Opening analogy and podcast intro

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It's the nutrients in the soil. How much water is it getting? How much sunlight? All that good stuff. And then you fix those things and then the plant gets better.

So it sounds like that's the approach that you recommend for treating this condition as well. Absolutely, it's the same. Yeah, plants like require our care.

If you're trying to cultivate them like in your backyard, same as kids. You've tried everything. You've changed your diet. You've detoxed. You've even moved homes.

And yet, you still feel sick. Headaches, brain fog, fatigue that no one can explain. What if it's not you? What if it's your environment? Welcome to Mold Microtoxins and More.

I'm John Bode. Each week, I sit down with experts uncovering how mold, microtoxins, and environmental exposures affect your health and what real recovery looks like.

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Andrea's eczema journey begins

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Good afternoon. This is John Bodie, host of Mold, Mycotoxins and More, and today we're excited to have with us, Andrea McHugh, and she is the host of the podcast, Exima Kids.

You're welcome to Mold, Mycotoxins and More. Thanks, John. I'm really excited to be here. Fantastic. I listened to several of your podcasts earlier and just really great work that you're doing.

Thank you. I noticed that where you indicated that you're kind of a reluctant podcast host. You said, hey, I wish I'd be doing other things, but here we are.

So share with us a little bit. How did you come to start XM and Kids? What's been your journey? Sure. Yeah, I would love to not be an eczema expert, but that's just like the cards that were in store for us because six years ago, I just had my third daughter and she was basically born with eczema.

She was born with this neonatal rash. They wrote in her discharge papers and it just got worse and worse and worse. And then simultaneously, my two-year-old, she had this little rash on the inside of her thigh and then it just started growing, growing, growing, growing.

And then I had two kids. completely covered, head to toe, skin falling off, oozing, kind of eczema, like not sleeping one little bit. And it just took us on a journey and then we went to the pediatrician, as one does when you have sick kids.

And you know, I had zero history with this. you know, growing up or anything like that. My husband didn't have any history with this. And yeah, we went to the pediatrician and the pediatrician just was like, this is so bad.

You're going to need two steroid prescriptions for both of them. Put gloves on yourself before you administer any of these medications because they're admittedly very toxic and you know you're just gonna have to manage this unfortunately and I was like that's just not gonna work you know I was holding my my newborn baby she's a month old and I was holding the hand of my two-year-old I was like It just can't be, that can't be the answer.

So I took the prescription and I just kept it in my back pocket and I just, I knew I had to find another way. And so, yeah, it was, it was by force that I had to, I had to learn all these things and, and, and go on this journey.

And now I help other people learn the same because, oh my goodness, this is such a ubiquitous problem. This is so, so big in our current pediatric population.

And then even with adults that never resolved it in childhood and they're still suffering.

Rejecting standard steroid treatment

So, so that's why I do what I do. Very good. Well, we don't want to gloss over this, but the standard of care was to apply a steroid to your newborn's skin that you couldn't have it touch your skin.

You had it been on gloves because it was so caustic. Yes, I know. Isn't that sad? He said also throw in a couple capfuls of bleach into their bath. I know.

It's just suppress and kill is what they have as tools in allopathic medicine. And then there's also scratch tests, which just exacerbate the problem a lot of times.

And then the dermatologists really say the same thing. And so, yeah, it's really sad. And I just didn't want my kids to be reliant on anything, but especially pharmaceuticals that I knew had pretty deleterious side effects.

And so, yeah, I just didn't want to go that route. Yeah, no, it makes a lot of sense. So, so you went down this, this path to your kids and obviously you've had great results.

And so you're trying to share that with, with other parents who are going through the same thing. What, what hopes are you trying or what is your hope to, to make an impact and the way that we, we treat our children with this type of condition?

I just want everyone to know, I mean, there's so many, you hear all these like preventative things and especially us as parents like, oh, dang, you know, I wish you could have done all this, but now we're here now and we're in this problem and we're not sleeping and our children are miserable.

I just want, you know, I just want everyone to know that this is 100% reversible. And the, what's great about, you know, tackling this when, when they're kids, even when they're older kids, you know, in their teens, it's just, they still have, you know, the most, most of their life ahead of them.

their cellular turnover is so quick that you know they just regenerate cells so quickly and once you start you know bringing down the inflammation and you start making each you know round of cells just a little plumper a little healthier a little more you know like increase the health of that mitochondria you can see results so so quickly and it just changes the entire trajectory of their lives and so yeah it's just it's it's it's it's that's the silver lining yeah When someone gets that diagnosis for their children, I mean, that's a heavy diagnosis to have, but I think you touched on something that's really important.

It's not just that. It's the, if you can imagine having that condition and as you age, it's your social interaction.

Why eczema affects more than skin

And then as a parent, the weight of trying to get your child on their path to wellness, can you talk a little bit about some of those additional rings, if you will, that occur when someone has eczema.

Like the bigger effects? Yeah, yeah. It's not just the fact that we have this of skin condition, right? It's much bigger than that. Yeah. Yeah. It's much bigger than that.

I mean, like, as you said, this is when you're not sleeping and you're going through it and your kid is itchy and you can't set your baby on the floor because they're just scratching themselves to death.

that's a problem and it's that's real suffering and there's certainly worse things right there's childhood cancer and there's there's things like that that are just like even scarier diabetes you know and but what you know scared me when i was researching and treating my own kids it's like that's just not too far away eczema is an autoimmune conditioning and so it has to be you know dealt with it has to be considered really serious and know, even just like a little bit, it's just showing you, oh man, there's something bigger going on inside.

And so if you leave that unchecked, if you, you know, go with the hope and a prayer methodology, just like, hopefully this will get better, hopefully they grow out of it, you know, that's tossed around a lot.

And in a lot of pediatrician's offices, it's like, when you don't deal with that inflammation, it just triggers, I mean, either molds into something else, like asthma or hay fever, you know, that's the atopic triad and, and Western medicine, you know, definitely acknowledges that but or it I read the GAPS diet by Dr.

Natasha Campbell when I was researching and trying to teach or treat my kids. And she put eczema and autism on this same path, on the same line, like that inflammation is happening inside the body and there's a dysbiosis happening inside the body and it can just manifest in different ways.

That inflammation can start to mess up your brain. It can start to mess up all your other organ systems. And so that's what was scarier than even what we were actually dealing with.

This is like, okay, if I leave this unchecked, it's just going to get worse and worse and worse. And so we got to deal with this now. And that's getting, getting, we work with a lot of functional medicine practitioners.

And I really, the thing I admire about that approach is really getting to the root cause, right? I think I heard on one of your, your podcast, you had the quote that essentially that's not a skin condition.

That's a message from your body. And that's certainly sounds like that's the case. What type of conditions have you been able to identify? Is it food intake?

Is it environmental? Is it all the above? Is it genetics? What have you come to learn? You've cleaned, repainted, and replaced filters. And still, you're not getting better.

Headache, fatigue, brain fog? The doctors can't explain it, but your environment can. At The Mold Pros, we specialize in uncovering what's hidden in plain sight.

Our environmental testing looks beyond surface mold, identifying bacteria, volatile organic compounds, and even micro toxins in the air that you breathe.

Root causes and environmental triggers

Then we correlate those results with your clinical data, showing how your space may be affecting your health. Next, we use our patented remediation process to safely remove toxins, restore balance, and prevent them from returning.

It's more than just a cleanup. It's a science-based system designed to help your body heal by healing the environment first. If you're ready to breathe freely again, visit TheMoldPros.com and schedule your free consultation.

Because wellness doesn't start in the doctor's office, it starts where you live. Yeah, I mean, we know that, like, as you just said, it's not a skin condition, there's a dysbiosis happening, and their little, you know, if it's child, their livers are overwhelmed, their inflammation buckets are full.

And so, no matter the reason, and some of my just, training as a parent, it's like I had to let go of that why. I had some, I had cesareans, I've had four cesareans.

I used to work in the dental industry. There's been a lot of exposures. There's been a lot of things that I wish, you know, I had done differently, but their bucket is full.

Our job now is to decrease the amount of inflammatory assailants that are coming at them 24-7, be that via food, be that their environment. EMF is a thing that we have to now deal with.

There's just So many things. And, and thankfully, good news is we have control over a lot of them, a lot of them, way more than we think, especially when we're treating our children, right?

Like you're buying the groceries, you're preparing the food, you're, you're paying for the environment and you're cleaning that environment and you're, you know, there's so many things that are within your control.

And if you just start to line those things up and start to get those inputs back into, you know, more a more of a healthy, more aligned circadian rhythm type of way, they will fare so much better.

Very good. So as opposed to, I think you said initially it was bleach baths with sounds just extremely awful, just terrible. And then it was this caustic steroidal topical treatment, it sounds like.

Obviously you've been able to come across a better path. And so can you share a little bit about what that looks like? And maybe do you have some stories of success where, hey, other than obviously your children, but others where they've been able to go down this path and find a road to wellness.

Yeah. Yeah. Every single, I've been doing this for four years and it's, I mean, everyone's gotten better. Every single person, every single person, because once you like do the things that we just spoke to, once we get the environment under control and we get the diet under control and we just like lower that systemic inflammation, everything gets better.

The skin gets better. The sleep gets better. The behavior gets better. Like every, you know, the allergies get better. Every single thing gets better.

And so that's, what's so promising and exciting. But to get there, as mere mortal parents, no matter who you're working with, you're the one that's doing it.

Healing through diet and home changes

You're implementing this, and you're in charge of the healing path, and it's your responsibility. So you start in the kitchen, at the next meal, and you're just ensuring that every meal is nutrient-dense.

comprised of whole in-season foods, ideally, prepared properly, prepared for digestion. These kids aren't assimilating the nutrients from their food. They're not absorbing what they need to absorb.

The whole reason that we eat is for nutrients and to grow and thrive, and these kids aren't doing that. We're soaking the beans and we're soaking the grains and we're using pressure cookers and we're, you know, pairing foods properly.

We're not eating meats with fruits, like as an example, because the digestive enzymes for those types of things are completely different, right? So if you eat those two things together, then some is left in your stomach and then it starts to ferment and it's increasing that systemic inflammation.

So we start there. We start in the kitchen. with some basic principles, number one being real food. Very good. So it's more of a, it was a Hippocrates that said, you know, let, let food be thy medicine.

So you, you start there. Is there any sort of testing or diagnosis or is it that someone can say, how could we have this? They've been to their doctor.

The doctors has prescribed these more traditional you know, standard of care treatments that they typically get kind of the canned approach. Is there any sort of testing or what's the path for them to get on a different approach that's more holistic for their children, I guess?

Well, like you, like you start with the diet, right? And so then, then we're I leave testing for last and the majority of the people that I work with don't have to go there at all because it's expensive and it's invasive.

For some kids, it's pretty traumatic and it's hard. Anyone under 12 months old, they can't do any testing and even school tests aren't made for them. So we just, we just do the things that we can do inside our four walls.

And that's a lot. So you do that. You make sure that everything that touches the skin is bioavailable. That's edible is basically our standard. Not that it would taste good if you ate it, but that, you know, anything that you put on your skin, it's absorbed.

And your body, it circulates throughout your body and is digested by your liver, just the same as anything that you would eat. So everything has to be of that standard, right?

And then, you know, everything in your environment, like you do what you can to, for mold, you open your windows, you purify your air, you you know, ideally get rid of carpet, things like that, that are just exacerbating your child's symptoms at this moment of time.

And then, and then, and we supplement because there's going to be some key nutritional deficiencies that are happening for anyone that's, that has eczema.

There's certainly a dysbiosis going on. There's certainly a backup in their detox pathways. Like when we're seeing eczema written skin, we're looking at those, those toxins coming out through the skin, right?

They're not coming out through the proper detoxification channel. So we're opening that up. We're getting their lymph system move in and go in and through enough cycles of that, through consistency, that's when you start to see the change.

And so when you've got all those things dialed in, those four sections for a period of time, a couple of months, and then you're most definitely better.

Testing, coaching, and recovery path

in a better place, but if it's not completely resolved, that's when we jump into testing. Because then, without a doubt, then there's some pathogenic bacterias or things like that that are living inside that we have to eradicate, but we have to know what it is before we start to.

treat that. Go down that path. It sounds like there's, I was talking with a practitioner that we do a lot of work for their patients. And they use the analogy of a plant.

When the plant's starting to go south, it's starting to wilt and not look, you don't look at the plant and say, what's wrong with the plant? You look at the, you know, the sunlight, it's the environment, right?

It's the nutrients in the soil. How much water is it getting? You know, how much sunlight, all that good stuff. And then you fix those things and then the plant gets better.

So it sounds like that's the approach that, that you recommend for treating this condition as well. Absolutely. It's the same. Yeah. Plants like require our care, you know, if you're, if you're trying to cultivate them, like in your backyard, the same, same as kids.

Yeah. Do you have, it's been four years you've been down this journey and obviously you have the podcast with a lot of great information on your podcast, which is fantastic.

Is there a website that people can go to? How can someone get more information or maybe get in contact with you to have a more natural holistic approach that really gets to the root of the problem?

Yeah. So eczema kids is a site you can listen to the most recent episode there. And I have a line of skincare and some probiotic tea and some just extra tools and support to help you through this journey, help you treat the outside while you're.

remediating the inside really. And then I have a coaching program called the eczema elimination method. And that's when we walk you through all these things.

We get a one-on-one coaching call and really create an in-depth plan for you to execute. And then we're talking along the way and making adjustments as needed.

And we're just going through that protocol until your child is healed. Okay, fantastic. So is there a website that we could direct folks to? Or is there a phone number?

How do we get in contact with you? XMAKids.com is where everything is. All right. And for those that are, you know, challenged with spelling as myself, it is going to be…

ECZ. Go ahead, go ahead. Yeah. ECZ, E-M-A, kids, K-I-D-S, dot com? Yes. Yes. Everything's there. All right. Perfect. Any other thoughts that or success stories you'd like to share with our audience today?

I just want parents to know even if you've gone down that steroid rabbit hole or if you've been taking biologics or that's just on the table, it just doesn't have to be your child's permanent story and it's okay.

Whatever has happened in the past, they can overcome it. They're very, very resilient. Our human bodies are meant to be resilient. And we're just, that's what we're doing is like creating this resiliency so that they can handle life with ultimate food freedom and without pharmaceuticals.

That's our goal. And no matter what situation you're in now, you can absolutely get there. That's fantastic. One other thought and listen to what you have to say, you know, we're talking about how resilient the kids are, but also as a parent, You have children, I have children.

I think there's probably a certain amount of weight that as a parent you carry, right?

Parent support and closing remarks

When your child is suffering and you can't get them better, it's what did I do wrong? Or in the past making these judgments or using these, you know, these steroids and bleach baths and that kind of thing, you're making the best decision that you have with information you have at the time.

Does your website have any support for the parent as well? Yeah, like I said, you're the one that's doing it, right? You're the one that's implementing.

You know, one, we give you a plan and we give you the information so that you know what, so you understand the why. Why are you doing each of these things?

We give you a rhythm, like we'll make it so that you can actually do it in your life, given the age and whatever is going on in your, your family. Like we can make this possible.

I have four kids run a business. I mean, you know, everyone's really, really busy. And so, yeah, it's gotta be doable and consistent. And I think just.

It's stressful, right? It's stressful to watch your child be miserable and not really know how to pull them out of that well. And when we were really going through it, the best thing for my mental health was, because I was never going to be okay knowing, you know, my kids were not okay.

Like, I'm just not evolved enough to be there yet. So, but, you know, when I laid my head down on the pillow, and I know that I did everything that was within my power, you know, to help my kids.

That is what kept me going. It's like, okay, like I could not have done any more for them. So that is what gave me solace like during that time. And then as they started to improve, I mean, certainly then it becomes much more, you know, self-fulfilling, but it just is that if you can just keep that little nugget in you are, if you're listening to these type of podcasts, you are the parent that is doing every single thing that you possibly can and just, you know, keep going.

Like there's no other choice. Yeah. Well, that's, that's fantastic. Thank you so much for sharing your personal journey for investing and learning and be able to help others and make an impact on families.

It's really important work that you're doing. And I'm so glad to have carved out time and, and visit with you today. So thank you very much. Keep it going.

Thank you, John. Likewise. Thanks for having me. All right. We'll talk to you soon. You've been listening to mold, mycotoxins and more with John Bodie.

If you're ready to take the next step towards a healthier home, follow the show and visit TheMoldPros.com for your free consultation. Because clean air is the first step to true healing.