Introduction and Dr. Minichu2019s Background

Well. Hello, everybody. Welcome back. Lock yourself in your chair. Put your seat belt on. And we got a good one. We had last year a chance to interview Dr. Deanna Minich, Ph. D.

She's not just some blogger you met online. She's a real academic and highly trained person. So this is a real pleasure and a long term friend, somebody that I would rely on in a moment to ask any nutrition question in the world, but to give her her full academic introduction.

She's a nutrition scientist and educator and author. That's six books and you should check out her books. I'm sure she'd be happy if you read them. I've read them.

20 years of experience, at least ten of them with the famous Dr. Jeff Bland, the father of functional medicine, somebody that Deanna produced many, many important projects with.

Now she's with that absolutely great company that I love and work with Symphony Natural Health. She's a chief scientific author officer. She has her own practice called Food and Spirit, and she continues to contribute scientific papers.

Over 50 of them. Some of them are really, really important, like talking about anti nutrients. Maybe we'll get there, maybe we won't in this discussion.

But you want to follow her online. She's really, really wonderful on Instagram and Facebook. I don't think she beats it up too much on Twitter like I do, but find her at deannaminich.com D E A N N A Minich.com And let's dig in right now because it's going to be a good one.

Thank you, Dr. Minich. Deanna. Great to be here with you. Dr. Kahn. So, you know, you could talk on so many topics, but today we're talking about reversing heart disease Naturally, of course, nutrition is a fundamental component.

My head is still spinning, not from a migraine. But last night I actually debated online a cardiovascular surgeon, and it was on nutrition for heart disease.

And I presented the plant forward approach and we presented the carnivore approach.

Nutrition as the Foundation for Heart Health

So you would think it would be about 99 minutes for me and one minute for him, but I couldn't quite get him to commit to just one minute of conversation because that would represent the scientific evidence or the different disciplines that will come out sometime in a month or six weeks.

And people that follow me online will know about it. But that's just I say that to indicate my patients are confused. They don't know if they should touch an egg white, they don't know if they should eat an avocado, they don't know if seed oil is, you know, toxic.

They don't know if these carnivores online are right. So just get to, you know, simple basic evidence based medicine. I mean, I want to reverse heart disease in my patients.

How much time what's the role of nutrition and dietary patterns in preventing heart disease and in using it as a tool to facilitate, you know, stabilization or maybe even reversal of heart disease?

It's number one. In fact, if you look at all of the different medical disciplines, gastroenterology, neurology, cardiology, I would say that heart disease is one of the first areas where we started to see that nutrition was an effective intervention.

In fact, you and our colleagues, Dr. Houston, Dr. Guarneri, Dr. Sinatra, we published an article looking at the recent science and clinical application of nutrition to coronary heart disease.

You remember that earlier. About that, of course, we write. The Journal of the American College of Nutrition. We published that some years ago, not too long ago.

But basically we unpacked, we looked at the macronutrients, we looked at fat, protein, carbohydrate. We then went into the vitamins, we went into the minerals, we went into the phytonutrients.

And I know that we're going to have some focus there. But essentially, to answer your question, it's the first line of approach. I do think that cardiovascular disease is implicated into so many other diseases, and we can get at those other diseases as well by mitigating a lot of the different pathways and preventing them from happening with food.

Food first, as I always like to say. Okay, so you are voting that it matters. There's no doubt in my mind on. A spectrum and you don't have to declare because we're going to have people listening to this summit, you know, that do follow a fully plant based diet, do follow a plan forward diet, to follow a Mediterranean diet.

But if you had participated in the debate last night between carnivore approach and planned forward approach, where would you generally settle in in your support?

I'd settle and where the sciences and the science is where plants are truly. In fact, that's why I have taken that position as a nutrition scientist, because there's so much arm wrestling going on, you know, meat or no meat.

Soy, no soy eggs or no eggs. I mean, you can pick any number of things, but the thing that we cannot refute for a number of different chronic lifestyle induced diseases would be fruits, vegetables.

And then there's a lot of different nuances of course, and looking at nuts, seeds, potentially whole grains, which aren't for everybody. But I think within that spectrum, if we look at what I call the underdogs of nutrition, the phytonutrients, these are thousands of compounds.

They're doing a lot of different things. And in fact, I even studied them as part of my graduate work where we looked at Carotenoids, and carotenoids are what make plants pretty.

So they're red, orange and yellow and sometimes a little bit yellow green. And so you see them in the leaves that turn in the fall, right? That's what's underneath a lot of that chlorophyll.

So a lot of these phytonutrients are having a role in cardiovascular disease because they're hitting on multiple pathways. The biggest one, I would say, is inflammation because the science of cardiovascular disease, as you know, has progressed so far in to us looking at it as an inflammatory condition.

It's a disease that connects to inflammation and oxidative stress. Two of the main pathways that can be improved upon through phytonutrients. So I think that there is, you know, just even one meal, you know, this is the staggering piece of it.

Like there are studies on what is called just like the one meal where they give somebody a meal that looks like fast food and then they measure for hours on end afterwards, you know, what happens to them, what happens to their inflammation, their inflammatory markers, what happens to endothelial function and all of it, as you can imagine, goes down.

So in endothelial function goes down, our inflammatory cytokines go up. And many times I think that this is why people feel terrible after eating poorly.

You know that 4 to 6 hour postprandial window after we eat something that's not so healthy, we start feeling low in energy. It's taken our resources and then it propels us into another cycle of eating similar food right?

Because we get the initial feeling of that. It tastes good, but longer term, it's setting the stage for inflammation, which we know is part of the root cause of cardiovascular disease.

Now, I hear you telling us that even one meal. Yeah.

Phytonutrients, Polyphenols, and the Rainbow of Foods

Leaning towards a healthier choice for the bright colors and carotenoids leading towards maybe a highly processed, simpler just reheat a tombstone pepperoni pizza because it's so simple but full of chemicals and refined foods and poor quality oils and the rest.

That just one meal decision can trigger inflammation action and cytokine release and artery dysfunction called endothelial dysfunction. So we should pay attention to the overall big picture.

But even meal by meal it makes a difference. And not everybody in the audience is familiar with the term phytonutrients. And, you know, that's what you won't find in chicken.

That's what you won't find in beef. That's what you won't find in pork. So just tell us about some of those Phytonutrient classes and what the word phyto means.

Yeah, so phyto is P H Y T O and that refers at prefix refers to plants. So when we say phytonutrient, we refer to plant nutrients. And when I say that it's a little bit different than a vitamin, a mineral or even fiber.

Those are kind of classes onto themselves. Phytonutrients are considered non caloric parts of the plant that have a variety of different effects, but they're not considered a vitamin or a mineral or even, as I would say, even a fiber.

So some of the classes would be things like some people may have heard of sulforaphane, some people may have heard of. I mentioned carotenoids. Another big buzz word is polyphenols.

And so polyphenols is the largest class within the phytochemicals or the phytonutrients. So within polyphenols you have about 8000 different compounds.

So things like Isoflavones, which I know your audience has probably heard, we know of Isoflavones and things like soy, but also a number of other foods as well flavonoids, pro anthocyanins, anthocyanins, resveratrol.

I know that many of you have heard of that. That's part of the Polyphenol all category. So some of those polyphenols, they have multiple functions in the body.

Some of them are phyto estrogenic, some of them are phyto progestin, some of them are brain active nutrients. So again, phytonutrients refers to things that typically you don't see on a nutrition facts label.

So that's a little bit of the challenge on a nutrition facts label. If you're reading on a process product or some product that you buy at the market, typically you see protein, carbohydrate, fat, the macronutrients which give us calories, give us energy, and then you find certain select vitamins and minerals, but you don't see poly phenols, you don't see carotenoids, you don't see even beta carotene, which is considered a phytonutrient.

So that's a little bit of the challenge is that you can't directly quantitate. So that's why we have to rely on certain things like color. We need to be looking at the colors of our food so that we can get a better sense of correlations to these different phytonutrients.

Okay, so that was so helpful. Number one, I love the word. Everybody listen and write down phytonutrients. Plant nutrients are non caloric. Yay, we can eat them and we don't get calories.

I'm excited to hear that. And number two, that's the big parent to phytonutrients and the biggest subgroup is polyphenols. And it's pretty hard not to read nutrition articles as they don't all have to be in scientific journals.

They could be in the New York Times or the L. A. Times. And you hear the word polyphenol all over. Yeah. So like what are some I mean, a lot of heart patients are listening.

They now want they're hungry for phytonutrients, they're hungry for carotenoids, they're hungry for polyphenols. I mean, name some of the foods that they should focus on for their heart health.

Well, I think about the rainbow. You know, my big thing is that I'm not connected to a specific dietary approach other than making sure that we're getting the spectrum of colors.

So when I think about red foods, especially for heart health, in fact, you've even talked about this wine. Pomegranate pomegranate is rich in one of the best polyphenols, a very big one, ellagic acid.

So we can get some of these polyphenols which are enriching the gut. But we're getting a lot of other things in the pomegranate to help the heart. So pomegranate would be great.

Cherries are great for reducing oxidative stress, especially if you're exercising. Let's just say that you're new to exercise and you're kind of starting out and you feel a little bit inflamed.

Really good to have things like whether strawberries or cherries or foods that are red and rich and polyphenols and vitamin C to help you with things like moving through your physical activity or even helping to reduce and quell some of the inflammation that you may have in your bodies.

So when I think of the color red, I think of inflammation in the body. But when I see it in food or at least in plant food, I think of reducing inflammation.

But that doesn't work for all foods within the red category because for some people they react to things like tomatoes, so they react to nightshades, they get inflammation from the nightshades.

You know, that's a small percentage of people, like 10 to 15%. But in general, when I think of red, I do think of a number of different heart type of indicate.

Watermelon is fantastic for the heart has a number of different actives. When I think of Orange, I think of the carotenoids beta carotene, alpha carotene, beta crypts, and then a lot of these different phytonutrients.

So when I think of Orange I things, I think of things that are typically circular and citrus. So things like Mandarin oranges, stem cells, tangerines, those three.

Right? There are powerhouses of certain carotenoids that are very good. Now, I would say exclusively for cardiovascular health, even for reproductive health.

So carrots, you know, beta carotene is good as a it's a pro vitamin A compound. So that's good. So a portion of that beta carotene that we take in will form vitamin A, but in general, beta carotene is just a great fat soluble carotenoids that can be very protective from the yellow category.

I think about ginger, I think about lemons, I think about pineapple. I think about prebiotic fibers that you might find it squashes. So I think about a lot of like the digestive aspects there.

When I think of the heart. Dr. Kahn The color that I would say I most primarily think about, I go right to it is green. And I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why.

If you would just take a leafy green, whether it's arugula, spinach, kale, you know, whatever it is, you pick your favorite leafy green. What it typically has in there are a number of different heart healthy nutrients, things like folate

and fall h are very helpful for a process in the body called methylation.

So that's important for the heart that will help to reduce homocysteine. We also have high levels of magnesium, vitamin k1i call vitamin K, the next vitamin D, vitamin K was named for coagulation.

That K was for the German word coagulation. So it's very important to help with healthy blood clotting. So that's why many times and maybe you can speak to this, patients are told that if they change their leafy green intake, they need to change their some of their medications.

So, you know, if you keep them at a consistent level, I usually think that that is that is good. But of course, we want people to increase their greens because of the magnesium, the potassium, the folate.

So vitamin K, all of those things and and much more actually even the nitrates. When I think of greens, I think of, you know, some of the high nitrate containing foods.

So nitrate in greens convert into nitric oxide in the body which acts to open up the blood vessels and to help us feel more relaxed. So we do get some of that.

And celery, arugula, those are some of the heavy hitters.

Using Powders, Spices, and Teas for Nutrient Diversity

But also we see that in beets. So it's not exclusively in greens, but I would say predominantly in green leafy greens. All right. So we've learned just in a few minutes that you believe nutrition is the number one impactful decision on cardiovascular health, cardiovascular prevention and cardiovascular treatment, that phytonutrients plant nutrients.

I've always heard of Fido like they're fighting for your health, but they're, you know, unique to plants. They're non caloric, there's a whole diversity of them.

And by eating the rainbow and trying to get multiple colors in every day, maybe in a week, getting all the colors in for sure, you're getting a whole range and diverse range of healthful, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, pro-health ingredients.

And you mentioned such delicious ones. I've never asked this before. Somebody says, you know, Doc, I'm doing everything I can, but I, you know, I am constrained.

I'm on the run. I'm raising kids. I've got a job. What do you think about a good organic green powder or green and fruit powder? Is there any role do they still have?

They won't. You know, the fiber will have been, you know, broken down because, you know, it's not crunchy anymore, like a celery stick. But do you think they retain any of the phytonutrients?

And, you know, a big root powder, green powder, if it's a last resort or if it's the last one or two servings to get over five servings in a day. The short answer is yes.

But let me give you some principles with that. And I think it's definitely, you know, food first. There's nothing that compares to nature and what nature provides.

Secondly, you know, what humans can create through a powder could also be, you know, it could just fill the phyto nutrient gap, as I like to call it. So, yes, I think if you're on the run or you're feeling run down and, you know, whatever the thing is where you just kind of feel stressed out and you need a little bit more, it's kind of like the way I think about it. Dr.

Kornberg used to talk about this about sometimes as we go through life, we have these potholes where we just need more nutrients. We're moving on the road of life, we're getting older or we have more stress or, you know, we

just don't have the time.

How do we fill those gaps? And I think that a powder could be a good strategy. Now, rules of, you know, just the principle with powders would be number one.

You said it organic. If it's not organic and you're concentrating all of these fruit and vegetable and or sometimes they put in their mushroom powders, you can actually be concentrating toxins as well.

So first and foremost, go with a reputable company that is giving you an organic powder. Secondly, I also like to for some people, and this is just a clinical thing, this is not a science thing.

But for some people, they don't do as well with grasses. So a lot of the wheat grasses or barley grasses. So, you know, I have one powder that I like that takes out a lot of the grasses and puts in more vegetables in place of the grasses.

So you can find powders like that. And then thirdly, I would say, look for diversity. You actually set it, you may be kind of like put my finger up because I was thinking that is a message I don't think many people realize is how important it is to get diversity, because at the end of the day, I think people are in food, right?

They're eating the same thing for the most part. Day after day, the average American gets anywhere between 5 to 7 different recipes or they kind of cycle through like 5 to 7 different meals that they just make and they just kind of do it on automatic pilot, right?

So a powder enables dietary diversity. And the thing about nature and plants is that plants work well together. So when we just isolate and just have beets and only have beets, then we're just narrowing what we could potentially be getting from a full, complex and of different phytonutrients.

We're just getting what we get from beets and not that complexity. So dietary diversity has actually been shown to be protective against cardio metabolic dysfunction.

And in fact, if I recall correctly, there was even a study showing that if you had eight or more diverse, different plant foods, that you can actually help lower systolic blood pressure.

There was a a correlation there. So it's not just the colors of food, it's the diversity. Because some people will say, well, DNA, I eat tomatoes every day and I have carrots every day.

And I'll ask, well, what are the other red colored foods that you're eating? What are the other orange colored foods? Because it can't just be one thing, because then you're just hammering on a very select number of phytonutrients and not the whole array of which, as we just discussed, there are thousands of them.

I appreciate that because sometimes, frankly, on the run, it is pretty easy to open a packet, drop it in some nice filtered water and know that you've made your blood and your endothelium with some extra nutrients.

I will say to people that, you know, the one green powder I hear all the time on podcast, this is a sponsor and I won't name it particularly I don't want to create any damaging effect is only partially organic.

Plant-Based Melatonin and Sleep Support

If you look at the ingredients and there are others that are fully labeled with the USDA organic label. So you might want to just look at the packaging and do a little bit of research.

And one last question before we take a quick break, which is give us three quick steps. The audience is hungry for information. I have this smart woman here now, and I want three steps to enhance my heart health.

What would your quick three bullet points be? Okay. Number one, more spices. Spices are a way to get more

concentrated phytonutrients. Number two, more herbal teas and other types of teas.

Tea, one cup of tea. As I'm drinking right now, is loaded with thousands of different phytochemicals. And for people who are just like you said, they're on the run.

Maybe they can't spend a lot of money. They don't want to think about it. Just get a variety of different herbal teas so that you're getting the complexity of phytonutrients in that way.

And then I would say, thirdly, aim for one one food that you haven't had on a regular basis every week. Like just allow yourself one new diverse food.

So for example, I was in the grocery store just this past weekend and I bought some cilantro. It had been a while since I had bought just a nice little bundle of cilantro, but I was really conscious, like, okay, what have I had over the past like months that I could be bringing in?

So just trying to think out of the box, try to bring in just one more thing, one simple thing, but then again, the other two strategies that I think will help you in getting concentrated amounts of phytochemicals at a very low cost.

So that is actually great. So we got the spices and again, I'd stress try and buy organic spices. They're going to sit in that glass jar for a little bit and you want high quality pesticide free.

Get yourself some teas again, I'd stress organic teas. They're available and they're just pennies a cup more. And then try something you haven't tried for a while.

That's good. I had some fermented cabbage today. I haven't had that for a little while, so I think I have a nice gift. For you. Day. So everybody, I'm going to say thank you.

Go over to deannaminich.com D E A N N A M I N I C H.com truly take a look at her beautiful website look at her books follow her on social media please, please, please.

And do take a look at the companies she's working with now as chief scientific officer. It's a long name, but it's a good name. symphonynaturalhealth.com We're going to talk now about more photos.

We were phytonutrient focused before and now we're going to talk about phyto melatonin. So you're working with this great company out of Australia, but they source some of their products from Peru.

I know you were just in Peru posting beautiful, beautiful information you had there. But tell us, know what's the difference between phyto plant based melatonin?

And I went to CVS and bought Megalodon it? Well, melatonin is a very popular supplement these days and it's only been increasing in its popularity. And because it's so popular, there is great demand.

So what has happened is that there have been all kinds of synthetic melatonin that have emerged to help with the cost of melatonin, to help produce it faster and cheaper.

And if you look at a lot of those different processes to make synthetic melatonin, it involves things like chemicals. And in that processing, more chemicals are produced.

So it can potentially be not so healthy. So, you know, there's always that dividing line between synthetic and natural compounds. And sometimes you can actually have things that are synthetic, certain vitamins, and they perform similarly in the body to the natural forms.

But in the case of melatonin and there can be some, I would say, untoward effects of producing melatonin. So if you do buy melatonin, which I think is a better option, is a plant melatonin.

And what most people don't realize is that melatonin occurs in the foods that you eat. So in a lot of the rainbow of different foods, you actually find teeny tiny amounts of melatonin.

So what Herb Tonin is, so it's HDR B herb tone in like herbs. There are three different plant based materials. There's rice, corella and alfalfa and all of them have been optimized in their own growing environments to just naturally make melatonin.

And there are ways to do that just through the environment, just in a healthy way, in an organic way. So it's not adding anything that's chemical. It's allowing the plants to do their thing, to optimize those plants in their environments and then to concentrate them and put them together.

You know, one of the things I like Dr. Kahn as well about Urban Tonin is that it doesn't just have the plant melatonin, which is the same melatonin in our bodies, it also has other actives from the plants like phytonutrients, like lutein, like zeaxanthin.

You know, some of the carotenoids that we need for the eyes, especially for the artificial blue light that people are getting at night, that is actually suppressing their melatonin synthesis, you know, just small amounts in the urban Tonin.

But still, because it's from the whole plant matrix and not just isolated melatonin, you're getting a lot more you're getting what nature naturally produces in that plant.

Okay. So probably for people listening, they've never in their life heard that there are different types of melatonin and it's just kind of a generic word, obviously didn't even really give it a proper introduction for heart health.

You need sleep health for heart health, you know, nutrition may be number one, but sleep is very close number two. And the science bears that out in in modern society with stress and phone and iPads and light and why fi and noise and dogs and cats and all kinds of things going on in my house is a lot of dogs.

And just working too long, long and too hard, right? Caffeine, maybe alcohol, maybe late meals. All these things should be regulated. So you're not putting your sleep as a secondary importance.

But nonetheless, many people are reaching for a sleep aid and it obviously shouldn't be Ambien and it shouldn't be rester prescription drugs. And tell us a little bit more like what's the dosing of herb tone?

And so number one distinction from the typical Vitamin Shoppe is that this is plant based melatonin, I think is that alfalfa, corella and rice based and it has phytonutrients.

What about the dosing? There are two doses. One is a physiologic dose of 0.3 milligrams. So that's the one that most people need just to kind of fill the gap.

So as we get older, our melatonin production goes down and that often coincides with sleep disturbance, which goes up, right? So it's melatonin as it becomes darker out at night, our our eyes signal that darkness and it naturally starts to signal the brain to produce melatonin.

Melatonin changes our body temperature. We start to get sleepy, and that sets in motion the circadian rhythm. That's circadian rhythm is essential for hormones, for brain detoxification at night, and also melatonin.

Many people don't realize this, but it's actually for more than just sleep. So when we are sleeping, we have a number of different repair processes that take place.

So glutathione is increased and that's one of and it's another antioxidant that's very powerful. And we get a lot of other antioxidant enzymes that are all boosted at about 2 a.m.

when the body is in its repair state. So melatonin is part of that rest repair rejuvenation process along side of

establishing that healthy circadian rhythm.

And the way that we are the next day after sleeping is how we're going to eat. So however we slept the night before will determine whether or not we have carbohydrate cravings the next day, how socially connected we feel, how stressed we get, how fragile we might feel, and just greater irritability and changes in mood state.

So I would say it's very important to be sleeping well and especially I'm going to call on this part of the population. Dr. Kahn Perimenopausal women, because during this perimenopausal period, which is typically in the forties and in the in the fifties, but it can start as early as in the thirties.

For some women, what ends up happening is we start to lose estrogen, we start to lose progesterone, we start to lose melatonin. And all of that sync together makes for not a lot of good, healthy, restful sleep.

And so then we see night sweats, hot flashes. And so having something to help smooth that over can help with her function. The next day. So there are certain populations.

And, you know, we also know from a cardiovascular perspective that perimenopausal women start to have greater risks for cardiovascular disease as their hormones do start to change.

And we do know the science of melatonin, that it's an antioxidant, it's an anti-inflammatory, it's a mitochondrial regulator. It helps the immune system.

And there are some studies looking at its cardio metabolic effects. So seeing changes and helping to regulate things like blood glucose, looking at changes in blood pressure.

So melatonin may be a missing link for some of the listeners. Wow. Okay. So many, many people are struggling with their sleep. Boy, in my clinic, you know, it's a big source of coverage, a big.

Issue. For every patient. And you're right, the perimenopausal group get special shout outs. And I will say, because this is such a special company, you're a special person, you've given us special information, but you have chosen to be chief scientific officer of a company that I have just been very bullish about symphonynaturalhealth.com and they have this Herbatonin 0.3 milligram.

And if we were secretly transported into my bathroom before I go into my nice bed with three dogs and you'll see a big package of 0.3 milligram Herbatonin and lots of little bullet points that I've popped the Herbatonin out.

So I use it nightly. And of course I do want to give a shout out to Symphony Natural Health, make some of the best natural perimenopausal support vitamins of Maca which you have become a world expert.

So go over to that website. I think I'm allowed to say this. I think there's a discount KAHN10 So go use it. Save a few dollars. What the heck? It's not going into my pocket and it's going to be a few dollars left in your pocket for those of you that are listening.

So everybody give a big thank you. I know you can't do it because it's being recorded. They get big thank you to Dr. Minich for taking her time busy, busy person traveling all over doing wonderful things with her acupuncturist husband.

So thank you so much. Hope to see you soon at one of the medical conferences. All right. Thank you, Dr. Kahn. Thanks for having me. And such a pleasure. And just so grateful for all you do.