Introduction to tonic herbs vs. medicinal herbs

This is where tonic herbs come in and I want to distinguish them clearly from medicinal or therapeutic herbs because this distinction matters enormously.

And medicinal herbs, the ones that are used in most cleansing and antimicrobial protocols, are what Chinese medicine calls attacking medicines. Welcome to the resiliency method, the truth about healing.

I'm Dr. Erica and we are here to uncover the root causes keeping you stuck. Together we'll restore your energy, your focus and your resiliency so you can finally heal, regenerate and feel truly alive again.

Well, I just want to acknowledge you, if you've done the parasite cleanses, you used the binders, looked at the heavy metals, been doing the antimicrobial protocols.

I want congratulate you and acknowledge your way ahead of the game in terms of health and well done. But I also want encourage you to listen to this next episode because maybe what happened was you actually felt better for a few weeks.

Why detox culture keeps people stuck

and then the symptoms crept back, or maybe a few months even, maybe years. But then symptoms kind of started creeping back in, and you did another round, then another one, years went by, five, ten, sometimes fifteen, you're still on the same kill and cleanse loop.

That's not healing, that's management with a better supplement stack. Welcome to The Resiliency Method, the truth about healing podcast. I'm Dr. Erica.

Today the better question is, is why is detox culture keeping you sick? Today we're going to break down why the Kill Kill kill framework dominates wellness culture why anti-parasitic and antimicrobial protocols are critically necessary in the first six to eight months, but become a ceiling instead of a launch pad when extended indefinitely.

We're also going to explore the Chinese medicine lens of excess versus deficiency, why most people with chronic illness have both, and why thermally cold herbs like warm wood, berberine, black walnut, all the things used in anti parasitic protocols and antimicrobial protocols can be poured on top of an already cold deficient body and make the foundation dysfunction even worse, not better.

And we're unpacking what true restoration actually looks like. Tonic, herbs, whole food supplements that speak the body's native language, glandular repair, nervous system repair and mitochondrial in resilience, because pathogens always return to depleted terrain.

So if you've ever thought doing another round of cleansing was the answer that just keeps coming back, well, this episode is going to challenge that idea.

And if want more information on this topic, check out our show notes and check our website specifically on toxicity. Welcome back, everyone. I'm so glad you're here today because what I am going to share with you is really something I feel that has been missing from most of the wellness conversations happening right now.

Even among some of most well-intentioned practitioners in the functional medicine, naturopathic and integrative healthcare worlds, we're living in a moment where more people than ever are waking up to the reality that parasites are real, that heavy metals are a problem, that they're accumulated in our bodies, and that Lyme disease is vastly underdiagnosed, in that fungal and bacterial overgrowth are contributed to a staggering number of chronic health

conditions.

And that awareness is genuinely exciting. It really represents the progress. But here's what I want to talk to you about today.

The limits of kill-and-cleanse protocols

Awareness of the problem is not the same as actually solving it, and in many cases the tools that we're reaching for address these issues. The anti-parasitic herbs, the binders, anti microbial protocols are what i call level one approaches.

They are important and they are necessary, and especially initially, but they're not the whole picture. And for far too many people, they've become a ceiling rather than a launch pad.

Today, as a master herbalist and doctor of Chinese medicine, I want to take you deeper. I want to challenge the Kill Kill kill framework that's dominated the wellness space for many years and offer you a more complete and more intelligent and ultimately more effective vision for what true healing looks like.

All right, let's get into it. So what do I mean when I say kill, kill kill? Well, I'm talking about the dominant approach to wellness protocols today.

The idea that primary goal of healing is really to identify what's harming the body and eliminate it. kill the parasites, kill bacteria, eliminate the fungus, bind the heavy metals, cleanse the liver, purge the gut, run another round of antimicrobial herbs, and then, if things don't improve, well, do it again.

And now I wanna be very clear here. I'm not dismissing this approach. In the early stages of a healing journey, typically the first six to eight months, identifying and addressing these things and these burdens is absolutely appropriate and often critically necessary.

And you cannot rebuild a house that's still on fire. So if someone has a significant parasite load or an active bacterial, you know, overgrowth or measurable heavy metal burden or, you now, they're addressing these things directly and it makes a complete sense to start at that point.

It's a great place to star. The problem is not the tool or even that approach, the problem the timeline and the over-reliance that eventually ensues. And what I see over and over again in clinical practice and What many of my colleagues are seeing is that people cycle through these protocols indefinitely.

They finish a parasite cleanse, they feel better for a few weeks and then symptoms creep back. So they do another round and another and they try a different antimicrobial herb or a anti-parasitic herb or ivermectin or whatever, and then they add a new binder and they change the order of operations and years go by, sometimes five, 10, 15, they are still in the same kill and cleanse loop.

Really, I got to say this is not healing. Admittedly, for a long time I did think it was. I thought that was enough for my own body even and I do that approach for 10 years and still saw amazing clinical results.

But as time went on, I started to see a different point of view about this. What we had really come to was that we were now at a state of management, managing the parasites, the bacteria, and the fungus, heavy metals.

There was a profound difference. that we started to see when we start to go beyond that. So when cleansing and killing protocols extend well beyond the initial six to eight months window, without a corresponding shift towards rebuilding and resiliency work, we see secondary impacts.

Sometimes impacts that are often caused or worsened by the protocols themselves. Now, let's talk about what happens to the body when we stay in kill kill and cleanse mode for too long.

First, understand that virtually every antimicrobial herb or supplement, whether we're talking about oregano oil, black walnut, berberine, artemisia, or any pharmaceutical antibiotics, exerts its effects through biological stress.

That is how they work.

Excess, deficiency, and cold herbs in Chinese medicine

They create an environment that is inhospitable to pathogens. And yes, that it useful. but the body's own tissue organs and glands are also responding to that stress.

And over time, well, prolonged use of those strong antimicrobial and cleansing agents can begin to further tax the digestive organs, particularly the liver, the gallbladder, which are already burdened in most people with chronic illness, with other burdens.

And they can deplete the mucosal lining of the gut and reduce the very barrier function that we're actually trying to restore. They can weaken digestive fire, what we call spleen chi in Chinese medicine, which is the root of nutrient absorption and immune system response and competence.

And moreover, they create a progressively more deficient internal environment where the body becomes increasingly reactive and less resilient over time.

And here's the paradox that practitioners don't always see clearly. The very reason someone keeps getting reinfected, why parasites keep coming back, Why Candida keeps returning, and why Lyme symptoms keep flaring is often not because the protocol wasn't strong enough.

It's because of the underlying terrain that allowed those things to take hold in the first place has never been adequately addressed. Now, you can kill every parasite in the body today, but if the organs, glands, and the tissues remain depleted and dysfunctional, well, the bodies simply not going to become hospitable environment again.

And those organisms will return. Nature abhors a vacuum and pathogens are opportunists. They thrive where the terrain is weakened. So the question we really want to be asking is not just what do I need to kill, but why is my body not defending itself effectively in the first place?

And that is a fundamentally different question. It's a deeper question and it's the questions that moves us from level one to genuine healing. Now I want to bring in the framework of Chinese medicine because I think it offers us one of the most sophisticated and clinically useful lenses for understanding why these protocols fail and what to do instead.

So in Chinese Medicine, there's two fundamental categories of pathology, excess and deficiency. And there are two fundamentally thermal qualities that inform every diagnosis and treatment.

Heat and cold. Now an excess pattern means that there is something in the body that should not be there. An invader, an accumulation, a stagnation, parasites, bacteria overgrowth, heavy metals, toxic dampness.

These are excess patterns. They are real. they need to be addressed. A deficiency, on the other hand, really means that something the body is really insufficient in.

That can be chi, blood, yin, yang, jing, organ systems that are really depleted, tissues that undernourished, glands that struggling to maintain their function.

And here's the critical insight. Most people with chronic illness or that just not optimal performers, well, they have both. They have excess patterns, the pathogens, and the toxins sitting on top of profound underlying deficiency.

And this is not a coincidence. The deficiency is often what allowed the excess to establish itself in the first place. It's interchangeable. All those pathogens and toxins have contributed to the underlying deficiencies.

And now here's where it really gets important, and this is something that even experienced practitioners sometimes miss. Most anti-parasitic herbs are thermally cold.

Wormwood, black walnut hull, clove, the classic anti parasitic and cleanse trinity are really cold, harsh herbs. And berberine is cold and many of the anti microbial formulas that have become popular in functional medicine are cold in their energetic nature.

And these cold herbs are effective at clearing heat toxins and bringing down the initial level of inflammation. Let's face it, inflammation is heat. It's an excess pattern.

They're effective in killing the pathogens and they really do have an effect on bringing inflammation initially. That is exactly why they work in the short term.

Case study: the endless cleanse loop

But if a patient has an underlying cold deficiency pattern, which many people with chronic illness and quite frankly living in a modern world that we're living today, well, we all have this pattern.

Particularly those with adrenal fatigue, thyroid dysfunction, digestive weakness, long-standing Lyme disease, mold exposure, these prolonged use of these cold herbs are essentially pouring cold water on an already struggling fire.

And in Chinese medicine, we talk about the digestive fire, the warmth of the spleen and the stomach, and in the the, stomach yang, ability to transform food, break it down quickly, have enough hydrochloric acid in your belly.

All of this are at the very center of health. And when we chronically use cold, bitter draining herbs without adequate support for this underlying warmth, though we don't just fail to heal the patient, we actually make their foundational deficiency worse.

And then they wonder why they're more fatigued after the cleanse than before, and why their digestion has worsened, why do they feel colder all the time, or why the immune system seems less capable, not more.

Well, this is the cost of applying level one tools to a level two or level three problem. And Chinese medicine really gives us a map for navigating this complexity.

The relationship between excess and deficiency, between heat and cold, and between clearing and tonifying. Well this not academic philosophy. This is a clinical framework that allows us to actually meet the patient where they are and move them toward genuine restoration.

Now let me give you a picture of what this looks like in real clinical life. Because I see this regularly and I know many of you listening are either practitioners who recognize these patterns or your patients who are living with them.

Take a patient, let's call her Sarah. Sarah has been dealing with chronic fatigue, brain fog, joint pain, and digestive issues for seven years. She's seen multiple practitioners.

she's done Lyme testing, it's come back positive. She's done a GI map and it showed parasites, bacterial overgrowth, her hair tissue mineral analysis, while it's showed elevated lead and mercury.

So she starts a protocol. She does a parasite cleanse three rounds, she does antimicrobial herbs for the bacteria, She uses binders for heavy metals, and she feels better at first.

and her brain fog lifts a little, her energy improves modestly. She's encouraged. But six months later, she retests and the parasites are back. The bacteria is overgrown again and she's shifted, but that hasn't fully resolved.

And her metals have moved but not cleared. So her practitioner Well, they recommend another round, a stronger

protocol maybe this time, and maybe they even add an herbal formula for Lyme.

And maybe add a new binder, maybe rotate the antimicrobials. This cycle continues, sometimes for years. Sarah keeps spending money, she keeps following the protocols diligently.

She keeps hoping that this round will be the one that finally tips the balance. But here's what no one is asking, why does Sarah's body keep harboring these things?

Why does the terrain keep inviting them back? Well, the answer, it's almost invariably, is that Sarah's organs, glands, and tissues have never been given what they need to heal.

Her liver is over-toxed and she's never truly been restored, not just drained and cleansed, but genuinely rebuilt. her glut lining has been assaulted repeatedly without adequate mucosal restoration, her adrenal and thyroid function profoundly depleted from years of stress both from the pathogens and from protocols, and she's never been meaningfully supported at a deep constitutional level.

Her underlying deficiency patterns have never addressed. And until they are, well, no amount of killing or is going to really amount to real true lasting change.

And this is a conversation we need to be having in the wellness world. Not instead of awareness about parasites and Lyme and heavy metals, but go beyond it.

Beyond level one: rebuilding the terrain

Advance them past the level one. Well, what does that look like to go beyond level one, you might be wondering? What does it really mean to actually help the organs, glands, and the tissue heal?

And when I say tissue too, I really am also specifying the the organ of the brain and nervous system too. I don't want those to get missed because those are critical in terms of turning these things around.

But really, What do we want to do and need to to regain their resilience or maybe even find resilience? Maybe they've never even really had resilience.

In my practice, this means we are asking fundamentally different questions at a certain point in the healing journey. And instead of asking what herb will kill this pathogen, we're asking What does this patient's liver need to restore its detoxification capacity intrinsically?

What is the gut wall need rebuild mucosal integrity and host a thriving microbiome without ongoing intervention? And what does the adrenal thyroid access need regulate the HPA response and maintain immune competence?

And what constitutional patterns, excess or deficiency, heat or cold, yin or yang are driving this susceptibility in? How do we address them at the root?

Are you tied to treatments, protocols, and gurus who promise results but don't deliver? You're not alone. For years, I struggled with my own long-term illness and I know how frustrating it feels when nothing seems to work.

That's why I developed the resiliency method. It's a science-backed approach to combine the best of Western and ancient medicines to restore your body's natural intelligence.

Patient after patient has discovered what's possible, living stronger, brighter, and more spiritually connected than ever before. Whether you're facing autoimmune issues, hormonal imbalances, weight struggles, or just feeling stuck, you don't need another quick fix.

You need a clear path forward. Take the first step with a discovery call at drericaonline.com forward slash discovery. That's D-R-E- R-I-K-A, online. com forward, slash, discovery, Or dive deeper with the full initial

consultation at Dr.

Erica online, because your health, your clarity, and your freedom cannot wait. This is where tonic herbs come in and I want to distinguish them clearly from medicinal or therapeutic herbs because this distinction matters enormously.

And medicinal herbs, the ones that are used in most cleansing and antimicrobial protocols, are what Chinese medicine calls attacking medicines. They are powerful, they're directed, but they are not intended for long-term use.

They're the surgeon's scalpel, not the daily nourishment that sustains true health. Tonic herbs are different and in their entire philosophy. And when I say an herb, I don't mean just a plant.

I mean actual animal tissue too. The study of Chinese herbology included animal parts. is a part of its tonification because the Chinese saw that we really needed those things in our regular diet.

We need exposure to them to really do better. And herbs like Astrologus, Reishi, Shisandra, Romania, well, these are all herbs that have been used also for thousands of years to restore organ function, rebuild chi and blood, and really support the adrenals and the thyroid and increase the body's innate adaptability and resilience.

And these are not killing tools, they are rebuilding tools and they operate on an entirely different time scale and through entirely a different mechanism.

Tonic herbs and whole food restoration

Another powerful and often underutilized tool in this restorative process is the whole food supplements. And again, I mentioned that earlier, but I want to really spend some time here because I wanted to distinguish these clearly.

from what the synthetic, isolated nutrients that fill most supplement aisles. Whole food supplements are concentrated, minimally processed foods that retain the full matrix of cofactors, enzymes, phytonutrients, and trace minerals that nature packaged together for a reason.

And we use something in that form like desiccated liver, wheat germ, nutritional yeast, algae, or fermented food concentrates. We're giving the organs, glands, and tissues the raw materials that they need and recognize at a cellular level, materials they can actually do something with.

and use for repair, not just process and excrete. This matters enormously in the restorative phase of healing because a depleted liver doesn't just need to be drained, it actually needs phospholipids, B vitamins, amino acids, cofactors it really requires to rebuild its own enzymatic capacity.

So a struggling adrenal gland doesn't just need an adaptogen herb, it actually needs the lipids, the peptides, and the micronutrients. It needs it to synthesize the hormones.

So whole food supplements speak the body's native language. And in my clinical experience, they are one of the most elegant and effective bridges between medicinal herbal work and deep lasting constitutional restoration.

So, in Chinese medicine, this is the domain of fuzheng therapy or supporting the upright tree, the body's constitutional vitality, so that the bodies can manage pathogens, environmental exposures, and the stress of aging from a place of strength rather than depletion.

And beyond herbs, advancing patients past level one also means addressing structural and cellular restoration, giving tissues the nutrients, cofactors, and energetic support that they need to regenerate.

Glandular support at a deep constitutional level, not just to symptom management, but restoring the inherent intelligence of the endocrine system itself.

That's how you find true hormone balancing, guys. It's not by replacing your hormones. it's more complicated than that and your body really is set up to communicate effectively and find these natural balances on its own, but we have to help it.

We have really aid it and then most important too is that nervous system regulation because a body that's chronically in fight or flight, it can't heal regardless of how sophisticated the protocol is.

you need to make sure your vagus nerve is getting what it needs. The brain is operating at its functional best by clearing out the toxins and then rebuilding it and repairing it.

And when I say toxins, I don't mean just a level one for the brain guys. We have to go deeper for their brain and the nervous system. So that's in level three healing.

Nervous system, mitochondria, and true resilience

That's a place where The organ tissue and gland repair that you do initially or after that initial cleanse in level one is critical to getting to that level three detoxification.

Now let's not ignore mitochondria resilience, that energy generating capacity of cells which is devastated in the most chronic illness. That goal and really the vision I want to leave you with is a body that really encounters a parasite, a toxin, an environmental stressor, or the natural process of aging and it responds from a place of resilience rather than collapse.

Not a body that requires constant external intervention to manage what it cannot manage itself, but a by with restored intelligent and adaptive function that can handle the inevitable challenges of being alive in this world.

That is a standard we should be holding for our patients and for ourselves. I want to be honest with you, this is not the faster or simpler path. Level one approaches feel satisfying because they give us something to target and eliminate.

And hey, patients do well for a bit on those. there's a clarity to it, a sense of action and progress. And again, that action is important and often necessary.

But healing, true healing is not linear and it's not just subtractive, it is regenerative, its restorative. It requires us to hold the complexity of the whole person, their history, the constitution, patterns of excess and deficiency, and meet them at the level their body actually needs.

So as practitioners that means we have to be willing. to evolve beyond the protocols that got us started. It means continuing to study, it means holding a bigger picture, and it mean having the courage to tell our patients, hey, we've done the important work clearing the way.

Now let's actually build something. And as patients And health seekers, it really means understanding that if you've been in a kill and cleanse cycle for more than a year and you're not seeing lasting change, maybe time to ask a different question.

Not what else do I need to kill, but what does my body need actually heal? That shift in question changes everything. So thank you so much for spending this time with me today.

If this resonated with you, please share it with someone you know who's navigating a chronic illness journey or working with clients who are stuck in that cycle.

And if you want to go deeper into any of these concepts, Chinese medicine, constitutional patterns, tonic herb protocols, organ restoration strategies, stay tuned because we're going to keep building on all of it.

Until next time, take care of yourselves, go deeper than the surface, and remember, the body is always trying to

heal. Our job is to give it what it needs to do so.

Thanks for tuning into The Resiliency Method, the truth about healing podcasts. If this episode spoke to you, follow, share, and leave us a review. Are you ready to go deeper?

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