposure and You know, before, and I'm admitting this, I did not use enough personal protective equipment as I said.

Because I've been trained, you know for say spray painting cars or lead, lead remediation through the Navy and stuff like that. The suits and everything that we had to wear for that process was extensive.

Yeah. And I was just walking in there. Yeah. And just doing this. Well, I put myself at risk. So you have to understand you're taking on a certain risk that you may end up paying for later on.

If you protect yourself, you are going to end being able to more protect your family and work with that. Yeah. By

default, because of my education, all the medical stuff, he kind of defaults to me to make decisions and guide their care, our care.

But it would have been much more difficult had he resisted me with whatever treatments, therapies our kids needed. Because that was just one more battle that I didn't need to fight.

That meant so much to me, just knowing that he was there, not necessarily understanding it all, but didn't question what the doctors were telling us we needed to do or what maybe the internet was suggesting I go do and the latest specialists that I reached out to.

And that was very pivotal in, I think, our healing and that when I told them we have to get out of this house, that we were getting out the house.

Family Progress and Encouragement

Yeah. There wasn't that battle of healing our family, what needed to be done. Yeah. Well, and you know, I think when people look at social media and all this stuff, they think, you now, the world out there on social medias, a panacea and that's not life.

Life isn't perfect and we have ups and downs and. We can't compare and, all those things. Chad, thank you so much for that. I really appreciate that Leanne for you.

as a nurse and then someone who's still walking the journey with the boys and Kylie and Jared and Cole, because they're the, you know, can you just kind of give us a little bit of an update at this point in time how everybody's doing?

Because you guys have had just, wow, I mean, so much, and you still have smiles on your face. This is one thing I say about Leanne. I'm like, Leann, i love your laugh.

And, you know, I'll hear outside my office or in the hallways, and it's like, it gives me great joy. And we literally hear at Hope for Healing, we're talking about this today in our management meeting, that we have to choose that.

Because when people reach out to us that are as sick as you guys were, You forget things, get upset, need help, want help yesterday. We're doing the best we can because we are human beings too.

But what would you, let's hear your update and then any words of encouragement that you would want to offer too. So Kylie is living an independent life.

She's working, she's, going back to school. she is, doing pretty good. And she has stopped most of the supplements and everything I put her on. and she decides she wants to take control of her health.

So she can jump back on the bandwagon, but she, is doing a lot. There was a point in time, I didn't know that our daughter would ever move out of our house.

And so to see her living on her own and doing her thing, it brings us great joy. The boys are thriving. Colt, he is a patient here, like a full functional patient.

We've gone through the SIRS stuff. He's on binders. we're still working on him because his SERS biomarkers came back pretty elevated. And for the most part, He is brilliant and so funny.

and we didn't have his tonsils taken out this year because it just, they needed to go. Um, had a little setback there, but he's recovered beautifully from that.

And I, anybody who knew Colt before the surgery and now will tell you that his emotional regulation is so much better. His sleep is much because he didn't have sleep apnea and his immune system has calmed down.

So he is not in this constant. anxiety mode. His anxiety was really overwhelming at times. He had a weird separation anxiety from his older brother. And so anytime Jared was out of sight, where's Jared?

Do we know where Jared is? I mean, he could just be upstairs in the house and Colt is, you know, would get really high strung. So he hasn't, those behaviors have not come back since his TNA.

I'm very thankful that we went ahead and did that. Jared, He's doing so well. He has some delays still, but there is another component with a genetic anomaly that he has that, I think, lends itself to that.

But as far as his immune system, he is one of the most sweet and compassionate, empathetic humans that I know, and he's willing to give his shirt off his back to the person if they needed it.

He just really is a beautiful human. And I'm so thankful that, I mean, he has his quirks. We all have his quarks. But for the most part, you would not know that he was ever diagnosed as having ASD.

I didn't know when I met him. I did know that. Yeah, he is. He's a real sweetie. It's very affectionate. And you know, I'll just give a little shout out to Dr.

Rosalia Burke too. I worked with her at St. Luke's Hospital here in the Woodland. She's with Texas ENT Associates and she knows about Pan's Pandas and If you go see her for a tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy, you have to say this is for pans-pantas because a lot of times their receptionist area, they don't give the referral to her.

And we always write on there that that's the primary, but she's an excellent surgeon and excellent, beautiful human being and understands it and has accommodated several of our patients like kind of emergently.

to remove tonsil or tissue and adenoidal tissue for these kids that have these bugs that are growing and their immune system doesn't tag them appropriately.

So I am so grateful for you sharing your story and Chad, especially having your insight as a dad who's walked through this and Leanne, your perspective as medical professional And Dr.

Rao up in Plano, he's retired. I received a lot of patients that he saw. And then there's a wonderful pediatric neurologist here in town, Dr David Doane and then Dr Melissa Jones, who inherited a lotta their patients and so did I.

But it's so hard to find providers that believe in the mental dysregulation. that also understand infections. And so you've walked that journey, you know what people are going through, and now we have you on our team to bless parents and moms and dads who call and go, how can I get my kid out of this flair?

And sometimes we're just praying and we are like, man, what are we going to do? We just sent someone to the hospital yesterday. Thank you for the words of encouragement.

And I also just want to give a plug for Fagran Genomics because the Wellness Blueprint helps us map out the playing field, show us our vulnerabilities, and show is how our beautiful bodies are meant to work.

So thank you, for sharing your story of recovery through mold and through Lyme disease. All right. Well, you guys have a great night. Thanks for joining us at Get to the Root with Hope for Healing.

If this episode helped you, follow and share it with someone who needs it and leave a review. It helps others find us too. For a free consultation, visit our website at gettotheroot.com with a number two and schedule a welcome call.

We'll see you soon.