Opening on Pain as a Signal

I'm not telling you to grit your teeth through agony, severe pain, sudden pain pain that doesn't match the injury. That's your body flagging something that needs real attention and you should listen to it.

that's the signal doing its job. What I am asking you reconsider is the reflex, the automatic reach for something to make the sensation go away without ever asking what the sensations was for in the first place.

Because the ibuprofen and the acetaminophen, we already talked about, suppress pain through those same mechanisms with those costs to the liver, the gut, and kidneys.

And the opioids take it to a place that has cost this country more than a million lives. Pain is the instruction that stops you from destroying the thing that's trying to heal.

Before you silence it, it's worth knowing what order it was trying give to you. Welcome to Vitality Radio, the podcast that helps you make sense of natural supplements and thrive without pharma drugs.

I'm Jared St. Clair. I'm going to tell you upfront that this series is going be a little different. It's a hard-hitting expose of the medical and pharmaceutical industry, something I do from time to time, but of a model specifically that has taught us to fear our own bodies and reach for something to shut down every signal they send.

I am going name names, follow the money, and look straight at what these companies knew and when they knew it.

Vitality Radio Introduction and Series Overview

But I'm not just here to tear something down. I am going to show you how to actually read a symptom. how to understand what your body is trying to tell you and work with your buddy instead of against it.

And I don't say this lightly because I've done a lot of shows over the years, but I believe this series I'm about to present to you may be one of the most important ones that I have ever done.

I hope that it will help you not look at a symptom or a pharmacy shelf the same way again. Welcome to Vitality Radio. Over the next few episodes, I want to give you a different perspective than the one that most of us were raised with.

Not me because I was raised weird, but most people in America. And honestly, if you've been listening to podcasts like this one for a while now, it probably lines up pretty well with what you're thinking has already become.

But I'm thinking I am going to be able to shed a lot of light on this, especially if your a little bit newer to the natural health side of things. Now what prompted this was that lately I've talking to a lotta my customers, a A lot of people hitting us up online on our chat feature on a website, vitalitynutrition.com.

And the messages that I'm seeing are still very full of a heavy amount of fear-based thinking around symptoms. And it gets even heavier when it's about the people that we love, especially our children.

A fever spikes and the whole house can potentially go into crisis mode. What I want to do with these episodes is offer you a different lens. It's the, your body knows what it doing lens, the idea that your isn't malfunctioning when produces a symptom, it is responding.

malfunctioning versus responding to very, very different things, right? Because when you start seeing it that way,

everything changes. You become much more willing to let your body do what the body already knows how to do, to support you through the process and to stay wise about the moments when, you genuinely do need to seek help without reflexively reaching to suppress every symptom and shut down every illness the second that it starts.

because in a lot of cases, as you're about to hear, we are far better off listening to the symptom than silencing it. The framework for this series builds on a piece by a writer who publishes under the name Unbecoming, who cataloged this pretty well, I think, I'm adding my take, my research, but his basic concept is where I got this from and I want to share credit for sure.

Reframing Symptoms as the Body Responding

Today we start with three symptoms that belong together because they're the body's repair crew showing up on the scene. Fever, inflammation, and pain.

Let's talk about the one that scares people the most, fever. Fever is the one that I think brings the most fear, especially in our children. But think about what a fever actually is.

Your body runs a thermostat set somewhere around 98.6. When you get an infection, your body deliberately turns that thermostat up. That's a decision. You immune system detects a threat and raises the set point on purpose because heat is actually a weapon.

A higher temperature speeds up your immune response. It makes it harder for a lot of pathogens to replicate, and it pushes your metabolism into a gear where it can clear waste faster.

The fever isn't the enemy attacking you. the fever is you attacking the Enemy. And there's a second thing the Fever is telling you, which is just as important.

If your body went to the trouble of mounting a fight, it means there is something worth fighting for. or against. The fever is information. It's your body signaling that it detected something that shouldn't be there and decided to respond to it.

So before you rush to shut that down, it's worth registering that. it is actually saying something has impacted the body and the Body is on the defensive.

And this isn't fringe thinking either. Back in the mid 70s, there was a now famous set of experiments with lizards. Researchers infected them with bacteria, then placed them in a chamber where they could move toward heat or away from heat.

The sick lizards deliberately crawled to the warm end and drove their own body temperature up, a behavioral fever. And here's what matters. the ones allowed to run their fever survived at much higher rates than the one that couldn't.

A follow-up study showed that when animals were given fever-suppressing drugs, more of them died. Let that shape how you think about the little bottle in the medicine cabinet.

And what's in that little model? Well, for most people, it's acetaminophen or Tylenol. The same thing, brand name versus not. This is where the story sharpens up.

Acetaminophen is one of the most widely used drugs on the planet, and for over a century, nobody fully understood how it worked. What we understand now is that it depletes something called glutathione.

If you listen to shows like this, you know glutothione is your body's master antioxidant, something that we want more of, certainly not less. This molecule is the molecule that your liver leans on hardest to detoxify and protect itself.

Acetaminophen burns through it. And that's the same mechanism by which acetaminophene in overdose destroys the liver. Did you know that acetaminephine, Tylenol, is number one cause of acute liver failure in the United States, responsible for close to half of all cases, more than alcohol, a lot more that alcohol.

And here's the detail I find almost poetic. When someone comes into the ER with an acetaminophen overdose, the antidote they're given is N-acetylcysteine, also known as NAC.

Fever as a Protective Response

And Nac works by helping the body do what? Build more glutathione. The rescue is restoring the exact thing the drug stripped away in the first place. Then there's aspirin.

When aspirine was used to bring down fevers in children during viral illnesses, it was linked to something called rise syndrome. That's R E Y E apostrophe S, a rare but devastating condition that attacks the brain and the liver with a historical fatality rate that ran as high as 30%.

Roughly 90% of those pediatric rise cases were tied to aspirin. And that's why aspirine quietly disappeared from the children's fever aisle. It was never pulled from adults in the market.

The recommendation just simply changed, and it's still sold for adults. And ibuprofen, also known as Advil, works by the same fever suppressing mechanism, carrying its own documented cost to the gut, the kidneys, and the cardiovascular system.

Now here's what actually happens when you reach for one of those Drugs. Picture an intruder in your backyard. Reaching for a fever reducer is like walking over and just closing the blinds.

The intruders didn't leave. You just can't see him anymore and now you have no idea what he's doing out there. You didn't make yourself safer, you made yourself more defenseless because you shut off your own view of the threat while it's still standing in your yard.

That's the trade. You feel better temporarily, but the thing your body raised its temperature to fight is still there. The waste your was mobilizing to clear the pathogens, the heat was suppressing.

All of it gets a reprieve. you took the one tool your body chose to deploy and knocked that tool out of its hand. Now I want to be careful here because fever is also the symptom with real edges to it.

And you should know exactly where those edges are. A regulated fever from an ordinary infection is your body running a controlled process. The hypothalamus is steering the whole thing.

Because it's regulated, an infection-driven fever rarely climbs past about 105, 106 degrees. Did you hear that number? 105 to 10 6 degrees, that is a high fever.

but your body will keep that fever in check most of the time. Actual heat damage to the brain doesn't even begin until sustained temperatures get above roughly 107 to 108 degrees.

level a normal infection almost never produces on its own. So when you do see a number that high, that's your signal that this probably isn't a simple infection anymore.

There's something seriously wrong. That's when your likely looking at something like heat stroke where the body's cooling has genuinely failed or maybe a drug reaction or something affecting the brain's thermostat directly.

Those are a different animal and they warrant real help real fast. But the fevers 105 or below, even 106 are below. Believe it or not, not so much. And look, I'm a parent and now I am a grandparent.

I've had four infants of my own and I now have seven grand babies. So I understand the fear that comes with

watching your kid burn up in the middle of the night.

But I have been there plenty of times. It is scary. That's exactly why this research matters. Those of us who take time to get educated learn not to fear the body and its natural processes.

When you understand what a fever actually is doing and where its real limits are, that 2 a.m. panic starts to give way to something steadier. You stop reacting to the number and start reading what your child's body is actually trying to tell you.

The other place to pay close attention, of course, is in the very young. And I'm going to give you a number that sounds really low, but this is the recommendation and I'll give it to you with a caveat.

I guess for a baby under three months old, any fever taken rectally that is over like 100.4 is considered high enough that you should be at least Concerned talking to a physician maybe having the baby checked out because the Baby can't tell you what's going on and that may be the only symptom now That's a very low fever compared to the fevers that I talked about and it's not a fever that at that point is dangerous but it is a Fever at That point that you should at least be looking at it and trying to determine what going pretty simple Outside of that, those numbers that I've talked to you, that 105, 106 number, That's a big number.

And it's number that most people look at and say, Whoa, thats dangerous. It's certainly uncomfortable, but we know if we research and please don't take my word for it.

Dig in, look these numbers, get comfortable now. when your child doesn't have a fever, when you or your spouse or someone you care about doesn' have fever.

Find the number that you're comfortable with, letting that fever climb to before putting something in the body that shuts down your natural defense system like we just talked about.

For the vast majority of ordinary fevers, the old approach is and was the right one. It's almost embarrassingly simple. warmth, fluids, rest. Let the appetite go away quietly if it wants to.

let the fever do its work. The natural hygiene folks had a name for that. They called it nature's bonfire. Your job isn't to put it out, your job is to stay hydrated and rested while it burns and to trust your body that lit that fire for a reason.

Number two on the list is inflammation. If fever is the body turning up the heat, inflammation is a body sending in the work crew. And it's probably the most misunderstood process in entire body because we've been taught to treat the word itself like a diagnosis.

You've got inflammation as if inflammation was the problem, but inflammation never the problems. Inflammation is response to the product. Before I go any further, there's good inflammation quote unquote and bad inflammation, quote, unquote, meaning Inflammation where you just stubbed your toe and it's like, holy crap, that hurt.

That's actually your body doing what I'm about to talk about. And that's fine. Chronic inflammation is a little bit different story, but both types of inflammation are your, body telling you something.

So let's talk. because you've got four classic signs of inflammation, heat, redness, swelling, pain. Every one of them is your body deliberately increasing blood supply to a specific spot.

In the case of the stubbed toe, it's going to the toe. When tissue gets damaged, your body opens up the vessels, floods the area with blood, and that blood is carrying everything the repair job needs.

Immune cells, oxygen, nutrients, the whole toolkit. It's like the ambulance and the paramedics on their way. The redness and heat are the extra blood arriving.

Inflammation and the Vioxx Scandal

Swelling is a fluid delivering repair materials to the site. Pain is the areas telling you to protect it while the work gets done. It's a system and it's by design.

The best way I've heard it framed is demolition. Before your body can rebuild damaged tissue, it has to clear away what's already broken. You can't frame a new wall on top of a collapsed wall.

you've got to haul out the rubble first. That's what a big part of inflammation is doing. Those inflammatory mediators are dissolving and clearing the damaged material so that new healthy tissue can be built in its place.

The redness, the swelling, The heat, and the soreness, that's the demolitions phase in progress. And here's the key. If you shut the demolition down before it finishes, the rebuild doesn't happen.

You've just got a covered up mess. Now, anti-inflammatory drugs are the single largest drug category in all of medicine. This is a multi-billion dollar a year business.

And I want to walk you through the one story that should have changed everything because it's the cleanest example that I know of what suppression actually costs and what happens when a company decides the profit is worth the bodies.

The drug was called Vioxx. The company was and still is and should not be in business a company called Merck. One of the biggest, most respected by who I don't know, pharmaceutical companies in the world.

Voxx came out in 1999, a new kind of anti-inflammatory marketed as easier on the stomach than the older options. Doctors loved it. About 20 million Americans took it, more than 80 million people worldwide took this drug.

Over a hundred million prescriptions filled in America alone by 2001, two years after it was introduced. It was Merck's second biggest seller, pulling in around two and a half billion with a b dollars a year billions of dollars every single year that it was on the market and here's the part i need you to hear clearly because none of it is speculation this all came out in court in murk's own internal emails they knew Merck's own scientists were worried about the heart risk as far back as 1997, two years before the drug ever went on sale.

One of their researchers wrote in an internal email that the possibility of cardiovascular events was, in her words, of great concern. And in that same period, the company discussed designing its big safety study to leave high-risk patients out so the heart dangers wouldn't show up in the data.

Then in March of 2000, the results came in anyway, and they were damning. People on Vioxx were having something like four to five times the hearts attacks of people on the older painkiller.

Merck's head of research, a man named Edward Skolnick, wrote to his colleagues that the cardiovascular events were, in his words, clearly there. He called it a shame.

He said it was mechanism based, exactly as they had feared. In another email that spring, he wrote that he was in minor agony over his fear that the drug was causing heart attacks and strokes.

minor agony. I guess the fear that he may be killing people was covered up by the dollars he was putting in his pocket and therefore the agony was only minor.

Hard to know. Can't get into his brain and I don't pretend to. So what did they do with that knowledge? They didn't pull the drug, they explained it away.

They went out and told the world that the older painkiller must be protecting the heart rather than admitting Vioxx was damaging it. They armed thousands of sales reps with a script for dodging doctors' questions about cardiac safety.

Did you hear that? They arm their sales rep with the script to dodge doctors questions. When the FDA sent them a

warning letter in 2001 to stop the misleading marketing, they kept right on going.

And Vioxx stayed on the market, selling billions of dollars a year for four more years. The whole time Merck's CEO, a man named Raymond Gilmarten, was out in public insisting the company had acted responsibly at every step, like pharma companies always do.

They are our best friends after all, right there with the government. They finally pulled the drug in 2004, six years in, and only because a new trial made it impossible to hide any longer.

By then, the FDA's own drug safety scientist, a man trained at Johns Hopkins, sat down in front of the United States Senate and testified that Vioxx had caused somewhere between 88,000 and 140,00 heart attacks and strokes.

in this country alone. And that between 30 and 55,000 people had died as a result. Now I've read those numbers are as high as 60,00 and that they are probably actually higher than that, but we have documentation that there are at least 30 to 55 thousand people.

Think about that. 30, 000 people is 10 times as many as died in 9-11. He called this the single greatest drug safety catastrophe in the history of the country.

Tens of thousands of people dead from an anti-inflammatory drug for pain relief, from a drug whose entire job was to reach into an arthritic joint and shut down the body's repair response.

And if you're tempted to believe the system caught this and fixed it, watch what happened next. A few months after Vioxx was pulled, the FDA convened a panel of 32 expert advisors to decide whether these kinds of drugs should be allowed back on the market.

That panel voted to keep them available, Vioxx included, by a vote of 17 to 15. Then the New York Times and an independent watchdog group looked into who was actually sitting on that panel.

10 of the 32 had financial ties to the very companies that made these drugs, consulting fees, speaking fees research money. And those 10 conflicted advisors voted nine to one.

in favor of bringing Vioxx back. I suppose the other person had a conscience. Take just those 10 votes out, take out only the people being paid by the drug makers and the panel would have voted 14 to eight to keep Vioxx off the market.

So let that sink in. The people deciding whether a drug that had already killed tens of thousands of people should be allowed back on pharmacy shelves, a third of them on the payroll of the companies that profited from it.

That is not a glitch in the system. THAT IS THE SYSTEM. in this country. And here's how it ended, which is the part that should genuinely make you angry.

It does me anyway. Merck paid in 2007, they paid $4.85 billion to settle the injury lawsuits from around 50,000 people and their families. That's no small amount of money, 4.8, 5 billion.

In 2011, four years later, They pleaded guilty to a criminal charge and paid another 950 million. Later, another 830 million to their own shareholders.

It sounds like a reckoning, doesn't it? Except when you add up what Vioxx earned against what it cost them, Merck still came out ahead. The drug made them more money than all of the settlements took back.

Not one executive went to prison. the government's own agreement stated that there was no basis to find that high-level management was involved at all.

So just let that land. They knew they sold it anyway. Tens of thousands of people died putting one of the executives in minor agony and the company still turned a profit.

And the men at the top walked away with their bonuses and their freedom fully intact. In my book and only in my books, maybe not only my work, they're murderers.

But that is the system. And that is why we have to be so cautious before we ever put any pharmaceutical in our mouth. That is the model laid completely bare.

that's what it looks like when suppression becomes a business and Vioxx isn't the exception. It's just the one that got caught out in the open. Now, Vioxx is an extreme case, but the everyday anti-inflammatories in your own cabinet carry their own well-documented costs.

The NSAIDs, ibuprofen, naproxen, and the rest are hard on the stomach lining, hard in the kidneys and carry cardiovascular risk of their on. And corticosteroids, drugs like prednisone, shut down inflammation across the entire body, And the price of that is muscle wasting, thinning bones, rising blood pressure, in an adrenal system that becomes dependent on that drug.

We know that somewhere around 15 to 20,000 Americans die every single year from the regular, normal, not excessive use of incense. 15, to twenty thousand a year, depending on where you read.

But here's the part that really shows you what the model actually looks like, and I want you to watch how the dominoes fall. You take an NSAID long enough, it tears up your stomach.

So now you get a second drug, an acid blocker, to handle the stomach damage that the first drug caused. the second drug caused. This is a real named phenomenon.

It's called prescribing cascade. One suppressed symptom becomes a drug. The drug creates a new symptom. the new symptoms becomes another drug and on and this is how a person with one inflamed joint ends up five years later on a stack of six medications.

Every one of them managing a problem, the last one created and nobody's standing back looking at the whole picture. asking the obvious question, what was that inflammation trying to do in the first place and what actually caused it?

Because that's the question functional medicine actually asks, not how do we shut this down, but why is the body doing this in the first place? What's driving this inflammation?

Because chronic inflammation that won't resolve is real and it's worth taking seriously. But the answer isn't to bludgeon the bodies repair signal into silence year after year, after the year.

The answer is to find the thing that keeps provoking it. the food, the gut, toxic exposure, chronic stress, the blood sugar, remove the provocation and support the body's ability to finish the demolition and rebuild and the inflammation resolves the way it was designed to resolve.

Now the edge here, because inflammation has one too, most swelling and inflammation is actually exactly what I described. The repair crew doing its job, but not all of it.

Sudden swelling in one leg and not the other can be a clot. And that is not something to wait out. Swelling with spreading redness, heat, and a fever, climbing can an infection that's getting away from you.

Those aren't the routine repair response. Those are the body flagging something that needs real attention. Still the, body working for you saying, Hey man, something's going on here, but something certainly shouldn't be ignored.

And I don't think any of these symptoms should be. But suppressing is whole different story, not ignoring the alarm,

But not suppresing the Alarm either.

For the ordinary sprained ankle, the tweaked back, swollen joint after you overdid it, that swelling is the delivery truck and that soreness is repair in progress.

Ice it if you need comfort. Rest it. Let the crew work. Freezing the demolition doesn't speed the rebuild, it just leaves the rubble in place. Three is pain.

which of course inflammation leads to pain. And in many cases we can have pain, inflammation and fever in the same event, right? But pain is interesting because in my book, pain it's something that we have been taught as a society to not tolerate.

I'm talking physical pain here, but also mental emotional pain we've been thought to numb these things down. And while there are natural things that I recommend on a regular basis and utilize myself for pain and inflammation, because they are, natural, they're safer.

Pain, Opioids, and the Cost of Suppression

And if there is a chronic thing going on or even a non-chronic thing, but more of an acute thing and it's very uncomfortable, I think it is reasonable to calm it down a little bit.

which is why things like CBD, turmeric, Boswellia, things that exist and why I talk about them on my show. But even with natural things, if all we're doing is knocking down the pain, knocking the inflammation, bringing down fever and not listening to why it's there in the first place, it can just be more slippery on the drug side than on natural side.

Tolerating pain isn't always a bad thing. This is my take on it, okay? But do we need to always reach for the Tylenol or the ibuprofen when there's a headache?

When there is a menstrual cramp? when There's an achy muscle after working out? Or can we just be okay with some discomfort? A lot of times I think it's kind of just okay to be okay with discomfort.

That's someone who sells things that people use for pain and inflammation. But I don't think we always necessarily have to reach for those things. To a large degree, in my opinion, and this may ruffle some feathers, but it is how I feel, we've been coddled a bit in this country.

In this world, in this modern society that we have, because back in the day, people just dealt with it. And I'm not saying you always should. Sometimes the pain can be debilitating.

sometimes it can really, really excruciating. I get it, but I think there's a time and a place when we can look at it and say, you know what? This isn't so bad that I need to suppress it with anything, natural or otherwise.

It is my body telling me something. Pay attention to what that thing is and try to do your best to keep it from coming back. So the body doesn't have to, keep sending you that signal, but pain is your body's most direct line of communication.

There's no symptom that gets your attention faster than pain. And what most of us were taught is that pain just information. a little alert that says something's wrong here, but pain is more than information.

Pain is actually instruction. It's not just telling you something is wrong, it's giving you orders. Think about a sprained ankle. it hurts specifically when you put weight on it, and that's no incidental.

That's the entire point. The pain there to stop you from walking on, so it can heal. that the repair requires in that case. Abdominal pain from something you ate makes you not want to eat, which is exactly the break your gut needs.

Chest pain stops you from exerting. Pain is the body giving commands and every one of those commands is in service of healing. It restricts the movement of what would potentially cause more damage.

it buys the injured part some stillness. that it needs to recover. So what happens when you silence the command? You keep using the damage joint because, well, it doesn't hurt anymore.

You go back to the activity that hurt your back because the signal was telling you to stop has been switched off. The pain that was designed to protect you from further injury gets chemically muted and the underlying damage keeps getting worse.

Quietly, underneath the drug, you've turned off the fire alarm and gone back bed while the kitchen is still smoking. Nowhere has this cost been higher than the class of drugs built to silence the pain the hardest.

Opiates. Now, I've done whole episodes on this before, so I'm not going to walk you through the entire opioid story today the way I did with Vioxx. Part of that is because Voxx is the one that most people still don't know about, and most of people have at least heard about this opiate thing.

But part of it is because this one may deserve its own full show soon, and maybe it's one I'll do with my sweet wife, Jen, because she didn't just study this like I have, she actually lived it.

And I will go into that in just a moment. But I can't talk about what happens when we silence pain and skip past this because it the single largest documented catastrophe in the history of modern medicine and it isn't even close.

Oxycodone. You know what is oxycontin. Hydrocodone, Vicodin, Norco, Morphine, Fentanyl, Tramadol. By the CDC's own count, more than 800,000 Americans have died from opioid overdose since 1999. That's 27 years.

Half my life. And here's the number that should stop anyone who thinks this only happens to someone else. Among patients put on long-term opioid therapy, as many as one in four will struggle with addiction, 25%. And that 800,000 number, that is a massive number.

And do you know how this got started? Well, a huge piece of it traces back to one single letter. In 1980, the New England Journal of Medicine ran a short letter to the editor about a hundred words, five sentences from a researcher named Dr.

Herschel Jick. a colleague at Boston University. It wasn't a study, it was a quick observation pulled from hospital records of nearly 12,000 hospitalized patients given a narcotic under close supervision.

That close supervisions a big part of this. They found only four cases of addiction in people with no prior history of Their point was narrowed that in a monitored hospital setting, short-term narcotics rarely led to addiction.

That's all the letter said. But years later, when the makers of OxyContin needed to convince doctors their drug was safe, that little paragraph got dragged out and cited over and over again, hundreds of times, as if it were hard proof that opioids weren't really addictive at all, even for the people sent home to take them for months or years.

which is nothing like what Dr. Jick actually looked at. He studied supervised hospitalized patients. They stretched it to justify handing out bottles of the stuff for chronic pain.

Dr Jic himself years on said he was horrified at what his letter had been turned into. he never meant it, to be used that way. But by then the damage was done.

and the damage made people rich. Oxycontin was made by a company called Purdue Pharma, owned by Sackler. the same name that used to be up on museum wings and university buildings all over the country.

They brought in over $35 billion on that one drug. And as the lawsuit started closing in and the death toll climbed, the family quietly moved around $11 billion of it out of the company and into their own accounts.

A Supreme Court justice later described it in the ruling as a milking program. They got richer as the epidemic got worse. That is what it looks like when human suffering becomes somebody's revenue stream.

And I want you to actually feel the size of that number I said, because 800,000 is so big. But sometimes it can go numb on us. We hear these big numbers all the time.

I mean, in America, our national debt just hit $40 trillion. So 800,000 doesn't sound that much. But we're talking about human life here. Let me put it next to things you already can associate.

More Americans have now died from opioids than were killed in every war this country has fought since World War I combined. Line them all up, World War I, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan.

Add up every single American who died in all of them and opioids have still killed more. It is nearly double the toll of World war II all by itself. it is more than a dozen Vietnam's.

The only war in the nation's entire history that's even in same range and opioid's beat it, is the Civil War. And here's the part that should really land, that 800,000 is only what's been officially counted.

Researchers who went back through the death records found opioid deaths are routinely undercounted. Coroners in a lot of places write unspecified drugs on the certificate instead of naming the opioid that actually did it.

The published estimates run 20 to 35% higher than the official number, which means the true toll is probably well over past a million. Either way, counted or uncounted, every one of those was a human life lost.

Somebody's kid, somebody's husband or wife, somebodies mom, people like my Jen who came within an inch of being one those people. So let me tell you just really briefly what she was told when she put on an opiate for her back pain.

Her doctor said, There's this great new pain reliever that works on opiate receptors, but it isn't addictive. 10 years later, and two attempts on her own life, she finally was in rehab and got off of this drug.

As I said, I think we'll do a show on this. I haven't actually talked to her about it. We just celebrated the anniversary of her being clean off this just last four days ago.

we do every year. And it was important to me before I met Jen eight and a half years ago, I've done shows on this way back, probably 15 years go on Vitality Radio, but I'd never done one with her about it so that she can talk about the toll that it took.

We've talked in brief about, it but this is the thing that I think is so important understand. And there's a few aspects of it. Opioids are a class of drugs that have killed probably over a million people in America, not worldwide, but there are millions upon millions, upon billions whose lives have been either brutally destroyed or at the very least impacted in a dramatic way beyond the ones who didn't make it out.

And there are millions currently addicted to these drugs right now. So this pain thing is an incredibly slippery slope because the one thing we can't say about opiates is they don't work.

They do work and they're recommended for everything from tooth pain. to back pain, to just about every post-surgical pain that you can imagine. And in many cases, long-term pain suppression, even though we know that over time, they stop working anyway.

So let me be clear about what I'm saying and what not saying, because pain is serious, and I am not going to be careless about how I talk about it. I'm not telling you to grit your teeth through agony, severe pain, sudden pain pain that doesn't match the injury.

That's your body flagging something that needs real attention and you should listen to it. that's the signal doing its

job. What I am asking you reconsider is the reflex, the automatic reach for something to make the sensation go away without ever asking what the sensations was for in the first place.

because the ibuprofen and the acetaminophen we already talked about suppress pain through those same mechanisms with those costs to the liver, the gut, and kidneys.

And the opioids take it to a place that has cost this country more than a million lives. Pain is the instruction that stops you from destroying the thing that's trying to heal.

Before you silence it, it's worth knowing what order it was trying Same idea, a whole new set of things you've probably been taught to shut down that your body is actually using for a purpose.

And here's what I really want you to take from this story. The story of Vioxx, because it's bigger than one drug. The lesson isn't just that we shouldn't reach for something pharmaceutical at every little signal our body gives us.

the deeper lesson is about who's actually earned your trust. Your body has spent your entire life keeping you alive, healing every cut, fighting off every bug, running these repair processes flawlessly without you ever having to ask or think about it.

That's the track record that you're working with. Now, put that up against the other side. A company that knew its drug was killing people and sold it anyway for four more years.

a regulatory panel, a third staffed by people on the payroll of those drug companies and the doctors in the middle of all this writing those scripts inside a system built and funded by the very companies that make these drugs.

Now, I'll grant you that a doctor is presumably trying to help, and I think in many cases they are. But we know that this isn't always the case. We've all seen it.

And the pattern's been documented plenty. The doctor who just wants you out of the office with a stroke of a pen on the prescription pad, five, six, seven minutes, next patient, even giving the benefit of Here's where I stop being generous.

If the person handing you the prescription doesn't actually know whether the drug is safe or dangerous, then they haven't done their homework. And if you haven' done your homework, you have no business using a prescription pad.

Think about it this way. I don't prescribe anything for a living.

Trusting the Bodyu2019s Intelligence

And if I can sit here and see how dangerous some of these drugs are, then a licensed physician with a medical degree and every resource in the world has zero excuse not to know about it too.

Willful ignorance is not an excuse, not when it's your body, your kids, and your life on the other end of that pin. So when you're deciding whether to trust your own body's intelligence or trust a pill that came out of THAT system, I'll tell you, your body has earned a whole lot more faith than they have.

Until then, here's the one thing I want you to walk away holding on to. Your body is intelligent. Every one of these symptoms is your buddy fighting for you not against you.

Learn to see it that way and you'll never look at a fever or a swollen joint or an ache the same way again. If you have questions about anything you heard on the show, give us a call, 801-292-6662, or you can jump on our website, vitalityandnutrition.com and chat there.

I hope I didn't ruffle too many feathers with this episode, but as I said, gave some additional insight. and help you

see this through a different lens if you weren't already seeing it this way in the first place.

Thank you so much for listening to me. My name is Jared St. Clair and this has been Vitality Radio. Thanks for listen to the Vitaly Radio podcast. If this episode helped you, follow the show, share it with someone, and explore trusted education and resources at vitalitynutrition.com.

See you next time. Hello, everyone. I hope you enjoyed this week's episode of Vitality Radio. Just a reminder that this podcast is for educational purposes only.

This podcast has not been evaluated by the FDA. Thank you.