The Gut-Autoimmune Connection: Breaking the Cycle of Leaky Gut & Chronic Illness Transcript

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Introduction and guest background

Hey, welcome to the Thyroid Pharmacists Healing Conversations podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Isabella Wenz, PharmD, your thyroid pharmacist. Can we have coffee if we got issues?

And we're going to get into some really innovative strategies on gut healing with one of, in my humble opinion, the world's top gut experts, Dr. Vincent Pedre.

Welcome, Doctor Pedra. It's so nice to have you here. Nice to be here with you. I mean, I've known you for so many years and excited that you launched the podcast.

And I think just another level for you to reach people and help so many people that you already have and just have a greater impact. It's been wonderful to have it because I get to learn so much from my colleagues like yourself and share this information with people that are listening that perhaps somewhere on their healing journeys, beginning of their journeys kind of in the middle.

There's so many innovative things that happening in medicine and functional medicine in nutrition these days. And this is really the best way to get the information out there to people who want the A little bit background about Dr.

Pedre, he's a board-certified internist, functional medicine expert. He has a simple yet profound mission to transform health. Over two decades of experience in Western and Eastern medical traditions, He offers more than healthcare.

he provides a personalized pathway to wellness. over 20 years of experience as an MD, that's amazing, and has worked with over 10,000 patients. He's certified in functional medicine, also trained in breath work and yoga techniques, as well as a fantastic dancer.

His journey in medicine has been both personal and professional. So I know a lot of us start down the path of going to You know, I went to pharmacy school, you went medical school people go to nursing school and we're kind of taught this curriculum of.

This is what we do. this is how we help sick people and then something happens sometimes in our own lives and our families lives that makes us. I guess kind question the narrative and wonder if there's anything else out there.

that could produce perhaps better, quicker, faster, more impactful healing. So I'd love to hear more about your story of how you came to functional medicine.

You know what, I think in some ways I have to attribute it to my dad. And it's not direct attribution. But my Dad was a contrarian. And he always was looking at the world sideways looking it in a different way than how other people looked at his viewpoints on politics on the stock market where he was constantly looking for the contrarian point of view the thing that people weren't paying attention to.

And I think that that influenced me in the way that I even decided to approach health. So even before I went to medical school, so between college and medical School, I had actually graduated in three and a half years.

Uh, So I was already admitted to Medical School and now I Had eight months off to just like You know, beef-free, you know I'm 21 years old, but I had a couple of things that I was challenged with.

One of them was my fear of needles. And it was this elephant in the room that was just lingering over my head,

because I just was thinking, like, I love science.

I loved biology. I love people. Always I wanted to help people and serve people, but if I have this fear of needles, how can I become a doctor?

Dr. Pedreu2019s path into functional medicine

like at some point, like, I'm not going to be able to skirt around it, Like, i'm gonna have to Be in a room with needles. And even alcohol like kind of made me queasy like the smell of alcohol.

Like I hate it. So I had all this free time. And I started reading there were some really big the alternative movement was rising Deepak Chopra had just come out with quantum healing at the same time Andrew while had published spontaneous healing and I unusual out of the box healings and just different ways of thinking.

So even before I went to medical school, I was all already like my mind was expanding and I just found I would just like absorb all of that like a sponge.

Like I thought, wow, this is so fascinating that there are these MDs these well-established MDs who are talking about how things can happen outside of the regular Western paradigm.

And so that led me down the rabbit hole of learning about the parasympathetic sympathetic nervous system, discovering breath work, discovery meditation and discovering yoga, all in January of 1995. Now, just to put that into perspective, this is pre smartphones, the internet is yet not a big thing.

If you want to get on the Internet, you're using a dial up through your phone line. Like this was a whole different era. So I was going and learning this from books at the bookstore, and I started meditating and doing breath work and yoga to conquer my fear of needles.

And little did I know that it was gonna have such a dramatic change, not just on my Fear of Needles, my ability to do that, so I could become a doctor.

It changed my internal operating system. So I went from being this very anxiety-prone, nervous, worrying pre-med student to this calm, zen person that was about to enter medical school.

And because I had that very visceral experience, and it was not just me, but it perceived by others to the point that in the first semester of medical school with how stressful it is, you're doing like, it's a fire hose of information and you are getting tested every two weeks and the amount that you learning is like college multiplied by 10, like any classes, multiples of whatever you did as a pre-med, And I was always calm and my friends started calling me the Zen guy because I just had this air of calm.

And little did they know that a year before, I would not have been that. It was through breath work, meditation, yoga that I experienced that internal transformation.

So I already knew that regardless of what they are teaching me, this is the path that I want to take. And I didn't know how that path was going to lead, because I don't about functional medicine back in 95, but I did know that the type of doctor that wanted to become was not going be a regular Western doctor.

I knew that was my intention. It's amazing that you discovered these powerful tools at such a young age. 21 to have these tools at your disposal. That's incredible.

A lot of 21-year-olds, they're going out to bars and drinking, myself, one of those 21 year olds, without really thinking through how they can empower themselves to live their best lives.

And a lot us don't get into our personal growth journeys until maybe our 20s or 30s, sometimes 40s our 50s are 60s even. And so that's incredible that you have that tool and I could totally relate.

I've had a needle phobia and a blood phobias and cadaver phobic. So this was like, I was okay, want to help people with their health, but not touching needles.

Like I fainted at the side of cadavers and wish I had those tools. in my 20s, I had never considered to start meditation, but that would have been so incredibly helpful.

And anybody really with any kind of anxiety or any challenging health condition, these are tools that are free that you can do on your own time. These days, you don't even have to go to the library.

You can go an internet website and find information on how you could do that at home, right? I do want to say something that I think because I come from the generation that preceded the Internet and the deterioration of attention spans that has happened, you know, we're in the TikTok society where people have a couple of seconds of I think that maybe I was a bit of an outlier in that sense because I didn't expect when I started meditating in January that one week later I would have conquered my needle phobia.

I just committed to it and I said, you know what, I'm going to do this for as long as it takes. For me to be able to conquer this and and I say this because I see it in my patients.

I See it and my son who suffers from anxiety and he's he is turning 21 in it. In October of 2025 and. his generation is suffering from so much anxiety.

And I think it's the social media effect. I Think it is the effect of our over access to knowledge, information, communication. But then there's this lack of patience, realizing that, hey, just because you started meditating the other day doesn't mean seven days later, two weeks later.

You're going to feel less anxious, you got to keep doing it, and it may take a couple of months. But what I found for myself is I was training as if I were training for an Olympic sport.

Like I'm like, I am going to become a doctor and the only way for me to do this is conquer my fear of needles. And I will meditate for as long as it takes for my to be able to this.

It took like eight months, so January to August And then when school started, I kept meditating. And there was a point in my life, you know, early 20s, like you start getting busy, have friends, start going out, so meditation started falling a bit to the wayside.

But what I did during that time locked in a change in brain and my operating system that lasted for years. And I think people don't realize this because we're in such a quick fix society that some things do take time.

And that timeframe is usually longer than people expect or realize. If they can only hold on for long enough, the transformation comes. You know, it's incredible.

There are so many things you could have done for your anxiety. You could've gotten on medications, right? Yeah, 100%. maybe gone to therapy, but a lot of the things would have basically worked while you were taking them.

There's different types of therapy out there, But you take a benzo medication or if you would take like an SSRI for anxiety, that's not going to give you lasting results.

But when you do something with meditation or other ways to impact neuroplasticity. I've done neurofeedback, and I have done over, I don't know, a few hundred sessions of that.

And that has rewired my brain to the point where I'm not as anxious and not stressed by things, so I can pause for a minute and when I am faced with things I could really stay calm, where if I had just gotten on benzos, then I would have been like, okay, either addicted to them or unable to function without them.

It becomes like a teddy bear, right? It become your pacifier, and then you start associating the ability to functioning

with that. But it disempowers you from seeing that the true power is within yourself.

You don't need… Now, there are people out there who, like, they don' have the discipline, the don have patience, or they're suffering so much that they do need medication.

Needle phobia, meditation, and nervous system change

help them bridge, you know, so I'm very much an integrator of seeing how we can weave these things together. Like, look, if you're someone listening to this, and you needed one of these medications, that's okay.

But also, start weaving in breath work, meditation, yoga, time in nature, like, figure out what are the things that like tone down your nervous system, activate your vagus nerve, get you into a more relaxed state, so that you can empower yourself to see that not all of it needs to be from the medication that You do have the power within yourselves in this incredible machine, this very sophisticated machine that we've been handed that has the ability to create these effects when given the right input.

And for me, my kind of belief in conventional medicine, I wasn't as forward thinking as you. So I was very much trained as the pharmacist and medications work, supplements don't work.

I kind had a bit of black and white thinking. And I don t know if it came from my own brain or maybe just the education that I received. But I got to a point where I a new pharmacist and I had so many different symptoms.

I have anxiety and remember going to a clinic and like I've got this symptom, I got the symptom. And I actually had fatigue and then that turned into a few years later I started with irritable bowel syndrome in pharmacy school.

Then right after pharmacy I start having anxiety. carpal tunnel, acid reflux, all kinds of symptoms and hair loss. Being a Leo, I was like the hair lost.

This is something that is really a serious issue. It was in my 20s and then eventually that led me to the diagnosis of Hashimoto's. Imagine if you had been treated with anxiety medication and basically told that all this is in your head.

There's nothing physically wrong with you. it's just in I was told that, but if it's all in my head, then why am I losing hair? I think that hair loss was what saved me and encouraged me to ask deeper questions.

I had the acid reflux and irritable bowel syndrome. Now, when I went through functional medicine training, what was really fascinating to me was that a lot of times, autoimmune conditions can start with the gut.

And I was like, Oh, wow, what if that irritable bowel syndrome actually was a sign or symptom that there was gonna that something more serious was developing?

And i know you did that as well, right? 100%. And also, that was my story of what got me into this, was having years of IBS, irritable bowel syndrome, after having been on 20 plus rounds of antibiotics as a child and developing sensitivities that I didn't know I had to gluten, dairy, and a couple of other foods that we would consider healthy, like even tomatoes.

I was reacting to tomatoes without knowing it. And when I got to my 30s and I discovered functional medicine, I started thinking about the interrelationships between IBS as the entry point that creates the dysregulation of the immune system, because 70% of your immune is all along the gut lining.

It's basically command central for your system. So if that suffers from chronic inflammation, eventually your immune system is going to lose the ability to recognize self and non self.

And at the same time, I had seen that my mom was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis and autoimmune condition. My older sister also had an auto immune condition, and I started just worrying that if I don't make a change, I could be basically harvesting an autoimmune condition that would come out 10, 15 years later.

So that was a big motivation for me to really dial in when I was early on in functional medicine. I basically made myself patient zero and decided, you know what, I'm going to do an experiment.

I'm going to change my diet, overhaul everything, introduce probiotics, start using gut-healing nutrients. And the transformation was dramatic, and it became even more dramatic when I discovered that I was gluten-sensitive and took gluten out of the diet.

Eventually, I actually was able to bring back certain foods that like, like tomatoes. I don't have any problems with tomatoes anymore, but it took like some dedication and gut healing in the beginning to be able to get there.

It's incredible. I think my journey is very similar because I had gluten and dairy sensitivity and being a Polish girl, that was like pretty much 90% of my diet.

And I have IBS and acid reflux and at the time I already had the Hashimoto's diagnosis. But it was incredible because i got off of gluten in dairy and within a few days, a lot of that I had been experiencing for like two, three, four, five years.

I was like, this is amazing, I don't have to take Tums and Pepsid and all of these meds that i was taking and I also had carpal tunnel and that actually improved with getting off of common food staples.

We, you and I have been talking about, like, actually going into when you really focus on gut health, You can make such a big difference in a lot of different health conditions, whether that's autoimmune, hormones, thyroid through estrogen.

Why do you think so many people overlook that connection? I think one, it's not the way that we are trained in medicine. The digestive system is the least sexy organ system, like who wants to talk about poop?

And unfortunately, if you see a gastroenterologist, they have no nutrition training and they will tell you that IBS is unrelated to your diet, which even if just have a brain and common sense, Wouldn't you think that IBS has everything to do with the diet?

But I've had top gastroenterologists told my patients that their Ibs symptoms have nothing to with their diet and that this gluten-free thing is just silly and they can eat gluten.

And then my patient have gone back to eating gluten and then they will have an inflammatory flare. I had one patient with ankylosing spondylitis. And I had gotten her to the point that she was on Celebrex, which is an anti-inflammatory.

We had got into her, to a point where we were weaning off the Celebrex. And then she actually went to see an allergist. And the allergist told her that there's nothing to this gluten-free dairy.

So she had a weekend with her kids, pizza party, birthday party cake, and then calls me the next week, which was only a few weeks after our last appointment where she told me she was feeling the best that she ever felt in the last year.

And she's like, I'm having the worst exacerbation I've had in years. And I was, you know, when I received the message, I looked at the chart and like, wait a second, but she was great.

How did we go backwards? And then I get on the phone with her and she's like oh, last weekend I had pizza and I have cake because the allergist told me that this was all silly and it had nothing to do with anything.

And, and, just asked her like well, what do you think? Because I do believe that experience is one of the best teachers. a patient's going to really stick to a plan when they learn through experience.

What it's like, you know, because sometimes it it''s a lot of sacrifice to go gluten free, dairy free. And you're like

well, is this really making a difference for me?

And then when you have it and you see what it does, like how it just triggers this massive inflammation in the body. Then they're never gonna go back.

And we can talk about ways that now I'm finding ways to be able to get patients back to tolerating foods that they couldn't tolerate.

Gut health, autoimmune disease, and food sensitivities

But it astounds me that we're not teaching nutrition in medical schools. it's an especially for someone who's a gastroenterologist, they're dealing with the digestive system.

And and I was so annoyed. So I'm like, you should not be giving nutrition advice. If you don't have any nutrition training. I don' care if you're an MD.

yeah it's really interesting because like i feel like when you get you have this really advanced training and gastroenterologists they are they learn so much right about the gut but they aren't missing that one little piece and it it almost like well if this was relevant i would have learned it i don't know i felt like that when i was going through pharmacy school because i had so many soo many classes on sooo many different things and then when I graduated, you know, I took my boards, and then I'd be presented with some information.

And I be like, well, that can't be a thing, because I would have learned about it, right. But it's like like you said, they actually don't learn about It.

and for whatever reason, be it the pharmaceutical companies or, or just like the curriculum and whatnot, You, They just don t know what they don' know.

The thing is that someone who has a title like medical doctor, and is speaking with confidence on something they weren't trained on, but they have such influence on patients that they really shouldn't take that lightly.

If you're not trained in something, then you shouldn' be commenting on it because patients respect doctors. Maybe not as much now as they did 20 years ago.

I think people have become very savvy and know that they need to be their own advocates and search on the internet. But still, there's no substitute for experience that can be trumped by a Google search or chat GBT.

You still need that experience. to really fully understand health. And we're not there, but people need to be their own advocates at the same time and ask, like you said, you started asking the questions rather than just accepting what they were telling you.

One thing that I see from a patient perspective, and I'm sure that you see this as well, or patient advocates or people who perhaps have healed themselves and had incredible results, which I am so proud of and always encouraging people to take charge of their own health.

But sometimes they put all of the eggs in one basket. They might say, like, healing the gut is just about diet, but there's other things that actually make an impact.

I was hoping we could get into some of these other things that can really sabotage our gut health besides diet. I mean, diet is a big one, but it's not the only thing.

And I think for our society, stress is the second biggest one because it affects so many things that can cause downstream problems in the gut, including being under high stress and deactivating the vagus nerve.

So you lose vagal tone. When you loose vaginal tone, stomach acid production drops. digestive enzyme production

drops. You actually, if your vagus nerve is shocked, like in a traumatic brain injury, within 30 minutes, you start developing leaky gut.

And when the vagous nerve isn't working properly, then you get constipation, and you lose the rhythmic contractions of the intestines. So the the Vegas is controlling a lot and it's coming through stress.

highly stressed you're going to shut off that vagus nerve and probably you know people know this intuitively like if you've gone through a major breakup a big emotional upset suddenly your stomach doesn't feel well your food doesn' sit well you lose your appetite you can't eat that much because it just makes you feel Sick, that's your vagus nerve being deactivated.

That's kind of more of an extreme version of it. But everybody who's listening can probably relate to a point in their life where they had a major stressor where he just lost their appetite.

Well, that's a physical manifestation of your Vegas nerve not functioning because you're under a lot of stress. And that slows down the digestive system.

You can't digest protein well. The problem is, is when it's not acute like that, where it is just chronic, underlying. And the person now has normalized living that way.

It's just the way that their life is. They're not really seeing the interconnection between stress and how it's having a physical effect and affecting their gut.

Yeah, it is hard to kind of track that like if you're just chronically stressed versus I know I could tell you I had an uncle that was in an emergency situation and I went to help him out in intensive care and see what was going on in the emergency room.

And all of a sudden I felt my digestion just really off. Then you don't really think about what chronic stress does, right? Going through pharmacy school is very stressful for me.

I had to wake up at an ungodly hour, I'm not a morning person, get to school, and I have to take two exams a week and do all the crazy things. all all these classes and not eating well and this this is you know when I developed IBS and it was more of it wasn't like an acute situation but it I want to say something about that, too, because it's something that I talk to my patients about.

Because a lot of times, someone in that situation will say, well, I'm not stressed. I know I have a lots of things to do. So mentally, they might be adapted to it, or they may just be expecting that this is just the way things are.

whether it's corporate job, whatever it is, like, very high performing people, but I tell them, it doesn't matter if your brain doesn' think that you're stressed, your body is stressed.

And they're speaking two different languages. Your brain can delude you to thinking you are not stressed your bodies never gonna lie. You don't feel it in your head, you gonna feel in it your And that's why I call it biophysical stress.

Having to wake up early, but you're not a morning person. Like having to force yourself to get up, putting your body through long hours. That is a biophysical and that can be felt in the body with physical symptoms, even if in your mind, You're like, oh no, this is just how my life is.

I'm always busy. Yeah, I've got a lot of things to do. Not especially stressed. A lot times, these high performers, do you realize how stressed your body is?

Yeah, it's incredible because I think our body, we can lie to our brains, right? We can kind of talk ourselves out of things, but our bodies always aware of what's happening.

You mentioned also hidden infections and toxins. Can you speak to how those might impact gut health and potentially we talked about, you know, food sensitivities and perhaps part of healing your gut is addressing all the things that are out-of-balance.

Yeah, because what people don't realize is you can have an underlying parasite, but not have a lot of gut symptoms that you would associate with a parasite.

You could have yeast overgrowth, unexplained sugar cravings or craving for a lot of refined carbohydrates might actually be that you just have yeast overgrowth in your gut that's hijacking your brain and making you crave these types of foods, but also exposure to molds, like environmental mold for people who are sensitive.

Microtoxins are very damaging to the gut lining and cause leaky gut. as well. So these are kind of like that expanded list of possibilities that we just umbrella and call IBS or inflammatory bowel disease.

And we're not really looking for, well, what are the underlying root reasons? Because everybody has a different gut signature of what's happening inside their system that might be Contributing to their overall symptoms, which are not just in the gut, they're felt in their immune system, their hormone system.

Stress, vagus nerve dysfunction, and hidden gut disruptors

Their skin, brain, lungs, airways, so it has ramifications that are felt throughout the body. And they could be coming from the gut. And there could an indolent infection or exposure to toxins that you don't even realize.

Like, for example, like BPA, plastics. I started doing research on that last year. It's just looking at, well, we know that microplastics are hormone disruptors, right?

They mess with estrogen signaling in the body. But do they do anything to the got? And it turns out that they a lot. they actually, I think because of the shearing effect, they destroy the mucus layer, which is, imagine if your mucous layer is like a protective moat over around the medieval castle, and the wall of the castle is your gut lining.

So you kind of need that moats to keep the invaders away. Well, microplastics wear away at that that mote, the mucus layer, so then it makes it easier for pathogens inside the gut to reach the lining where they can start to break it down.

And the other thing that they've found in research studies is that the micro plastics also cause the overgrowth of bad bugs in the gut. So they will lead to dysbiosis, which also causes leaky gut, so there's different pathways to leakey gut from exposure to microplastics which are everywhere in our environment now.

Yeah, it's really been crazy. Because even people who consciously try to avoid things like pesticides and plastics and leave, live a pretty clean life.

You had mentioned to me, you're actually finding things in their system when you are doing testing. Is that right? Yeah. So when I do toxicity testing, one of the things that we check for is BPA, bisphenol A, which is one plastics out there that's used in creating plastic water bottles and things like that.

And surprisingly, even people who are being conscious about it, but you have to think like our food is wrapped in plastic. You might be getting exposed to hidden plastics, like if you go to a coffee shop and you get a to go cup with your hot coffee, well, the inner lining of that cup is plastic, And when that hot liquid hits that lining, it's shearing off little shards of plastic, which are microscopic.

You're not going to see them with your eyes, but you're going drink them. And that's also affecting the gut microbiome and the integrity of the got lining.

So there's a lot of ways that we potentially are getting exposed to plastics. It's very hard to avoid. I have glass. cups, and I have glass jars, chairs, where I sell my food.

And I think this is a great place to start with, like, lowering your exposure wherever you can, not maybe giving yourself an aluminum hat, but maybe you could do that in your own home instead of drinking from plastic cups.

Are there ways to help detox from the plastic if it's in Plastic is what we would call a persistent organic pollutant. It's fat soluble, so it's a bit harder to get plastic out of the body.

I would say the top two ways that I've found is infrared sauna, like regular sauna therapy. And number two is using phospholipids, so things like phosphatidylcholine to help improve the body's ability to detoxify, improving bile flow, and also helping to pull those microplastics out of the interesting.

So we were just chatting a little bit before the interview. You love body bio-phosphatidylcholine, and I do too. I will be the first to admit that I don't love the flavor of it.

It's definitely an acquired taste, but I found that it's been incredible as far as helping with my brain function, And the tricky reason, one of the reasons I haven't necessarily recommended it as frequently to my clients that are earlier on their healing journeys because it's soy derived, but you mentioned that it can potentially be.

It doesn't it might not even have soy proteins. Is that right? Yeah, I mean, just because I think it's such a great intervention for patients, so I've spoken to the chief science officer at BodyBio about it.

And they say that the way that they extract the soy lecithin, it removes any of the proteins, which is really what we react to. Although you might say, that some people might still react the the soyl lecythin.

Someone who's super sensitive. But for me, my entry point now is to really work on gut healing, work the integrity of the gut barrier. I think we can kind of like take a quantum leap now compared to what we used to do with the peptides that we have available.

They have dramatically improved the speed of gut-healing, whereas things could take months years before now within a couple of months, you can start seeing I'm having patients who are able to start tolerating little bits of foods that they could not tolerate.

So there's a potential avenue there using peptides like BPC 157, lorazotide, KPV, where you can have the patient do a protocol with that for a couple of months and then start testing the phospholipids, which have soy lecithin in them and see if they're able to tolerate at that point.

And starting with like minor, you know, very small doses initially and working your way up, because like you said, like the benefits for brain fog are amazing.

I have a patient that I'm working with now who had gut issues, but also had been living in a house with mold. And she was exposed to a significant amount of mycotoxins had incredible brain fog.

She's also in her 50s. So like, post menopausal, And so you could easily blame it on the hormones at that point. You can see how it starts to get very complicated because postmenopausal woman, oh, you have brain fog because your estrogen is low.

But the amazing thing with her is that she didn't follow my slow increasing protocol with the phospholipids. She just went super fast to the full dose.

And within four weeks, when I met with her, she told me that her brain is the clearest it's been in 10 years. And that was only after four week on the full dose of the phospholipids, which is, in the case of a body biopsy, it is one tablespoon with breakfast and one with lunch.

You don't want to take it late in the day because it could actually keep you awake at night, it might be too energizing, like people notice that they get energy from them.

And the interesting thing too, is that the phospholipids help with gut healing, and they're helping heal the gut border as well. That's fascinating because I feel like a lot of times people would think, okay, we would go on an elimination diet.

And I know I have a lots of people with Hashimoto's, which would, think that they needed to be on something like autoimmune paleo for, you know, indefinitely in some cases, and they would be, on this diet and, they still wouldn't see a, lot, of healing happening and I, know a, lot of, people, with irritable bowel syndrome.

those are the patients that I get, but this patient already on a gluten free diet already, on the dairy free Diet, and yet still having symptoms. And those other types of patients, that i've gotten over the years, so it's kind of really refined, how I work with people, because I got the people were doing everything right, yet they're still not feeling well.

So then when you work with those patients, you have to figure out, okay, what's missing here? What haven't we looked at? Where are the stones that weren't turned over that could be hiding the clues to the mystery of why this person who seems to be doing everything right is still not feeling that great?

Toxins, microplastics, and phospholipid support

So, looking at their toxin burden, their stress, whether they have infections, supporting them with peptides and other healing supplements, and then getting them on some phosphorylcholine, you've seen a lot of turnaround in people being able to tolerate a whole lot more things.

Yeah, and I think like you, like I like to be scientific, I'd like be data driven. So I do like do testing. And the great thing now is that there's a new test available by a company called MeScreen, where we can look at mitochondrial function.

Short of doing a muscle biopsy, which is the gold standard for evaluating mitochondria function, but They're painful, they're not practical, like how many people are you going to put through muscle biopsies?

Now we have a test that's close enough and equivalent to that that can give us baseline mitochondrial function, but also look at how the mitochondria are functioning under stress.

How many reactive oxygen species they are producing, which is oxidation, that which can cause DNA damage. And for years, you know, we're functional medicine trained.

So doing elimination diets seems like that. But I feel like now we can really I'm one of those people who is super impatient. Like, don't tell me I have to do an elimination diet for six months and that I and the progress is going to be like, I want to find what are the potential shortcuts that get me there faster while still understanding that this is a commitment, that if you wanna see true results, you've gotta commit the time and the effort.

Like it's not gonna be overnight, but it can be faster than you think it is. And what I find, I don't know if find this, the people that actually dedicate themselves to doing the protocols without resistance, are the ones that get the better and faster results.

And the one's that push back and they're like, well I don't know, I'm not gonna do this, or this is too much, they get there but their progress is slower.

Yeah, I've definitely noticed that I remember I had one client that was like, i'm not I need help. And I am struggling, but I'm Not willing to change my thyroid meds.

I don't want to do any lab tests. i don' want it to take any supplements, and I' m not going to chang my diet. An I was li e, you know, like huh, let me let m think about this, because this is going t be kind of tricky.

Well, yo can focus on stress, right? But I sometimes I have a little bit of a sarcastic edge at times so I would probably tell that person like so basically you want to tie my hands behind my back and then have me help you

there's you know you have to change you no sometimes I'll tell people look what you're doing isn't working if it were working you wouldn't be here so You've gotta be willing to make the changes.

I'll work with you so that the change can be livable and we can work step by step. Sometimes I think for some people it's easier to stack changes instead of do them all at once.

They're gonna be really overwhelming. So like if we're doing an elimination diet, let's choose the one that's easy. Maybe it gluten, like stop eating bread at the table when you go out to dinners.

And then little by little we'll become gluten free at home. Master that. Then once that's solid, then we'll go to the next one. You know, some people need that and I believe that.

Like I want to empower people to get there in the way that makes the most sense for them. But when people put the brakes on like that, basically like you want help, but you don't want Yeah, yeah, I think sometimes people can be very dogmatic and this is the diet that I need to be on.

Maybe it's vegetarian or vegan or autoimmune paleo and sometimes they're not open to the idea that actually this might be part of what's not working for you or Some people might be very closed off to mold toxicity as being a potential driver.

They're like, but there's mold everywhere. Or, you know, everybody has mold or this is like we have the good kind of mold. I call those upper limit problems where people, and this not everyone, some people want to get better.

but they don't fully want to get better. They haven't reached that point where they're fully committed. But that's also our magic bullet, easy button society, where, they want get to better, but don t want it to require that much work to And sometimes it does require like an inner journey, a transformation, and change in the operating system, the way you've been thinking about life, health, all of that.

Because if you're not feeling your best, then what you are doing isn't working. And trying like, you know, we know this, like you aren't going to get there if we just make one tiny change.

Sometimes you need a complete overhaul, but you can do that stepwise. You can phase in the changes, But you've got to get there. Like you cannot just say, well, I'm going to just do phase one and let's see how that works in a couple of months.

Well, one, i'm gonna look bad. Because I can't promise you that you do this one little thing, you're going to get better. And that's not good for you.

It's Not good. For me, You're gonna be frustrated. I'm going To be Frustrated. So you know, I don't want to feel like I m being judgmental to anybody who's listening to this.

But my patients know like, i give them tough love. And sometimes I'm super gentle, and I am very warm and supporting, but sometimes people need a little bit of a hard push, right?

We do that with our kids. Sometimes the cuddling love isn't going to work. You need to give them a bit tough love to get them to where you know they need Yeah, I've definitely been learning that with my own son too.

He's seven and every now and then he needs a nudge for a while he was very fearful of taking showers for when he I won't go into details. But he really, really needed to take a shower.

And so I just like pushed him in the shower, like it would have been like very gross and unhealthy for him not to and then he was spent like an hour in The shower This is amazing.

This was great. and Then he takes showers from now on for a while. He was only taking baths, but the bathtub had become dirty. So we were like, okay, this this is for we're gonna do this.

Peptides, testing, and personalized gut healing

Sometimes we think things are harder than they're actually going to be when we do them. Yeah, I definitely thought going gluten-free was gonna be impossible.

And then some other kind of intimidating things. I remember doing a stool test where a lot of my clients have been like, this is the most horrific thing I've ever done was pooping in like a little cup, but it can provide so much information for healing, right?

Or, you know, really doing even blood work for some people. They're afraid, they're still afraid of needles, But going and getting that information can be a really big game changer.

getting people to understand, like, I think having a co-collaborative relationship with patients where it's like I thing information is power and if they can understand why you want to collect the poop sample that maybe is kind of gross, but it is going to give us such good information that it will help me help you, that hopefully they will conquer their own inner resistances to those things.

Elimination diets I feel like have been a cornerstone of functional medicine and nutrition. And I think you and I have both had a bit of a maybe a change of heart or just seeing some of that progress where we're not necessarily saying people need to be off of 800 different foods.

One food that a lot of people love, I should say one drink that A lot Of people Love and swear by is coffee. but it does have a bad reputation for gut health and for thyroid conditions, various different health conditions.

And I think sometimes people are like, well, if I have to give up my coffee, like I'm just not going to do anything like screw you and your protocol, I not gonna do any of it.

Can you tell us a bit of a myth of why perhaps coffee might get a bed wrap and how we can actually enjoy coffee without having some of the potential adverse reactions.

Yeah, I think, you know, look, there's good research on the benefits of coffee, even like in patients with Parkinson's, with dementia and improving brain health.

But something that people need to realize is that coffee is one of the top 10 crops on planet that is sprayed most with pesticides. Not necessarily glyphosate, although sometimes you can get some cross-contamination if there's glyphasate being sprayed in fields that might be nearby to those coffee plantations.

And then there is the possibility of getting exposed to mold. People can even get exposed microtoxins, ochratoxin A, through coffee, but also different grains.

It's not just limited to coffee. But it has to do with the storage if they're stored in poor conditions, usually lower grade coffee beans that are of lower quality are going to be more likely to get a mold growing on them.

There is like a little insect that bores into the coffee bean and then creates little holes that allows mold to grow in them, but this is going to happen in places where the storage isn't as good or like the Coffee beans are not of the highest grade.

So you know, think places that are buying like millions of dollars worth of coffee beans, one of the biggest companies in the world that does that, that controls the coffee trade, but their beans aren't organic.

Organic coffee beings are going to be of higher quality. By and large, they will be free of pesticides. They should be if they're truly organic, and because they are higher-quality, there are gonna be three of mold, mycotoxins, All of that and those are those.

Are just some of the things that people need to look out for like we talked about the microplastics like the two go

cups like it's so easy to just bring your own tumbler like a Yeti or whatever it is to the coffee shop and just have them.

put your coffee in your own steel-lined tumbler and drink it from there. Usually, it's $1 cheaper if you do that, but it is also hundreds of dollars in savings for your health and your gut because you're not getting exposed to those microplastics that are going to disrupt your good and hormones.

The quality of the coffee matters. That's going be a big difference for you as far as if your exposed like the toxins, mycotoxins, your if you're mold sensitive, like and you might have eliminated you've gotten out of your moldy environment.

But if You're still drinking poor quality coffee that might Have Ochre Toxin A, then you Might still having brain fog and other symptoms and not realizing that you are doing it to yourself through your drink.

It's also the quality of how the coffee is prepared. As you know, I've launched the Coffee. And so as part of this, little by little becoming a coffee connoisseur and understanding the whole process of coffee and coffee beans and all that.

But also, the way that the copy is roasted affects a lot of the qualities of the coffee and even the potential that the Coffee might expose you to things like polyamory aromatic hydrocarbons, or other, like, products that happen like advanced glycosylation and products have happened from burning the beans, if they get over roasted, again, I will say happens with one of coffee chains in the world, then you're getting exposed to cancer causing chemicals in coffee.

Coffee quality, mold, and cleaner brewing

But if you do something like air roasting, which is what we're doing, there's a couple of things where it actually makes the coffee more easy on the stomach, it lowers the chlorogenic acid which gives that sour feeling, but also because the air roaster is actually siphoning off the smoke, As the coffee is being roasted, it's siphoning off those poly aromatic hydrocarbons.

So the Coffee that you get is actually much cleaner coffee, roasted coffee than you would if it is Being done in a drum roaster, which is the majority of how coffee Is roasted in the United States.

So, I mean, it's fascinating because some people like coffee, they're like not really willing to part ways with their coffee because this is just such a big part of their lifestyle and it makes them good feel good in so many different ways.

It might be causing acid reflux, sour stomach. They might balancing out the health effects with the fact that it wakes up their brain, but not realizing that its also causing damage.

The way to get around that is to drink a cleaner coffee. Can you tell us about happy gut coffee where people can learn more? Super easy to remember happygutcoffee.com takes you to our website.

We talk about our air roasting method, where the beans come from. The beans are all organic. And we've actually had the beans third-party tested for mycotoxins, pesticides, glyphosate, and heavy metals, too.

People might not realize, but coffee beans, depending on where they're sourced from, might also be contaminated with heavy metal. And, we provide those testing results on the website so people can see transparently that we have tested our beans and that they are clean.

We're also certified organic by organic certifiers. So super excited. This is a new product line that we launched at the end of 2024. And it's just been growing.

Even if you don't get my coffee, if I can just get people to take a Yeti to the coffee shop and not keep getting coffee

in those to-go cups, At least that's a minor win for me, because I say that the micro habits are the things that build our macro health.

And if you can change just little microhabits that you do every day that are affecting your health, you could have a dramatic impact on your overall wellness.

And we love your coffee. So my husband and I have had the pleasure of trying it. And so thank you so much for creating it for us. I know my has been had been dealing with some acid reflux and he was like, I don't know if I need a quick coffee, but he loves it so.

Much and. He's been drinking happy got coffee and his gut has. Been very happy, so Thank you. so, much. Eating it, for everybody. We so appreciate the work that you're doing in the world and all of the healing resources that books about gut health and your supplements and the coffee and all the education that you've been doing.

So appreciate your work, Dr. Pedre, and I really appreciate you taking the time to join us today. Could you tell us where people can find you if they wanted to learn more about you and work?

Yeah, come over to Instagram, follow me at DrPedre. And they can learn more by going to happygutcoffee.com or happygotlife. com. I mean, people are surprised that I still do take some one-on-one clients, and they learn about that by go into my Instagram or my website.

But I just feel really passionate about educating people about building the foundation of gut health as the root system for the entire body. And diddle to you.

Thank you for all the work that you do in educating people about Hashimoto's autoimmune disease and energy. So I really appreciate you so it's I'm just sending some of that love back to You for everything that You do.

Well, thank you So much and hopefully everybody listening. I hope this has been healing on your healing journey. Thanks so much for joining us.