Introduction to Mitochondria in Kids

Welcome back to the Restore Your Mitochondria discussion. I'm your host, Laura Frontera. I'm bringing you experts to help you boost your energy and fix your health so you can build the life you love.

And today, my special guest is my friend, Doctor Anna Maria temple. Hi, Anna Maria. Welcome to the summit. Hi. I'm so excited to be here. I know it's going to be good.

You are going to be one of the few pediatric experts on this summit, and this is an important conversation to have for our kiddos, too. Mitochondria problems don't just occur in adults.

Kids can suffer the consequences of mitochondria not working well. And so you're going to bring that conversation to life for us today on the summit. And whether you're a parent, a grandparent or an anti or an uncle, this is relevant.

We all have kids in our life in some capacity. Most of us do. So thank you for being here. I'm so excited. This is great. I think it's a topic that we don't often the address in children and we sometimes ponder about, like what some of the things that our children are dealing with.

And anyway, there's some I'm excited to get into, some tips and tricks that people can start doing right away to improve their children's mitochondrial function.

Oh, so good, so good. Well, let's introduce you to our audience. You are a holistic pediatrician. You're the you are a bestselling author, a mother of three and award winning speaker at Harvard Club of Boston.

And you've had over 100 TV news and podcast appearances. You've been busy over your career. Your passion. Your passion is to inspire, educate and empower mamas to revamp their family's health and prevent children from developing chronic disease.

So we're going to get into mitochondria with kids. So let's just jump in. What are some of the signs of mitochondrial fatigue in children. How might you know a child in your life is suffering from this?

One of the things that I see oftentimes is parents come in and one of their concerns is that, gosh, my children have an activity and they've been there for like three hours, and then they're wiped out.

And then they have to, like, take a nap. And we're not talking about like four year olds. We're talking about, you know, like seven year olds, eight year olds, ten year olds, you know, a four year old, you expect that they're going to have an intense activity and they might still be a little bit tired.

Maybe they need a nap. But we're talking about the older kids. But even when we're looking at the younger ones in kids that I see that let's say they're three and four, they're they're having some issues with core strength.

They're having issues with some fine motor, some gross motor. They don't seem to have the endurance of their, their other kids. When you see them at a playground, for example, you're like, oh my gosh, how come my child and this goes for all ages, how come my child is the first one that has to sit down?

How come my child is the first one that, has to call a timeout? How come the my, my, my child is the first one that has to leave the playground first?

Because they're always seem to be whining. Their legs are tired and again, right. It's sometimes a little bit hard to discern because little kids complain and they want to be held.

They want to be carried by their parents. But not. But this is goes beyond where you're noticing that your child is always the one that has to be carried, always the first one to leave the playground.

And then in this way, I just have to say, I remember this when I was a kid. I can remember kids that couldn't keep up with the rest, right? Or they they just didn't seem to have the stamina and they were the last one picked on the team. Right?

Because everybody knows that kid can't keep up. Oh my gosh.

Signs of Mitochondrial Fatigue

And even with everything I know, I never because I don't work in pediatrics, I never would have thought, wow, those kids probably had some thing going on at the cellular level where they couldn't function as high as the other kids.

Correct. Because, I mean, one of the things that you always talk about is like mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell, powerhouse of the body. So the motor in the engine is not running at optimum speed.

When you can't run on a playground, you can be the fastest one. And again, we don't I'm not necessarily saying that our kids need to be the fastest, but they shouldn't be always last.

Every single time they're last, every single time they're picked last. And then, you know, when we look at school performance they fatigue early. They can't they don't have stamina for standardized tests.

They're their brain fog. Some ADHD actually can be because of mitochondrial dysfunction, inattention, anxiety. It can show up in many other and mood disorders and irritability.

Because if you are always tired, if you're always fatigued, if you're always brain fog, if you always feel like you cannot just memorize and remember all this stuff from the school, how can you not be irritable?

How do you not develop anxiety around test taking? How do you not start fearing school because you always feel like you're not good enough from the aspect of the mitochondrial perspective?

Wow. Oh my gosh, this is so enlightening. Now I'm starting to think about grumpy adults and slow adults wondering, right? I mean, right, but a lot. How many of us as adults you feel like in your 40s and 50s you're like, oh, it's just an aging thing.

And then I'm just kind of tired. Is that when or maybe your powerhouse in your body has just, like, lost their, you know, the will to live and it's not is not firing on all, all the cylinders and therefore you're manifesting it through your own brain fog, your own tiredness and again, when you're a mom and you have four kids running around you trying to run a business, etc., you're like, oh, it's because of that.

Is it? Or is it something deeper? Yeah. Okay, so now we know what to look for in kids with what mitochondrial fatigue might look like. Now why do they get it?

Why are children who are born perfect? Why are they getting this so young? What is the problem? I mean, yeah, it makes sense. If you've been on the planet for 50 years and you've filled up your toxic bucket, but what's going on with kids?

Oh gosh. You know, the story is so complex by, you know, let's get genetics out of the way because everyone goes. It's genetic. There's nothing we can do about it.

So there is a genetic component. Absolutely. And actually in the traditional model you can get genetic testing done and you can look at the different mitochondria.

So and when I was in traditional practice I had children that by they had genetic screens from the traditional neurologist that mitochondrial dysfunction.

And it was deemed genetic because you can put it on the chromosomes. However, we also have the kids that in when the babies are in our belly, they are exposed to a lot of toxic things, unfortunately.

And I know I'm always a fun because they're like, oh, everyone's like, oh my God, here you go again. But again, the water that mama drinks, if it's a certain kind of water, if we're just not paying attention to the water we drink and it's filled with fluoride and filled with chlorine and filled with other, antibiotics and things in the water source.

Okay, well, that's going through the placenta to our babies. What about the heavy metals in the soils? Heavy metals in our food that's going to go through the placenta into our babies.

The stress that mama feels. You know, I had two babies in residency. I mean, as a resident, the amount of stress is so incredible. No one told me that I need to actually pay attention, figure it out because and tone it down a little bit.

I mean, I'm not going to quit residency, but there's ways to handle it. No one told me that. And so my children, two of them, were actually conceived in a tremendous amount of stress.

And that, of course, is going to affect your mitochondria. And then we get to the mom food. When I was pregnant, you know, all I was told was like, okay, well, don't eat cold cuts and don't eat raw cheese and raw fish and you're good to go.

So I ate all this processed food. It was, you know, in the cafeteria, in the hospital cafeteria. I don't even discuss the food that was served in the cafeteria.

And then we would buy frozen burritos and frozen pizzas. But we were cooking at home, and it was all filled with chemicals and food coloring and processed preservatives, which I was eating.

And then that went onto my babies. So by the time our babies are born and I haven't even covered medications that mamas take, but by the time the my my babies were born, they were very exposed to so many chemicals.

And we also haven't even touched on all the chemicals and the cleaners and the makeup and the cosmetics that go on our bodies, in our in our homes, that also go into the placenta.

In fact, there was a recent study that showed that in the umbilical cord, there are over 283 chemicals that are found in the blood that goes to our babies.

Why Children Develop Mitochondrial Dysfunction

And these are toxic chemicals. I have so much guilt. Can I just say, right now, I have so much guilt for my own child. And you didn't even talk about firstborn child who gets the offload of the mother's chemicals worse than the other kids, right?

So your firstborn child is doomed, not doomed. But we'll talk about what we can do to fix it. But you know what you mean. They get the big load from us.

But I have such guilt because I, working as a nurse practitioner for 20 years before I found functional medicine, and I totally had had toxins coming into my body when I was pregnant with my daughter, thinking I was doing everything right. Right.

Oh, I'm not drinking alcohol. I'm not doing drugs. I'm not smoking. I'm not around secondhand smoke. And I'm not eating raw fish and and Brie and, you know, I'm doing good.

That's what I thought. That's exactly what I thought I was like, I am awesome. And then now I'm like, oh, wow.

Okay, I didn't know. Yeah, yeah, I know, I know.

And then you know that. What about at school? What are our kids getting exposed to at school? So once they go to school what toxins are coming into them?

So once we're going to school, I mean, you know, now that we've had this pandemic, now the amount of cleaners has increased exponentially. The amount was exposure to bleach and chemicals and cleaning products is through the roof.

And do we want to even talk about the fact that during the summer times and I live in Charlotte, North Carolina. So I'm in the South during the summer.

It is hot and steamy hot. And the schools, there's no one in school. So what is happening in the vents? What's in their air ducts and air systems? So when school gets in session and everything gets turned back on, all the mold and all the stuff that has been sitting in the ducts is getting sent to our children, and then let's talk about school food.

I mean, you look at the food that is being served to our kids, and it's deemed nutritious, and it's filled with food coloring, preservatives and chemicals that I would never serve my kids.

And that is nutritious. You know, we have a free lunch, a free breakfast at our school, and it's Lucky Charms, Cinnamon Toast Crunch, regular milk chocolate milk or strawberry.

You know what? That's the free lunch. That's the free breakfast. It's free breakfast. Bring your children to school so we can poison them with free lunch or free breakfast. Excuse me for breakfast and. Yeah.

And when I went to the schools and I was like, can we. I met with the principal of my kid's school and I said, hey, listen, can we talk about the food?

You know, the lunch can what can we do about the lunch? And they're like, there's children that this is the only meals that they have. They have breakfast and lunch.

And other than that, they go hungry. And I was like, great. So should we not be feeding them better food than Doritos? And, I mean, and the mac and cheese that we have squeezed out of a bag and the pizza and the hot dogs, I'm like my point exactly.

I had to leave. I was asked to leave you out. You were asked to leave. Well, I mean, there was nothing that we can do here. So I'm like, yeah, so you at least could send your kids to school with a good lunch, correct?

Correct. So yeah. So we have tons of exposures. Yeah, yeah. A lot of exposure. Okay. So so what I'm hearing is root causes of mitochondrial fatigue for kids.

It comes from a toxic load from the mom. It comes from toxins in the environment. What about what about infections in kids grade point. And so we do have a lot of infections again in kids.

I would probably say that what I see most is that the kids have had like viruses that then had bacteria and that antibiotics upon antibiotics on upon a biotics.

And the number one infection I see is Candida yeast, that we all have in our bodies. However, because of the antibiotics, it kills a good bacteria. So now the yeast is taken over.

I do see some parasites, however, not as much as you would see on Facebook, because everyone comes in and I was like, right, but we do these very thorough multilevel stool tests and I see some parasites.

I would say I see more bad bacteria and more yeast than anything else. Of course, I have some children that have

Lyme and Bartonella. EBV is not a big issue in the in the population that I see and in.

And Bartonella is small on the scale of Candida and other microbiome imbalances. And what I would say about parasites, I mean parasites are my jam. The test only looks for 15 or so types of parasites that are only gut parasites.

And there's hundreds of parasites and some are not even in your gut. They're in your bloodstream or in your organs, and they're protozoa, not, you know, something that you can even see with the naked eye.

So a bench, you know, microscopy, where you're looking at a microscope, but a stool sample, you're maybe going to miss it. So yeah, I would say there's more parasites out there than we even think, you know, and there's more viruses and there's more bacteria than than we are able to to capture.

Totally true. Totally true. Okay. So lots of root causes. So now we've identified what kids might, might be acting like if they have adrenal fatigue. We have a good idea of where these root causes are coming from.

So now what. So now you've identified this. What do we do to intervene. Where where should parents start? You know, my first place where everybody in my clinic starts is nutrition.

If we don't have nutrition, we're not on board with that. You're just going to waste money on supplements. You're wasting money on all these other treatments.

I have a lot of kids that we get the nutrition on par. We do it. Supplements, we heal the gut. We get rid of all the stuff that is ailing them, and then they fall back into the old ways and I'll tell you their symptoms go back.

And then, despite all this stuff, so the the people that do well is the folks that are maintaining the same, the nutritional level that we go through in the treatment.

And so there's treatments sounds so big and scary. But here's the thing. When my kids were little, all my kids were super sick. They had asthma, eczema, allergies, chronic constipation, chronic ear infections, chronic croup, ADHD, I mean, you name an illness.

My kids had it and the weight and I didn't know anything that I was. It was about 14 years ago and I started with nutrition. I was like, it can be wrong to get rid of food coloring and add fruits and vegetables in their diet.

And as a pediatrician, I was like, okay, well, they have strawberries at lunch and they have broccoli at dinner, so we're good. Okay. When we're getting serious about nutrition and about mitochondrial health, we really got to step up our game.

And we're talking I want to see plan points at every meal. And in our, you know, for my patients, I'm like, you need to have a fruit or vegetable every time you sit down to eat.

It may sound daunting, especially with picky kids and such. We start with one bite when we're dealing with picky eaters, because that's the first thing that when people hear me say this, that I got, my kids are never going to do it because they're picky.

So I'm not great. But everyone could take a bite of one grape. You can take one bite of a carrot, sick, you can take one bite, or you can do a cucumber slice.

You can do one organic edamame, you know, so we have to start really small. So plants are super important because they're filled with the right nutrients that the mitochondria needs.

One of the things that a mitochondria needs vitamin C. And everybody's like I'm going to get my vitamin C from a pill. I'm like, okay no you get it from like red peppers, red peppers and strawberries and go, what actually are the highest foods in vitamin C?

Nutrition as the Foundation for Healing

And also when you get your vitamins from food, the body is able to absorb it and recognize it better than when it's from a supplement. Even though it's a fancy supplement from my name, you know I have my own supplement line.

It's amazing. But the human body responds the best from when getting nutrients from food. You know, I talk about organic foods. They're things that we need B12, and we need methylated B12 in order to get the mitochondria really cranking.

Where do you get your methylated B12 from eggs, from liver? Yes, I know from organ meats, but from other meats. And everyone's like, oh, but in France, my friends, paté and live and liver stuff is, you know, fancy.

I was in Spain last week, and liver paté was like a normal thing that you get at the grocery store. So my children all had to eat better. But we can get again when we're buying synthetic supplements.

We don't know what we're looking for. So that's why I always go for nutrition. Decrease the child's sugar intake. Children. I mean, we can go on a whole hour on sugar, keeping the added added sugar, not natural sugar from fruits and vegetables, added sugar to less than 24g a day and removing food coloring from your life.

Removing preservatives. When I started my journey, I can do all of this. I picked one thing and I would, you know, Cheez-Its was a big cracker in our house.

So I was like, I'm going to replace the Cheez-Its. So I went and read the ingredients, and I only picked a cracker that had ingredients that I could read 100%.

And my goal is to keep the ingredients less than five in a packaged food, because if you keep it less than five, you're more likely to avoid the preservatives, the food coloring, and all the junk.

So in summary, for food, if you're added sugar to less than 24g a day, if you can't read it, don't eat it. Try to keep your packaged food amount of ingredients to less than five or less, and start introducing a fruit and a vegetable at breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.

It's. This is perfect advice for adults too. I mean, I know adults who eat like kids. Honestly, I do too because the apple doesn't fall far. Okay, you know, when when my daughter was little, we used to call it her.

No thank you bite. She had to have a no thank you bite of everything. And my claim to fame as a parent is my child's favorite vegetable. As a child was brussel sprouts.

I won that one big time. Yes. And it's the way you cook them too. My my brother's a chef, and he taught me this amazing way to sauteed brussel sprouts.

That even the most picky eater eats it and says, that's amazing. Yeah, this is good. So food food is so important. So what about well, what about school?

So obviously not not having the school lunch. Any tips and tricks on getting your kids to eat the lunch that you pack them? Yeah. So, when I started, I started slow, and, you know, my kids had Lunchables.

They had. The beautiful thing is, I did it all wrong, and I had all the garbage in my kids food. So I've gone through the whole journey because I'd be like, oh, you don't understand.

I'm like, oh, no, but I do, because we had, you know, juice boxes and chocolate milk in their lunches and you name it. But start switching out one thing at a time, like when it comes to juice, for example.

Again, it's juice is a ton of added sugar. I know, and it says natural and it comes from fruits. One things I tell people I'm like, right, so little box of honest kids juice is about 6 to 7 apples.

So I don't know any children that sit down and have 6 to 7 apples in one sitting. You'd never do that. But in a juice, you remember you'd eat that on top of the fact they remove the fiber and all the vitamins and minerals and then they pasteurized.

Okay. So in the juice example, the way I started, I was like, instead of doing juice every day, we started doing just every other day. And then it was juice twice a week, and then was juice once a week.

And then then it just went away. And then my kids just I stopped buying it. Once you stop buying it, they're going to stop whining. It's going to take some time for the whining to stop.

But most kids under the age of 16 don't have a driver's license and they don't have money, so they can't really go to the grocery store. So if you want your children to stop eating a certain way, you have to stop supplying them with that kind of food, because we are the way, you know, when my kids were eating goldfish, like it was going out of style, I was basically, I feel like I was a supplier.

I was like their drug dealer. And then I would then I would yell at them, like, why are you eating goldfish? I'm like, why am I buying the goldfish? If I buy the goldfish, they're going to eat the goldfish.

So one of the ways is actually stop buying the food that you don't want your children to have, and also put a positive spin. Always. Like the reason that we're eating this way, the reason we're changing.

Because I want you to be faster, stronger. Don't say healthy. Healthy means nothing. But if your child is like, oh, come on, it's like I'm always picked last on the playground.

Great, great news here. Okay. Don't you want to be to be picked? You know, number two. Number three. Okay, well, we need blueberries. You're going to be stronger, faster.

So now you can be picked on the playground for the other kids to play, or you get tired and the end. You can't focus on math. You need a tutor. Isn't that exhausting?

Oh, my gosh, if you eat more vegetables, if you eat eggs. If we change out the cereal for a smoothie, now you have brainpower. Now you can remember stuff, now you don't.

You're not going to need a tutor. You have stronger brain, you have stronger muscles, you're faster. So, I always encourage kids, and I associate the food with, a way that they're feeling rather than a generic, healthy because kids respond to, fast or strong, whatever their thing is.

You will know because they're always complaining about whatever their weakness, their perceived weakness. It's so good. You're so good. I'm loving this conversation. Okay?

You're solving all the problems. All right. So now what about lifestyle modifications? What do we need to do there to support mitochondria. So we've gone all over the place with food.

Now what. Yeah. So one of the things that I see a lot of like people, the kids, we've become a sedentary society. We are now sitting inside. And one of the things that's happened with the pandemic, we told our children, you should sit inside more.

Definitely don't go outside because there's big bad germs out there. So let's sit inside more. Let's sit on zoom school for eight hours. Let's sit on, you know, connect with our friends on Xbox.

Let's. So now we've become a sedentary society. Mitochondria thrives in sunshine. Mitochondria thrives when we give it oxygen. You you have obviously you breathe we have oxygen when when we're out, when the kids are playing and running, they're getting more oxygen into their body and they're able to supply their mitochondria with one of the key fuels, which is oxygen. It is an aerobic organism.

It cannot work. And under anaerobic conditions, which means it needs oxygen. So the more that we have our kids play, run around, bike, go out in the sunshine, the more we empower their, inner motors with more energy.

In my kids that are so severely affected by mitochondrial deficiency, they have to actually wear oxygen. And but that's not true for a majority of the kids.

We have oxygen out into the world, which is much better, by the way, our indoor air quality is a hundred times more polluted than our outdoor air quality.

So have your kids go outside screens have been shown in the literature, but screens suck the power out of our children's mitochondria. I don't know if any of you guys who are listening have any children that maybe have been addicted to YouTube, or to TikTok or Snapchat or whatever screen or their iPads, and then they're just like piles of motion on the couch and they're like, you want to go hang out with your friends?

No, I want to do you want to go an I don't want to do anything. Why don't you go outside or everything's I don't want to. And we're like, we've sucked the energy out of their mitochondria with their screens.

They're very useful. You do your schoolwork, you find your recipes, you do your Google Maps, you have your Spotify. But we have now all become addicted to these devices, which are literally sucking the power out of our bodies.

My son was in the middle of quarantine, clocked 46 hours of YouTube because we thought he was on school and we were distracted by publishing a book and all that stuff, so I took my eyeballs off them and he became especially vegetable ish.

And my husband's like, we got to look at the history. So we pulled the history of 46 hours. He spent five, maybe nine minutes on schoolwork that week.

He figured out how to get into the classes, get attendance, do the minimal amount of work to get a minimal grade that is noticed it by the teachers, and the rest of the time was all on YouTube.

And I can tell you, he wouldn't go out of the house. He wouldn't get off the couch. He would hang out with his friends.

Lifestyle Changes: Movement, Screens, and Sleep

He like it was like literally ripping this human, like, up to try to lift him up and push them out into the world and the addiction and so on this summit, we do have people talking about emfs and dirty electricity and the dangers there, but but that addiction, that dopamine hit every time you see another YouTube video and I mean, he probably was sitting there watching mindless couple minute things like not even long attention span of right.

And he even told me he goes, they got to the point because I'm talking to him. He was watching. I'd pick up some meat or something, and I was like, how do you know about the relationship to that?

Because what I like about actors in the 80s or something, he's like, I don't even know what that means. He's like, it's got to the point. Doesn't even matter.

I don't even know the context. I just sit and watch it like a zombie. He said that when he was 13 or 14 years old. At that time, when we were like, I had tried him out and we were he had four family walks.

In order to like, you know, get in pepped up. So, yeah, the addiction and one of the things that we have not studied is what do eight hours of screen time do on a developing brain that is going through so much restructuring, so much, pruning so much?

So rewiring? We have no idea that what that is doing to our children's brains, we're just like, it's fine. It's no big

deal. There's nothing else we can do.

But there is so much we can do. There is. So you've covered for lifestyle modification. We covered moving our bodies, getting outside. We've covered screens and devices.

Give us another one before we sleep. Sleep. And you know, because you can power up the house if you don't give it some rest. And, you know, because of screens, our children's sleep has gone down the tubes.

They're watching screen time after dinner. They're watching screen time, you know, before bed. The teenagers have their phones in their room. And, you know, a lot of parents are probably like this lady is cray cray.

We had TV, you know, when we grew up and we were fine. We had tube TV. We didn't have blue light TV the way we have the flat screens, the the TVs that we have right now are not the same light blue light that was that is emitting now.

We didn't have that in the 80s. In the 90s. This is new now to our children. So it's a different ballgame. And so a simple thing that we can do a simple take away is no phones or electronics in your children's rooms.

All the iPads, computers, laptops and phones should be plugged in in the kitchen next to the parental phones because we are also a problem and our children don't listen to what we say, but they watch and copy most of what we do.

So we, the parents, can also purchase an alarm clock from Target or Amazon because they're all my parents. I want to know I used my alarm clock. I'm like, that's cool, because there's an alarm clock from target, and we also plug our stuff in.

And if the device is missing, when I wake up in the morning, that's a 24 hour confiscation of that device. And there's going to be a lot of moaning and complaining.

But I'll tell you, it only happens once, maybe twice. So we have to follow through the consequences. We have to lead by example, follow through with consequences.

So good, so good. Okay. What do we do now to make a mitochondrial healing plan and be able to follow through in a house that's totally resistant? You maybe you've got a resistant spouse.

Maybe you got resistant kids. Maybe you're the only one in the household that says, we got to change something here. Great. That is such a good question.

I love that because that's the whole reason I wrote the book, because I was the only one. I was the only person. When I realized what was going on with my kids, I was the only person.

My husband and I fought over food and lifestyle modifications for five years before he came on board. In fact, he's so on board. You know, he's on board because he's at all our meetings now.

I know your husband, I love him, he's amazing. Amazing. But she it took him five years and we fought and bickered. He used to have this fancy car. It was it was a Corvette, a ZR1, blah blah, blah blah thing.

And he would only put the top notch gas in it. Whenever he would wipe it. He would have only the fanciest jammies that he reserved for the day. And then he would be like, what?

Grass feed organic beef? Why are we paying that much money? I'm like, are you serious right now? Like your cars? Jammies are like, oh yeah, million dollars.

And the gas and the amount of gas and the repair bill and everything. It's topical. Right? Right. And I was like, we're fighting over food right now. So. Yeah. So that was really hard.

But the way I did it, I actually became a yes household. So instead of being like can't have can't, can't, can't, can't when my kids were like, we want a snack and we had goldfish and all the stuff at that time.

And I was like, wonderful. Yes, you can have a snack after you have a fruit or vegetable, which one would you like? And then they were like, well, what fruit?

Vegetable? I'm like, well then you're not hungry. So then they picked the fruit or a vegetable, and then they had their snack and they're like, and I'm like, okay, well what fruit or vegetable do you need next?

And I taught them portion sizes. But what I did is I started filling up the bellies of the small humans and the giant human with good food, and then allowing the food that I considered garbage afterwards.

So they would be, you know, a breakfast. I didn't just chuck the Cinnamon Toast Crunch into Lucky Charms in the trash. I started with smoothies, and I did smoothies at first and then drink a smoothie, and then you can have your Lucky Charms.

And what happened over time? It was weeks. Months. They stopped eating the Lucky Charms, and then it was months before they would even go in the pantry and get the Lucky Charms or Cinnamon Toast Crunch, but if they would do it, I would just say, well, what fruit or vegetable did you have before?

You're enjoying the street. We need to respect our body like a temple and then we will. We're okay eating some of this stuff. It's going to be fine. It's not a problem.

I didn't make food evil. I was a yes person. And with John, I was like, hey, babe, you know, instead of your Cheez-Its, I tried this one. Can you try and see what this crack.

Why do we have to do this? And so I would go through like, okay, well, we'll just doing small changes. And because I did really small changes it was tolerable.

It could I couldn't have just had a gazillion million things done at the same time. So it's very small, tiny. And it took, you know, five years before you came on board.

And then my kids about seven years until they came off all their medications and everything. It was slow. I didn't know what I know now, but the key to my success was taking it really slow.

We didn't start doing filtered water, the reverse osmosis in our house until a year ago, and we've been on the journey for 13 years because I knew that if I brought that up, I would have my little filters and my little pitcher.

But we didn't do the big house stuff because it was too much of a marital fight. But I got to the point where I was like, hey, babe, I really think. And he was like, totally on board.

But I waited for the right time to do that. Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. That makes sense. This is giving people hope. So. So I got a question. So let's say you you get to the point where people are eating in your household healthy food, but they're just like, how do you finally get rid of the food colorings and all of it?

Like, what if they don't stop asking for it? What if their brains are so addicted to it? Is there something you can do to finally get rid of it once you've, you know, introduced all the other foods and got them eating?

Yeah. So I mean I stopped buying it. Yeah, that's I stopped buying it. And they did complain. And then they were like, they'll come home and like our pantries.

The worst. My friends have a best pantry. And we're saying how come we don't have. Well and I was like, this is the food in our house.

Creating a Sustainable Family Plan

You're more than welcome to go to your friend's house and eat in their pantry. Oh, no problem with it. But this is the food that we have here and I was just no nonsense about it.

I was like, that's just what it is. I'm like, if you would like to have a conversation about why I'm choosing certain foods and how to read ingredients, I'm happy.

But if we just want to moan a little bit, which is fine because everybody has to be upset about it. Go ahead, no problem. But I did not internalize that, that I'm a bad mom.

Because the problem is, when they start with the whining and complaining and all the changes that we're talking about, then we internalize what I must be a bad mom because my kids complain.

Obviously their friends mom is a better mom because they're so happy to go over there and eat from their pantry. That doesn't make you a good mom or a bad mom because they want to go into your pantry.

That's just kids who want to go in the pantry and Doritos. That's just a fact. This is statement how you view yourself. That's you. And so a lot of times when people say, what's the first step in changing my children's mitochondria, the energy level of ADHD, I'm like, it's mindset.

If you decide that this is no longer going to happen in your house, it's no longer going to happen. If you're like, well, I'm going to kind of do it and think it's good.

And I think I read a Google thing. I saw some summit, I think they're going to bully you out of it there. You know, I have four people against me when we went through our changes and I was like, when?

Because my mindset was like, we are no longer going to be sick. We are no longer eating food coloring. They complain all day long. And I was like, sorry, that's just really what's going on.

And I didn't internalize it that I'm a bad wife or a bad mom or a bad person. That's so good. And then what comes to mind for me too, is if you're to the point where it's time to stop buying it and you're just not doing it, really think about are you being an enabler at this point?

I mean, this is huge, huge, huge. Yeah. And and again, you know, sitting down with so husbands dads and I had to make it a male woman stereotype. But they're very much about the bottom line and about the spreadsheet.

And how is this benefiting the family. So for a lot of my mom is I'm like, you know what? What? We're going to talk about is like, how how we're doing the bottom line when you're buying more fruits and vegetables and more organic, what we're going to stop buying less processed food because that's what costs more when our kids are healthier, they're going to have less doctor visits about their inattention or their fatigue.

To the doctor, that's less copays. We're not going to have to spend money on ADHD medicine or eczema medication, which, by the way, it's not 100% covered by insurance.

So that comes out of your pocket. So if you talk to dads are like, hey, listen, we're going to reduce our over-the-counter medication cost with these fruits and vegetables.

They're like, okay we can do that. We can do the bottom line and they can start seeing it. It is hard. A lot of men need to see the results before they buy into it.

So you have to give a little bit patience and you have to listen to your partner. You cannot bulldoze them. They have to be have a say in what's going on.

It's a very delicate balance. Listen, I've been through three marriage counselors. I work through a lot of that stuff, because it's difficult. But you have to.

You have to do it gently and gradually in order to be successful. So good, so good. You know, I know you and John. And what strikes me is you are a allopathic trained pediatrician.

John is a orthopedic surgeon. You, of all people would think that you guys would be able to raise really healthy kids. And what I heard you say is your kids were really sick and.

Yeah, so don't be beating yourself up. Viewers, if you feel like, gosh, you know, this is so hard. I mean, even people who are equipped with knowledge that you didn't get that knowledge in medical school.

So this is something you have to seek out for yourself and do it. So I just acknowledge you and John for making that you change. Last question. How are the kids doing now?

Are they okay with all this? What they're you know what, they're fantastic. You know, we moved to New Zealand for a year and a half in 2016. No meds, no doctors, no no medications with us, no, no medical insurance.

And, you know, we just came from Spain and my super, my super picky eater, what? Ate all our sushi. And we're all like, why is eating sushi? We're like, we don't you don't like sushi?

He's like, well, apparently it's really good. So my picky eater that I've worked on for 15 years, he's eating it up. My children that the one, the YouTube addicted one that was on a couch as a couch potato.

He's on a rowing team. He works out every day. He's now on, I'm doing added sugar for two months. I didn't say a word. Did not say a word. But he was like, I've just decided I'm not going to do any added sugar for two months, to see if I can do it.

And my college kids, one of them is doing spectacular. Of course, she had some setbacks because we're going to be honest, alcohol. And then my other one had some cafeteria situations navigating it, but they're all, you know, when you look at what they eat and how they there's no complaint.

Everybody is on board. There's no more my pay. Our pantry stinks is just it's just what it is right now. But again. But we're, you know, 14 years in the making.

Kids' Progress and Where to Find Dr. Temple

It didn't happen overnight. It was many years. And as patients, you know, there's some days when I'm I'm just like, oh my God. I'm like, doc, look the finally listing or they finally are doing it.

He's like, well, they took 20 years, but I guess we got there. So I it takes a long time to get there. But we do you get there. Yeah. And full of energy.

Their mitochondria is working at optimum speed. They can do nothing slows them down. Nothing stops them. Which is so awesome to have kids that are on no medicines.

They can do whatever, you know, hike whatever they can go to, whatever concerts they can travel through Spain and London, and no one's complaining of being tired or their legs hurting or being fatigued.

Their focus in school. I mean, all this effort that I've done for the past 14 years is worth every sweat tears Penny spent when I look at my kids today.

Oh, that's so good. That's a great place to stop. This has been an amazing interview. And, please tell our audience where we can find you. And I love your Instagram. You're so funny.

You are really funny on there. So where can everybody find you? Well, I'll tell you, one place you guys can find me is a Costco, Walmart, target, and now the recently Trader Joe's way on my weekends is what I do.

I go shopping so I can make your life easier and your children healthier by pointing out the products and foods that you can eat and select with a little you know, less worry.

So I'm doing all the reading of the ingredients for you and kind of giving a thumbs up or thumbs down and educating how to do it. All. That is available on YouTube under Doctor Anna Maria temple on my Instagram account.

Same name on TikTok as well, because why not? So, and then if you for your readers, I have my best selling book is Healthy Kids in an Unhealthy World that you can grab a copy on Amazon.

Awesome. Thank you, Anna Maria. And I'll see you in a few months. See you in a few months. Thank you so much for having me. Okay. Take care. Now.