Summit Introduction and Speaker Intros

Welcome everyone to the Gut Health and Longevity Summit. I am a so glad you're here, and I want you to take a moment right now to just pause, because today's conversation is going to take you somewhere.

Most doctors don't really take you, which is the remarkable connection between your gut and your eye. We spend so much time thinking about our gut as the foundation of our immunity, our metabolism, our mood.

And yes, all of this is true, but today we're adding another dimension to this that will genuinely surprise you. Your vision and the science connecting your microbiome, your nervous system, and your health of your eyes has never been more clear.

And two of the most original thinkers in this space are here to walk you through it. In this session, we're going to cover the gut excess. What it is, why?

Declining vision is a whole body signal, how plant based nutrition protects your site at the cellular level, and what you can do today to start preserving your vision for decades to come.

My first guest here has spent her career asking the question that most optometrists never ask. What is blurry vision actually telling us about the rest of the body?

Please meet Claudia muhlenberg, known as a holistic vision coach and the founder of the Naturally Clear Vision Institute and creator of a coaching certification program training the next generation of root cause vision practitioners.

She has helped thousands of people reduce their dependance on glasses by addressing whole body terrain, nervous system regulation, anti-inflammatory nutrition, and the stress of vision connection most practitioners completely overlook.

Then we have also my second guest, and we're doing double duty here because there's just this is such an amazing topic. My second guest is pioneering a field that barely had a name five years ago, and it may be the most important frontier in eye care of the next decade.

Doctor Radka Toms is a medical doctor, ophthalmologist, and functional medicine practitioner. She is a pioneer in nutritional ophthalmology and the gut.

I access the emerging science of how you eat shapes what you see in her clinical practice. She integrates conventional ophthalmology with evidence based nutrition and lifestyle medicine to address macular degeneration, glaucoma, dry eye disease, and diabetic retinopathy.

At the root, not just the symptoms. And she brings a rare depth to this conversation as she has healed her own advanced rosacea through nutrition and lifestyle, and that transformation became the foundation of her mission.

Welcome, Claudia and a Doctor Tom's Radka. I'm so excited to have you here. And we've got a lot of questions to get through. So first, I'm going to start with you, Claudia.

The premise that stopped me in my tracks when I first heard it was that your declining vision is not just an eye problem. It's a symptom. A symptom of what exactly?

And why has conventional eye care missed that entirely? Can you walk us through what you mean by that? Thank you for having me. So the thing is that you just touched on this a little bit.

Stress and stress sounds like this big word like trauma. But when we are stressed, we have so many responses in the body, in the nervous system that affects our God, our sleep, our emotional level, how we show up, right.

It shows up our physical tension in the body. A lot of tension and the myofascial tissues really affect our posture. So that we have we had posture and when our vision gets worse, we might be doing other things with our head.

So we really have to look at this on this big level versus not just the eyes and also the brain. Obviously, most people know this, that the eyes are not where we see what we see in the brain, and the retina is actually part of the brain.

And that's why an ophthalmologist like Doctor Raqqah, she can actually look into the brain by looking in a dilated pupil exam, looking into the retina.

So that's really what we have to look at. Like even how we stand, right, how we tilt our body, how we tilt our head.

Vision as a Whole-Body Signal

All these things affect our vision. And that's really what we need to look at. But stress is the underlying level on the physical, emotional, mental level that really affects your vision.

Good or bad. Okay. Well I'm going to add a little story in here. And we're going to work through my vision scenario as we kind of go through these questions.

Because as you some of you may know, if you've been following me for a while that are watching, I suffered a traumatic brain injury. And with that traumatic brain injury came vision problems.

Okay. And as somebody whose career is dependent on the status of their vision, when I'm looking through a microscope and diagnosing disease under a microscope, you can imagine how disruptive that is.

So we'll get into that in a little bit. But I wanted to follow up with you, Claudia, on one thing. So for someone who's been wearing glasses for 20 years, what might those glasses actually be masking about their health underneath?

So we often think of the eye muscles being too weak, right? That's the people might think, oh, it's eye exercises that the muscles are actually too tense.

And they keep that eyeball almost in a frozen state. And we see that especially with myopia. That's the staring, that's this tension, that's this effort.

And that causes that blurry vision that the cascade of negative effects down the road. So that's what I would say to that is really the number one thing that the muscles need to be released relaxed so that they can function properly.

It's kind of similar to the pelvic floor, right. Everything else in our body, if it's not if it's stress and strain intense, it cannot function properly.

So would you say that our eyes, with all this technology and work we're doing on the computers, is stuck in a sympathetic state? How did. Yes. Well, that's another way to think of it.

I honestly haven't thought about my eyeballs being stuck in a sympathetic state, but now it's making more sense. All right. Perfect. Let's ask you, Doctor Radka, your work with a concept called the gut I access before we go too deep.

What is it? And why should every person in our gut health community be paying close attention to their eyes? Thank you, Monisha, as well. Very happy to be here.

So me, as often as I think that the axis is one of the most important emerging concepts that we have in medicine,

because it challenges the idea that I diseases begin and end in the eye, and the axis basically describes as a continuous communication between the gut microbiome, the intestinal barrier, the immune system, nervous system, and the eye.

And so we have to realize that the eye is not isolated organ. It's really connected with blood vessels, with immune cells, with inflammatory mediators, hormones stress.

And so when it comes to health, it's really important to look at this and connect the dots between these two. Because we are now some emerging evidence that few conditions can be related to Peru gut health.

Now, is it true that the embryological origin, like when we are a fetus, when we are created, that the gut and retina are like part of that same kind of development pathway?

That's a great question. A very important one. I think the not I would not say retina because it's more like a nervous tissue, especially the ganglion cells, which we know that there is now a connection between.

Not sure yet, but there is. I see patients that we see in the retina early signs of Alzheimer's or Parkinson's and all these new devices. The scanner can help us with AI, help us to understand in really detail level if there is connection and if there is causality or what's going on.

We don't know yet, but there is definitely a connection, but I'm not sure if that is a thing. Is more a narrow tissue, the retina? Yeah, well, it makes me think.

I mean, between the muscular layers of the GI tract we have ganglion. So if we have that same ganglion pathway in the retina that you're mentioning, I would suspect that there is something there.

So at what point when it comes to gut dysfunction, does it show up in the eye before somebody even notices a vision change? Is there a subclinical window here where we can possibly intervene?

So this is a very fascinating observation of yours. And this is what I love to do. That's why I'm trying to nutritional as a field, because many patients may present with a dry eye disease with a visualization, with bluff rights with this UI is inflammation in the eye.

But it can be actually the prodromal symptom something that they not aware of yet. So for example celiac disease IBD out immune condition. And sometimes I can see it in the eye before people have a proper symptoms.

So that's why we have to look at both. We have to look at the gut health and optimize that, but also look at the eye and connecting the dots to the gut.

Give us some hint and of the conditions that people are not aware of yet, if that makes sense. Yes okay. All right. So we're just touching on the gut eye axis here.

I'm excited. I don't want to divert too much from my questions, but I'm like, I have a thousand questions coming up in my mind that I want to ask you.

Okay. So, Claudia, let me ask you, you let's jump back to stress for a moment, because I think pretty much anybody I talk to says they are at some point experiencing stress, whether it's daily stress, weekly stress, a lot of people, now that I'm talking to have elderly parents or they have, you know, they're taking care of somebody.

The Gut-Eye Axis Explained

They've they've just got a lot going on in their lives that it's like, okay, we have this constant underlying stress. So if you have identified chronic stress and nervous system dysregulation as a root driver of deteriorating eyesight, walk us through the mechanism that's happening.

How does this nervous system create that physical tension in the visual system? How does it get our eyeballs stuck, like you said? And how does that loop back into the gut health?

All right. That was a big question. Let me try to dissect this. So when we are stressed on the very foundational level on the sympathetic nervous system, our pupils dilate.

So when and not like the big way they do in a dilated pupil exam that Rathke will do, but they dilate a little bit. And then people say, they're so light sensitive, right.

Because now we have natural light. And yes, the the biology is so smart because the pupils get very small when it's bright and when it's dark they open up. Right.

It's a perfect system. But now we are stressed, extremely stressed. And I'm not talking about like a little bit of stress that's we all stress is good also.

Otherwise we are both in our little arousal state right now being focused. But that's not the same as being out of control stress in this chronic level.

And then people get migraines, so they get this cascade of other problems and also tunnel vision. And that's a big problem nowadays. So tunnel vision is this like you focus overly focus on the sharp central vision which is measured like and then the visual acuity, like it's always performing right.

It's visual mental performing, which by the way goes connects to each other, the mental and the visual performance. But we kind of ignore the peripheral field, right?

We're like especially when we have my little dummy glasses here. When I put my glasses on now I'm like everything behind the glasses shop. And I completely ignore the world around it, which is part of good vision as both the central sharp vision.

But it's also the wide peripheral field that we have, right? And now a days with computer use, with glasses, with stress. We are really just drilling into the central vision.

And it's just too much. It's too much. That's not our how our biology was designed. We are supposed to look near and far and look around right in our biology and not like stare at one point at a close up point all day long, which is, by the way, also a little bit more engaging.

It's like that mental focus creates a little bit of a sympathetic arousal, which again, is not bad, but we shouldn't do that for hours and hours at a time.

So would you say that? So if we were kind of going to summarize that a little bit, that chronic sympathetic activation causes this tension in the ciliary muscles that hold the eyeball, potentially reducing blood flow to the retina and then impairing basically a number of things, and then that vagus nerve that connects the gut.

And I also you have that connection. And now, you know, the space that I work in, which is stress induced gut permeability, is feedback to that systemic inflammation that reaches the ocular tissue.

So calming the nervous system is not only good for digestion, it's literally changing the physiology of the eye. So what does it mean? And I'm still in you, Claudia.

What does it mean practically, if someone is already doing breathwork or meditation for their gut health, are their eyes benefiting without them knowing it?

Definitely yes. And actually you have a good friend or colleague who is a psychologist, who also noticed when she helped people traverse the traumatic events, that division improved.

So that's actually one of my foundational levels that I call that strains and gains. Noticing how your vision varies, which it does for everybody. Right.

But we often don't notice because we might wear contacts or glasses or we just simply don't pay attention. So when you connect the dots and I always say yes, computer use and yes, lighting, but what about the tasks that you're doing?

What about the people that you're hanging out with? I give you a quick example. So I had a client. She was a little older and I asked her like, what? When does your vision divorce?

Like when are you the most stressed? Like what she says, when I go into my garden, I'm like, really? Most people would say the garden is again like, I feel good, I love nature, she said.

All I see is the weeds and all the work I have to do. So when you connect those things a little bit more and like because we are all stressed at some point, nobody is sitting there just like all day and being relaxed, right?

So but when we tune in but we notice these things, we can also we have agency, we can make changes. We can decide not to do a certain thing or change a job.

I know it's not that easy or maybe not hang out with certain people, like for instance, bookkeeping. For me, looking at spreadsheets, it's like I literally don't want to see it.

So the first thing as my little when I grew my little business was hiring a bookkeeper because I don't want to. I want to know the numbers, but I don't want to know.

I don't want to do all this stuff. So hopefully that was helpful. All right, so, Doctor Radka, when we look at big eye disease like macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy conditions people assume are just about genetics or aging.

What is the microbiomes actual role? And what does a research say about how gut dysbiosis is driving these diseases at the cellular level? Yes. So you actually mentioned all the conditions that we have now, stronger evidence that there is a connection between the gut and the eye.

So if I say, for example, the strongest evidence, I think it's with diabetic retinopathy, the the gut microbiome influences the Lucas metabolism insulin sensitivity and muscular health, but also these unbalanced bacteria.

So we have more of the bad ones and, and the good and good ones. And they creating metabolites that can also influence and impact the retinal disease progression.

So that property is more and more clear that there is we don't know yet causality. But there is a huge link. The other one that you mentioned, glaucoma, it's there is emerging evidence, but it's more it's also tuned into these biases when we have too many of the bad ones and too little of the good microbes.

Stress, Nervous System, and Visual Tension

But this might contribute to different pathways, more like neuroinflammation for the and the affecting the retinal ganglion cells through the immune pathways and metabolic pathways.

So again, it's all emerging. But it's fascinating because we have hints of of this axis there in this condition, which is very, very I'm very hopeful because these people, we have only the monitoring, the high pressure and visual field and Oct and for so many years.

So now we have new hope for patients with this condition that actually can work with it from the inside out. AMD is a big one. Research increasingly suggests that the gut microbiome can influence the retinal inflammation and the oxidative stress and the Druze information.

Druze are the compounds that basically create the diagnosis. And so that pattern really are important, especially when we want to grow the good that microbiome.

And so and we know that we can lower the risk if we having a low glycemic diet and not the opposite, the high glycemic of the processed food. Uveitis is another condition that was actually first to really they publish the first condition, the link between the gut and I, particularly with the auto immune is.

And several studies have shown that there are alterations in got got microbiome and also the gut permeability leaky gut that you mentioned before. And that's literally influencing the inflammation and immune activation in the eye, which we can see in the eyeball when we're looking at the examination.

And the area that I work with is the dry eye disease and rosacea. And I see that was again published as well. But for my experience also these patients, they demonstrate alterations in gut microbiome.

They have increased inflammatory activity. They have leaky gut and stress is a huge factor there. And, you know, it was we never talk about stress in a often setting.

No, no. But stress is completely like it's so I'm so happy that you are talking about this and it's your research because that's something that we should be talking more because it's I feel it's it's coming from the top and influence everything else.

And so those are the most, I think, common ones that coming now and I see practice of Asia as well. That's something that why I came into this and I see a lot of patients, they have Sibo and see for small intestinal bacterial overgrowth and the fungal overgrowth.

And also they have the emotional this balance and the triggers from the brain influence everything else. So it's like it's even more complicated. But I would say that these conditions are now really scientifically supported.

So we can talk about it now and hopefully the future will bring we will have a stamp and we will know exactly what bacteria we can predict. We can predict the progression, we can predict the risk.

And so it's really fascinating. But yeah, so it's many pathways. So it's either through the gut microbiome, leaky gut that the LP s go through even bacteria.

Or it can be system. It can be through different pathways inflammatory pathway. So yeah it's complex. As I said we don't know yet causality. But definitely there is link and the eyes are communicating with the gut and ongoing basis.

So it's fascinating. And so it's it's really something that if patient ask these questions we can really move forward. But unfortunately often we don't ask this question in my job of cases.

But I'm hopeful it's coming. Well, you know, we just expanded this from the gut I to nervous system access because I feel like it's actually a triangle here.

And that's why I invited both of you to kind of discuss this. You know, just just to summarize what you said, I think more and more people are familiar with this imbalance in the gut microbiome, also known as dysbiosis, which increases that intestinal and permeability.

What we in layman's terms say leaky gut. As you mentioned, this leaky gut contributes to that LPs that you mentioned these compounds entering the bloodstream, which then are going to trigger that neuroinflammation even in the retinal ganglion cells, the ones that you mentioned a lot earlier.

Right. So it's going to do that. And then there's specific bacteria that are linked to things like AMD and glaucoma. That's the newer research that we're seeing.

And so we're going to get to nutrition because I know people are like, well, just tell me what to eat. Do I need to eat more carrots? We're going to get to it.

We're going to get to it. But, Claudia, let me ask you from your angle, okay, if our gut health audience is waiting for what are the dietary and lifestyle shifts that you've seen make the biggest difference in gut healing and vision improvement at the same time?

And where do those pathways converge? Eat more plants, get more fiber and then the sugar. And I think people, you know, and I my grandparents had a bakery okay.

So I grew up in Germany eating cake or pie every day. And I have a sweet tooth. And I didn't realize all these things. But sugar is not just the sugar that we think of in cookies and pie.

It's also in the refined carbs and all these ultra processed foods that you mentioned vodka. So getting, you know, getting out of this, like I got a blood glucose sensor, I, I learned about all this like probably ten years ago, but I had no idea either.

My mom has diabetes. We have high blood pressure in the family. We have all like we have really bad genetics, right? And a lot of people do. And then you have to be even more.

It's even more important. And obviously alcohol, we already know this alcohol is a poison and alcohol, but the liver eye connection is just not good. So reducing or eliminating sugar and alcohol, eating a rainbow diet.

It's like the stuff that the dark leafy greens full of lutein. We need the exact thing we need, which is a micro algae. I do supplement with that myself because sometimes it's really hard to get all these compounds.

Same with omega three fatty acids. So I do eat the sheer seeds in the flax seed and the walnuts and the hemp seeds and all that good stuff, the basil seeds.

But, you know, I still supplement to kind of really get enough. And then we need to eliminate some of those bad fats and some of those, you know, it's I think it's a step by step process.

So instead of getting overwhelmed, where are little things that you can stop doing? You know what I mean? And the other thing that's biggie is intermittent fasting or time restricted feeding or whatever you want to call it, but not eating.

And I had just discussing just this last week, I'm a fence. Why don't you ever treat yourself? Why can we go to dinner at 8 p.m.? And I'm like, well, it affects my sleep.

And I know the fasting is important. And David Sinclair from Harvard, you know, he wrote the book lifespan. He also in his lab they found that and I think they did that in mice, but that A and D was really responding to like longer fasting windows of like 16 plus hours between meals.

Right. So those are things they're not as easy to do. But I think if we start tracking and that was my own journey, like I didn't do all this overnight, right?

I started with little baby steps and I've been plant based since, oh gosh, like 14 years now. And so that was it. And that was doing my teacher training on vision.

And actually when I got when I became vegan. So that was something that it's also really important eat more plants and eat like a variety of colors. Yeah.

So I think you're giving hope to the viewers here that all right. We need to eat more plants. It's never too late to start. You only started 14 years ago after, you know, eating from a bakery, kind of what you said is, if I'm going to summarize it, anti-inflammatory whole foods plant based will reduce both that gut permeability and ocular

inflammation.

Right. Because overall they're reducing inflammation.

Gut Dysbiosis and Major Eye Diseases

You're also eliminating foods that are processed foods, foods with a lot of sugar. Your recommendation was leafy greens. Eat the rainbow berries, which are going to support both the microbiome and macular pigment density.

Right. So stress reduction is not a separate from what you eat. Sleep restoration. So stress reduction and sleep restoration both address that gut barrier integrity and that intraocular pressure.

I mean you're coming at it from here. So I'm summarizing it. So now if there is a specific food or habit that is uniquely powerful for the eyes, something beyond what somebody has already been doing for standard gut health, what would you say that is?

Well, I love carbon 60. It's a very high level antioxidant that's also certain berries. I think they're called berries that, you know, doctor, you gave me.

So I get the the powder, I put that in my pocket. But yeah, I have that powder too. And I got it from the UK. So that's where I got it from. And I'm like, this is really cool.

I like this powder. Yeah I think and then also, you know, the orange, you know, that's why we talk about carrots, the beta carotene which gets transformed into by the mean a which gets friends on the road.

Dobson and or Dobson is what covers the rod cells. So a lot of times coming back to vision really quick. And the retina we have the two different types of photoreceptors.

And the cone cells are, you know, centered in the phobia and the for sharp colorful vision. Right. And we have them throughout the retina. But the rod cells are the night vision cells.

And that's another big thing that I think I don't know if optometrists usually check this, but a lot of my clients come with like they've given up night driving.

And if you live in the United States, you really dependent on having a car. And so that's why the orange, you know, vegetables. But even kale, like the dark leafy greens, also have high levels of beta carotene.

So I think instead of trying to like these are the ten superfoods, if you if you do that, if you eat colorful and if you try to eat like 30 different plants a week, and if you really don't always eat the same stuff, that will probably get you a long way to, you know, and whatever greens you like.

If you don't like, you know, cooked spinach has different benefits. And raw spinach, you know, maybe you put it in the smoothie and maybe once sometimes you cook it.

You know, in Germany we love kale in the winter and it gets cooked, usually with meats. Of course we don't do that, but it's like it's like really yummy.

I love it in the winter. It's green cold in German, you know, so that's good. That's also different from a cloud salad I eat here in Los Angeles. You know, they're both whatever you can what you like.

Don't force yourself to eat foods that tastes horrible because you're not going to continue doing that, you know. So this is a perfect transition to my next question for Doctor Radka, which is you practice food as medicine for the I.

So rather than like giving you a list of ten foods, share with us what are the specific nutrients and plant compounds and dietary patterns that have the strongest evidence for protecting and preserving vision over time?

And how does this map to what you would call eye longevity? So I think what Claudia mentioned, that the diet is really rich in plans will be really moving the needle with with the people and their eye health.

So I believe that plan rich diets provides thousands of bioactive compounds that work together. So it's not like having one supplement. They create this anti-inflammatory internal environment.

And so we know from science that they this benefits. Benefits may include lower oxidative stress, better insulin sensitivity as you mentioned before and better microbiome.

And these high amount of these short chain fatty acids production and reduce inflammation. So I would always so I always tell people to have protein fat and fiber plus which is fermented foods.

That should be the plate always. But if I focus more into the eye health I the is one of the most important ones. Nutrients for really for eHealth. This is a really arguably the most important carotenoids for retinol protection for many reasons.

Like again, the anti oxygen protection and the mitochondrial support, because retina is so metabolically demanding tissue and a lot of various lot of metabolic activity, it will be a lot of you know, Ross.

And that means that it needs a lot of antioxidants. And so like like Claudia mentioned, kale, spinach, watercress, rocket, Swiss chard, all these leafy greens are really, really good for you and also for your eyes.

Darker the color, the better the polyphenols for the eye and higher lutin content. That's why what we want the other group, I would say this is anti-science.

This is what we mentioned with the Haskell. This is the pigment that gives berries their blue, purple and red colors and has a different benefits. Again, it's good for retinol.

Blood flow also reduce oxidative stress as a good polyphenol and phytonutrients. And the best sources are blueberries blackberries, bell berries. This berries, cherries.

But I'm against eating berries at wintertime. There are, you know, from far away. So I always freeze them or buy during the winter time. But I really want to make sure that I have this understanding every single day.

Another group I would mention will be flavonoids and sulforaphane. So flavonoids are really very powerful compounds for long because we know that it can reduce AMD risk for people who are worried about this condition and because it influence also support retinal blood vessels and can reduce the neuroinflammation.

And that can be flavonoids and also in berries, actually it's in apples, it's onion, it's a cacao. And partially it's a lot of good things. And so far pen is very powerful because it's really it influences the master and antioxidant pathway.

And so it to help us increase glutathione which is the master of oxygen. And that's what mentioned Claudia as well. The broccoli sprouts the broccoli kale brussel sprouts I always, always make sure that people eating plants that are growing in the sun and growing in the soil, and also they are cooked and raw.

So it's kind of they have the balance. That's what really makes all the difference. And then also I will mention omega three fatty acids. It's especially the Da.

It's very important to have flax seeds hemp seeds walnuts very important for for the eye and vitamin C. That's another one. E and in general polyphenols as such.

So that's why it's so important to really make a plan and create habits that you fall in love with. Because it's forever. While we live, we have to enjoy the full eating.

So absolutely. I agree with you, Claudia. I would not eat food that I don't like, but actually we can make the call in

the way that actually tastes delicious.

So that would be my go to foods.

Nutrition for Eye Longevity

But as I said, it's really the diversity of who that we eat that we eventually see the increased microbial diversity and increase the production, that when we actually see the results in the eye.

Sorry for such a long. No, no. The answer is perfect because me and you believe in the same thing. So just I'm going to summarize it and repeat it for the audience because there's a lot of big words.

I mean, these are common language for us to talk about all day long. But so you started with mentioning lutein and Zia, which is found in dark leafy green veggies.

Right. The concentration. So this is these two compounds are really important for the macula right. And act as an antioxidant shield. You then went on to talk about short chain fatty acids.

Now short chain fatty acids are literally metabolites which are going to be produced by your gut bacteria based off of the plant foods you eat. So the way to make them is to eat more plants, more fiber.

Then you also mention scientists from berries. So whatever berries you can get access to, whether that's blueberries, blackberries, all the berries should be eaten daily, according to Doctor Rod Cup.

Okay. And I'm going to go eat my blueberries after this conversation. So then you mentioned also the flavonoids which you're going to get in all the like different plant foods, different colors, the sulfurous vein which is going to be in your cruciferous vegetables.

And if you don't want to eat any broccoli today, get some broccoli sprouts. And then you also mention omegas, right? So omegas coming from nuts and seeds and this kind of stuff.

And then vitamin C, I want to go back to Amigas just for a second, because I remember seeing that there's now these new drops I drops out that contain omega threes in them.

I wanted to just get your thoughts on this, because there might be a lot of people who have eye issues right now watching and they're like, oh, well, my doctor told me to go take these eyedrops for dry eyes and whatnot.

And I've seen recently ones with Omega. So can you talk a little bit more about can we do this with just plant omegas. Is that enough. And and tell me a little bit more about the eyedrops. So that's great question.

I, I know it wasn't on our list, but I want to know. No no. No it's great question because you know we know that it's so important and not all of us we converting enough from the plant based sources.

So some people need to supplement either from the, you know, supplement in a bottle or which is should be at least two grams of EPA and DHA. Because I see a lot of people taking wrong supplements, it's like 200mg of EPA and 100 of of Da.

And so they investing in something that doesn't make any sense. So definitely if you have supplement, get it in that level two grams day of EPA. And so it's important because it's for never protection is reduced inflammation and improved Tir quality from the inside out.

So I'm big fan of supplements but I do diet first good first always. And we can measure it now there are tests that we can measure actually the omega three index.

And we can measure how we are with DJ and EPA. So this is I think it's something that we can act on and it can

be easily supplemented. And I love flaxseed.

I have actually blueberries and flaxseeds are my if I ended up in Ireland, this will be my food. I'm kind of depending on it because I feel if I don't take flax seeds regularly every single day, I feel my hair on my skin.

So for sure. Oh my god, I'm as well for the dry eye. Every dry eye patient that comes to our clinic, they will need to supplement omega threes and they usually low.

They have low levels of threes. The eye drops that you mentioned. These are fantastic for people who have evaporative dry eye condition. So we have either dry eye that comes from a disease that we don't produce enough of tears as Aquis like or we have rights or from the eyelid issue.

I don't throw too many of the names out there. We don't produce enough of the fat to create the tears, because the tears consist from water amusing and fat.

And for the people especially, I found that omega three drops that out there can be very beneficial for these type of patients that have, you know, they have even the rosacea.

They basically not don't not producing enough of a fat for the tears and the tears evaporating too soon. And that's why they are having a sore eyes, red eyes, grittiness.

So it can be very beneficial. But actually I always, you know, give people like here you have to kind of drops try it and see which one you like more.

So yeah, definitely. It's not always like to support that. We are doing it both treating the eye as treating the body that benefit the eye. So okay perfect.

All right. So now I would love to hear a patient or client story from both of you without breaking any privacy or anything where you found that the gut vision nervous system connection was a real turning point for them.

So, Claudia, why don't you start and then Doctor Radka, you can follow. Yeah. So I had a student signing up for my program. She was just about to turn 70.

Just went through a divorce, major stress, financial issues, and started a health coaching business. But I couldn't see the screen. So she had 325 reading glasses and she could not read and got really stressed out.

Then she went to two different eye doctors cataracts. Stage three, stage two and a half, and another macular issue too. And she couldn't actually had given up night driving because she couldn't see at night.

She was really scared. Also dry ice, what you just touched on like she was supposed to take these eyedrops. So long story short. So she did my program and now she's actually becoming a coach.

She is driving at night again. She doesn't need the dry eye drops anymore. She doesn't need any glasses to see the screen. And because I told her about the blood sugar and the a onesie because I asked her, what's your A1 see?

And she said like five nine. And my doctor said, that's like pre-diabetic, but it's okay. I'm like, no, no, no, no, this is not okay. So she got it down to five two.

And I caught her at the most recent exam at one and a half at most is what the ophthalmologist said. So. And I have not seen like that level of cataract actually reduce.

I've seen many people that had already said cut out completely eliminate them. But I so we know I think it's so important to know that this is possible.

And now she is kind of the poster child in a way for inspiring other people. Because 70, right. We think, oh, 70 that's like too late. And no, it's amazing.

So things are possible. Good. All right. How about you doctor. Okay. So one of my the most memorable really about the patient in the clinic was a lady in her 50s.

She came to see me with severe dry eye disease and, and she has been multiple specialists all over the country. She has been prescribed lubricants that mentioned steroid drops, sheared IPL ashes, antibiotics, but nothing really helped.

Or maybe temporarily, but nothing seems to address the underlying problem. And when I took a deeper history, which we do in factual medicine, a different story really emerged.

She was suffering with bloating after meals long standing on. She has reflex, she has put sensitivity. She had fatigue, poor sleep. And when we start really looking to this, I realized that her eyes were only one piece of much longer puzzle.

So we start working on this arias restoring the gut health, which of course needed a little bit of time reducing inflammatory triggers, supporting the nervous system.

Omega-3s, Dry Eye, and Patient Stories

Regulation, like Claudia mentioned, is so important. And you it's so important. And so she adopted by the time this a whole food and inflammatory diet in vegetables and all the foods we mentioned omega three fatty acid.

And we work also on circadian rhythm, on meal timing and sleep and stress reduction. And by the time she not only improve her, you know, the bloating and energy improved, but also the rosacea flare ups reduced.

And for me, that was something that was like turning point because I was just helping her understand that I was not separate from the rest of the body, is kind of like a messenger.

And once she understood that, she became more empowered in a rather than frustrated before. So it's completely changed her mindset and she was able to heal completely within several months.

So yeah, that was that's why I wake up every morning historically. Okay. Well, these are both really inspiring stories. So last question I want to ask you and let's be very concrete.

So for somebody watching or listening right now, and they may have just been told that they need stronger glasses or that macular degeneration runs in their family, or that there's nothing they can do.

What are the three most important things they should start doing this week? To protect their vision and their gut health together? And so I'm going to start with you, Claudia, and then we'll go to Doctor Radka.

And I guess this audience is actually going to get six things, because each of you get to give three. It's so hard, as good as just little it down to three.

But what I would say I touched on this really earlier, the strains and gains. So if you know, you know something is stressing you out, just close your eyes for a moment.

Take a few deep breaths, a little bit longer. Exhale. That already comes you down right. Like just taking a few. We know that. So that can be helpful.

You can also do something called palming where you come. You close your eyes and you cover them with your hands. It's just the darkness, the warmth. Those are that's the simple thing that you can do.

And then reduce the use of glasses. So everybody that starts with reading glasses knows this. When they look up, they need to take the glasses off. But we've gotten especially with myopia nearsightedness.

There's this tendency to work glasses all day long. Right. So when do you not really need glasses. So maybe you're near side. You don't need glasses for reading your phone.

Or you know, if you have if you have contacts then and you spend a lot of time with the computer, get contacts or computer distance, and then you put a minus one or something on top for driving. Obviously work with your eye doctor for that, but really diopter is really quite.

Diopter is the measurement of the glass that's measured on the distance. So that is no, nearsighted people should not wear the distance glasses all day long when they're set up close.

That's really important. And if you're farsighted, use the weakest drugstore, read as you can get, and then don't use glasses for anything else because you will end up losing your vision in the distance as well.

There's people don't know this. And then the third thing I would say that's really important. I mean, there's obviously a lot more about sunlight or natural light.

We now know from so many studies with animals, with humans that sunlight is so unnatural. Light, to be more correct, doesn't have to be sunny is a big factor in or the lack of sunlight is a big factor in creating myopia in children.

So go outside. Get some natural light again, it doesn't have to be sunny. Move around your eyes. Want to look far and near? Like make it like really fun.

Make vision fun again. What do you like to look at? Right? Like what colors do you enjoy? Take your glasses off. Like what colors do I see? I think it's really the awareness and the tuning in.

Does it bring me joy? You know? And a little bonus tip would probably be the idea of don't say I'm blind like a bad people say this, I can't see anything.

And I look at that glass and they're like a minus two or something. No. Like, I appreciate my eyes. I love my eyes. Let me see. Whatever. But change. We know from quantum physics how we talk our thoughts.

That all affects our physiology. So where can you change? We take our vision for granted and let's stop doing that and really be appreciative and take care of our little.

I always call them our children, you know, let's take care of them. So. All right. Perfect. How about you, doctor? Yeah. So this is my really favorite question because it shifts us from the mindset of decline is inevitable to biology is adaptable.

We know that we cannot change our genetic completely. We cannot stop the chronological aging, but we can absolutely influence how our genes are expressed and how quickly our eyes H.

So my three would be eat one large plate of colorful plants every day. Not supplement, not powder, but real food and aim for this would have been mentioned.

The darling, the greens, the vegetables, the berries, spices and herbs which we didn't mention. This would be the number one really. One big plate. Invest time to research food that you like and just create this this beautiful plate.

Second one our iterate what Korea mentioned I would say walk outside every single morning. It sounds really too simple, but it isn't because the 20 minute walk outdoors shortly after waking really can improve our rhythm.

Blood sugar control as well, mitochondrial function, sleep quality, our mood.

Three Practical Steps to Protect Vision

And so, you know, unfortunately we a lot of humans living life that we are too much indoor during the day and then we have artificial light at night. So we are kind of we as a result we have this circadian disruption.

And so I know that I don't know you as well. You live California. I feel like we are solar panel and we need to have this outdoor life. But we are living in during the day.

So this would be one that definitely we both this would be the double point to go outside. And my third will be I feel like this is foundational work for all of us.

Establish the blood sugar. This may be single, one of the most overlooked intervention in eHealth. And it's not only with people with diabetes. I'm talking about a large glucose spike that promotes oxidative stress, retinal inflammation, vascular damage.

So it's not only for people who have doubled the particular party, but this blood sugar spikes are influencing everything else, like the dry eye, the UV it is, you know.

So that would be my three points. And then one more will be sleep. Really brought to sleep will be the addition one as a bonus because sleep is not passive it's really biological maintenance.

So that will be my three. It comes back to the lifestyle that we live right. So Claudia Doctor Radka, this has been a genuinely eye opening conversation.

I learned things in this conversation that I'm going to carry with me in my own practice and in my own life, and thank you for the work that you both are doing to connect these dots that medicine has kept separate for so long.

If people want to find you and learn more about your work, Claudia and Doctor Radka, where can they find you? So my website is naturallyclearvision.com, and then I'm known as the holistic Vision, not the but holistic vision coach on Instagram and YouTube.

Those are probably the three best places. And I'm on dr.radka.toms and Instagram and website is Gut-Eye Axis is the best one or also rosacea_healing on Instagram and Facebook.

Perfect. Thank you so much. And so the key takeaway today for the audience is your gut. And your eyes are in a constant conversation every time you choose a fiber rich, anti-inflammatory, plant based meal, you are sending a message that reaches all the way to your retina.

That is the science and that is the power that you have. So stay tuned for another one of our episodes and I will see you in the next session.