Probiotics For The Heart: The Bacteria You Need To Know Transcript

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Introduction to Gut Health and Heart Disease

Hello and welcome back to the Reversing Heart Disease Naturally Summit. I'm super excited. I'm your co-host, doctor Reed. And Moscoso, and I'm excited to have a very special guest here who's going to talk about things that may not be talked about a lot in a half hour summit, which is gut health and microbiome imbalance.

And Steph Jackson is, I've known her for probably 12 years or so. She's been active and she speaks at all my events. And so I'm super excited to have her here and to talk about the connection between heart health and the gut.

So Steph, welcome. I'm so excited to have you here. Thank you so much for having me. I'm really excited to be here. And yeah, grateful for this talk. Yeah, I'm excited too because I think people need to look at it.

We always look at the diet for heart health, the diet for, you know, blood pressure regulation, etc. but people aren't talking a lot about what do you do for your gut.

So let's start with how is the gut and the gut microbiome related at all to heart health? Right. Well, it's really via the gut that we experience some of those benefits from those very foods that we're talking about, like the fiber and all those things, that can help us to reduce cholesterol and lower inflammation in the body.

And it's really via the gut and with the help of our friendly gut bacteria, that we can accomplish these things. So how does that work? Yeah. So. Well, let's just start.

I start with a little bit of the negative, once we upregulate inflammation in the gut or anywhere in the body, we upregulated everywhere in the body. You know, I noticed, especially the past few years talking about, different viruses.

How the Gut Microbiome Affects Cardiovascular Risk

We we've been talking a lot more about systemic inflammation, and myocarditis and things like that. And there are some gut bacteria and some, gut bacteria signaling that has been actually shown to increase that, which we'll talk about in a little bit.

But yeah, gut gut tests, like if you get a really good gut test, it has shown, in studies to be as predictive as good lipid testing. Yeah. For, for heart risk factors.

So yeah. And that's amazing. Yeah. Because we don't think about that when we're talking to people about lab tests for cardiovascular disease. We're not usually talking about get your gut flora, your microbiome tested.

Yeah. We're not talking about, like, a poop test and see what kind of, you know, probiotics we have that are thriving and and what other, parts of our microbiome that we could work on.

But yeah, when we consider, like, the food that we eat, being sort of information from outside that we take into our bodies that is then altered by our gut bacteria sometimes, before we absorb it in different forms.

And we, we absorb their byproducts as well. Which, which we're now calling post biotics. Right. A lot of a lot of these post biotics are signals for our immune system for for which things to, increase inflammation about in which things to, to decrease inflammation about.

I picked out a couple that I thought were important to talk about today as examples. Sure, I'd love to hear about it. And the the point is, what I'm hearing is that inflammation we know now is related to cardiovascular disease.

And sadly, that's only been publicly acknowledged in in conventional medicine recently. But that inflammation is a huge part. It's it's the underlying cause.

And you're saying that what we eat affects our microbiome balance and that affects our creation and our genesis of various inflammatory products. Is that what I'm hearing.

Exactly. Okay. So talk to us about some of those bacteria. But also we're really interested in what people can do about it too. Right. Like what are the foods that affect it positively.

What are the foods and lifestyle. Things that affect it negatively that then go on to affect the cardiovascular system? Yeah. Okay. Well so one connection with the gut is there is something called tmao which is made in the liver, from something called TMA which is made by our gut bacteria, particularly when they're out of balance.

And there are some, some foods that contribute to this more than other foods, particularly animal products. And when our gut bacteria are out of balance, they produce more of this TMA and our our liver produces more of this tmao, which has been very clearly shown to be, a cardiac risk factor.

Absolutely. And it's on some of the risk factor, the panels that, you know, doctors like Joel Kohn, the host to this summit, talk about. Right. Well, we can't eat that.

Inflammation, TMAO, and Gut-Derived Risk Signals

We can't make that without the TMA. Right. And our gut bugs are making TMA from food. So that's one sort of clear connection that we can make with the foods that we're eating.

And the bacteria. There are there are a couple other sort of signaling molecules that I want to talk about. So we've got interleukin six, which is a cytokine.

There's also there are genes that affect this as well. But interleukin six responds specifically to pathogens in the gut, and it slows motility in the gut.

And it's also associated with digestive inflammation like whether it is is it's correlation. Right. Like it's there there's digestion methylation. And it's also associated with cardiac and cerebral injury.

So that's that same signal that our immune system sends when our gut bacteria are out of balance. That is associated with cardiac and cerebral injury.

Well so yeah that's interleukin six. And there are some things that we can do about it. And there are some specific bacteria that contribute to it. So it has been reduced in super short studies like for days by people having a simple probiotic like Lactobacillus acidophilus, like the most common, like regular, I'm saying everyday like it's the cheapest.

We can get it in almost every probiotic that we buy in the store. The savory. Yeah. So in just four days we can with taking probiotics, we can reduce the interlude in six, which is a huge, huge inflammatory factor.

Yeah. Exactly. So it was acidophilus Kashi and Bifidobacterium before them. But I mean acidophilus, it's everywhere. This is like something very actually, we can all just go do this.

What are the risks? Right? We can we can try this is something. Right? Right, right. Yeah. Yeah. So then there's also interleukin one beta. I picked these because they're specifically associated with cardiac stuff.

And which is associated with act like activated by pathogens in the gut. It's associated with worsening of myocarditis. And it's also associated with celiac, other sort of inflammatory bowel diseases, infections in the gut or gut imbalances.

And it might also increase cytotoxic damage. And it can be increased. So we increased this inflammatory signal, with salmonella, Shigella, Legionella, Pseudomonas.

You may have heard of some of those. So just some strains of those can increase this inflammatory signaling. And so can damage tissues. So just to like come back to food, it's not just like bad bacteria that can hurt our gut.

It's like if we're just, like, eating some stuff that we didn't chew very well, even if it's a head of raw broccoli, like, and we're just not chewing it and we can damage our gut. Right.

And that's not to mention all the sort of like, non food foods that we can eat that can hurt us as well. Well, the non-food foods that most people are eating unfortunately that are big contributors, the ultra processed foods, the oxidized fats, etc., that are big contributors to cardiovascular disease.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Exactly. Well yeah. And our digestive integrity is also very important for protecting us from some of these like ingredients that we're not even talking about really in this talk.

That are, that are in foods that we don't want to absorb. And so yeah, having, having good strong digestive integrity, which our bacteria help us with as well.

So having lots of bifida and having, you know, good butyrate production and then these things also in turn help us with our sleep wake cycles, like help us with our own circadian rhythm, help us with our blood sugar balance.

And all of these effects, the heart. Sorry. Vascular system. Yeah. Absolutely. Absolutely. So like we've been talking about sleep. Yeah. Yeah. I'm sure other people on this summit have been talking about it.

Right. Yeah. And I'm sure someone's going to talk about, blood sugar balance. And our gut bacteria help help us with insulin sensitivity and with sleep signaling.

Right. Well, yeah. So there's a lot to it. And we really can't just test the cardiovascular system by testing the lipids.

Fiber, Polyphenols, and Butyrate Production

Even if you're doing advanced lipid panels and you're doing some of the, you know, different kinds of inflammatory markers that are usually tested that are specific to the cardiovascular system, that's not enough.

It sounds like I mean, especially if you are having any kind of digestive woes, any kind of, you know, pain, inflammation, or you've been diagnosed with IBS, Sibo, inflammatory bowel disease, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's, etc.

that puts you at much higher risk of cardiovascular disease. So that's the stuff that we really need to look at. If you're listening and you're saying, oh I have family history of heart disease or I want to prevent a stroke or whatever.

Looking at your gut, it's got to be a big piece of the picture. And when you say integrity of the, talk a little bit about that, are you talking to a leaky gut type of what's commonly called leaky gut?

Yeah. Like trying so hard not to say leaky gut. Yeah, exactly. That is. Yes. Sort of permeability. Increased intestinal. The ability. Yeah. Right. Yeah.

But we want and like you would think like wouldn't that help us with absorbing nutrients and all these cool herbs that I'm eating or whatever. And it really, doesn't because we need we need, to be able to have, proteins escort some things across or not escort some things across and other, more damaging things like, let's say, oxalates.

We want to kind of keep them in the gut and then get rid of them. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I know that you, you know, food is a biggie, right? And there's certain foods and there's things that people can do at home to improve their gut microbiome even before getting tested, but to just improve it, as a rule of thumb, and help with cardiovascular

health.

So talk a little bit about that. Yeah. I was talking about the connection with our circadian rhythm and with with blood sugar regulation. So there's something called butyrate, which is a short chain fatty acid which is produced in our gut, by some bacteria that have the grandmother bacteria of Bifidobacteria.

And so they help to create an environment where we can make more of this, and we must consume a variety of long chain fiber and polyphenols, which are those things that make the food that we eat beautifully colored, such as purple kale, pomegranate, those kind of things.

Robust tea. And so just eating the fiber alone. So like, let's say we're taking a fiber powder or even like seeds in our smoothie. I totally love flax seeds in our smoothie, so I'm not coming at you.

However, just having those things has been shown to increase the number of bacteria, but not to increase the amount of butyrate that they're able to produce.

Interesting. So we actually need to eat. The vegetables, eat the foods, the local plant fibers. This is why you know, so many people, especially in this kind of a summit, are talking about the the promising effects, the the protective effects of eating lots of plants to protect the heart and it does so through the gut at one point.

I mean, yes, some of the polyphenols and the the antioxidants in there are directly protecting the cardiovascular system. But a lot of it can be happening through protecting the gut and creating an environment in the gut that is protective.

Well, a lot. Of those polyphenols actually, oh no, are going down a tangent, but the polyphenols actually need to be converted by our gut bacteria and then absorbed by us in order for us to have the benefit.

For example, a green tea extract, if if it doesn't go through our gut bacteria and they don't change it prior to us absorbing it, we actually don't get the benefit.

The benefit we get is from the post biotic, from our gut bacteria after they're exposed to the EGCg, or the other, chemical constituents of green tea.

Okay. So what you're saying is injecting people, if people don't like to eat plants, injecting plant chemicals, polyphenols, etc. into the bloodstream isn't going to work because you're bypassing the gut as a as a major contributing factor here.

Right. So it just goes a long way towards supporting the eat more greens, eat more colorful vegetables, eat the rainbow. Right. The plants are our protectors, not just directly to the heart but also through the gut bacteria.

Totally. Yeah. Totally. Yeah. So what do you say to people who are pushing a carnivore diet and saying that it's not, doesn't have negative impact on the cardiovascular system?

You're hitting me with the tough questions. So, okay, off the top of my head, this is what I think. Benefits, immediate benefits might be felt by many people switching to that long term.

The effect on our gut flora.

Fermented Foods and Helpful Probiotics

And then from there, the effect on our liver and the effect on our, metabolism in being less robust and being able to, not being able to, tolerate so much of the world that we immediately live in.

Immediate benefits. Don't know if it's worth it continuing that way for a long time. Right. So many of them, it's being reducing the fibers that are well, the exact fibers we want can be.

Hurtful to come to mind, you know, like blood sugar regulation and like if we're not able to tolerate any sort of carbohydrates and we're kind of backed into a corner there, that can be a kind of it can change something for somebody and they can experience some weight loss and have some good times.

Although we can quickly turn protein into sugar as well. So. Right. We know stress is bad and we know that, and, that could kind of break a cycle for somebody.

I could see that. But long term, having all of these effects on our gut, you know, not being able to have those fibers that we need to produce these messages, really, that tell our body when to feel tired and when to feel awake and, how much estrogens produce and all sorts of things, right, that are so important.

Right. For a long term health. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So be cautious of it. And you know, these plants are they're there for a reason. So we talked about you mentioned how what we can do at home is increase the fiber in the diet, not by taking a fiber supplement, but more from eating a wide variety of plants, colorful plants with lots of fibers and lots of phytochemicals and all this.

But beyond that, like, how can people? Are there specific things that people can do to even enhance things further? Yeah. So I've pulled out a few specific bacteria that we can talk about that can help us to reduce gut inflammation and that you can make stuff with at home.

Really before I go into making stuff, eating the actual vegetables is where we get our most diverse flora. Like we can't buy a lot of things in capsules and potions and even as starters.

Right. The most diversity that we're going to get is from actual plants that were that were grown in a healthy, setting. Right. And so if we want that, that's the only way to get it, really.

But if we would like to, for instance, we can go back to that interleukin six. We were talking about decreasing in a week. Let's go for that. We were talking about Lactobacillus Kasai and I brought some ferments.

We can ferment things like this is some squash that I made actually with Doctor Rita Marie the other day on a call. And you can see where it's at now.

So Lactobacillus kasai would be in this ferment, as well as Lactobacillus plantarum. And those are just found naturally on the surface of these plants.

And Lactobacillus plantarum we don't have time to get into it, but it has been shown to reduce cholesterol as well. If that's something that you are interested in.

Yeah. And so there are there are many ways that you can kind of customize these ferments as well to have more or less of a certain bacteria. Like if we want less, there are some bacteria that are kind of flagged on gut tests that that we might want less of and we might want more of some other ones.

And we can increase the ones that we want. There's, there's a bacteria called lactobacillus gram gnosis that can really help with our small intestinal about imbalances or balances.

And we can get that just as a probiotic. And it's in a lot of mood, mood focused probiotics. And we can add that to our ferments. Like for instance, I have a yogurt here that was made, another squash ferment.

This one turned out really well. I added some kelp. Nice. Yeah, I use it to make kind of like a mock potato salad today. It was. It was red. It was my lunch.

And then I've got, a kimchi here and even to kimchi, although it has naturally some of these, it doesn't look amazing on the video, but it's really good.

It's naturally have, all three of those bacteria that I just talked about, but, Great. Yeah. You can always add more as

well. Customized for yourself.

That's awesome. That's awesome. And you know, so people here, oh it's really hard to do. There's a lot of, of these, probiotic kind of foods that you can buy commercially.

You can go to the, you know, gourmet store or the health food store or whatever and buy these. But you can also make them, and making them isn't as hard as you might think.

Practical Ways to Support Heart Health Through the Gut

And, so tell people a little bit about like, how they could like, you have a, what do you call it, a, forum, a platform where they can go and just check it out and learn how to make these things if they're so interested and inclined?

Yeah. We have a group. It's called the friendly Flora collective, where we make plant based ferments. And so we've made yogurt out of almost 40 different things at this point.

Right. We've made green yogurts, purple yogurts, yogurts that have potatoes because it's cheap, yogurts that have macadamia nuts and just everything. And so that's, that's where I do like these kind of ferments like this.

And yeah, we just have a great community. We have, genetics on the gut call. We have nutrients in the gut call. We have Q and A, we have a lot of different, great connections.

And, yeah, just a lot of really cool people that are into nerding out about this kind. Of thing out of the them. In a practical. Yeah, yeah, way. Back to the way. Right.

And incorporate it into your lifestyle. So we'll have the link on in the show notes. You'll see her link and you can go check it out. And I think that's important.

What else do you want to make sure people know about the how to protect their heart through their gut. I think the fiber, the polyphenols. And then, some of those bacteria, the bifidobacteria, they're really important.

The lactobacillus perico and REM gnosis, and the plantarum, like, good place to start. Awesome. Yeah. Awesome. So thank you very much for being here with us and opening up a whole new area of heart health, cardiovascular health, and reversing heart disease naturally through the gut and through fun ways and fun foods and a wide variety of fibers and plants that that support you in so many, many, many ways.

So we've been talking to some of the friendly Flora collective. Thank you so, so much for everything today. And, thank you everybody for being here on the Reversing Heart Disease Naturalist Summit. Thank you.