Introduction to lymphatic health in menopause

Imagine waking up at 3:00 a.m. hot and sweaty, brain fog, feeling heavy, and it blankets your entire morning. And despite having a calorie deficit, despite walking until your feet just run off, you can't seem to get rid of that belly fat. And you've been told it's hormones, it's estrogen, it's menopause, and maybe you're told it's just getting older. But in women's health, we often just focus on the hormone signals. But today, we're going to talk about something that's rarely ever looked at, and it's the highway system that evacuates metabolic waste, clears cellular debris, and it actually allows those hormones to communicate, and it actually brings the raw material to your cells to communicate because your issue may not be just about your hormones, and it may not be just about the fatigue and everything else. It might be a little bit a little bit, it might be a little bit of a plumbing problem.

So today I'm joined by Dr. John Duyard who is an Ayurvedic and research expert bringing the science of Ayurveda together with real science and bringing those things together. Basically taking what we know to be true through thousands of years of use of Ayurvedic medicine to help people get and stay well, but actually bringing it together with this the data that's actually in the medical journals. So, we had a great conversation today about a lot of the things that you don't know that may be contributing to your gut problems, your digestive issues, your heartburn, your visceral fat that won't go away, your brain fog, all kinds of skin issues, rashes, acne. So, this is one you don't want to miss.

So, Dr. Dr. Diard, I I'm excited about this conversation because obviously I've been talking for years if not decades at this point about pmenopause and menopause, but we're going to have a conversation today that I think really gets missed because we think of the hormone signals and we talk about the action of the hormones, but you know, especially from ayurveetic standpoint, there's a whole lot more going on with the body and specifically around the lymphatic system and how important that is to to our health in general, but obviously in that pmenopause and menopause transition. So, so, so tell I want you to tell my listeners a little bit about how Ayurveda looks at the body as a whole because it may be something brand new, brand new to my listeners and then especially looking at how we can look at the lymphatics when we're talking specifically about women's health.

You know what's interesting about the lymphatic system is there's volumes of research in the medical journals that really very little of it if any really is in medical practice. We only think of the lymph when we have cancer or something like that. So there's a lot of information um that we really need to talk about. Now from the Ayurvedic perspective the study of the lymphatic system was the study of longevity. So they had a whole branch this this thousand-year-old system of medicine from kind of ancient India still in practice today. Matter of fact, the all Indian Ayurvedic congress is the largest medical organization in the world. So I mean it's been around for thousands of years. It's still here today in a ma in a major way. Probably something to it.

Um and what I do is I kind of try to find the science to back up this ancient wisdom. So if you have ancient wisdom and modern science, that's a great place for folks to start because science alone really can prove whatever it wants. As we know, coffee can be good, we can be good, we can be bad. I mean, it's so confusing. No one really knows. You can't believe a study anymore. It's just really sad.

How the lymphatic system supports immunity and hormones

But if you have a time-t tested wisdom and the science, I feel like it's a great place to start. So the lymphatic system is such an important system. We talk so little about it and it does three major things and they're major and a lot of little minor things.

The major one is it carries your entire immune system. >> Yeah. >> The second one is it takes out all the trash from every cell of your body. And the third which is important for hormones. It delivers fatty acids to deliver basically the fatty acids which are the precursors to the hormones to every cell of your body. It's for baseline energy. is for the phosphoipid layer of your skin and it's also for hormone production. Plus, it clears the hormones. So, the

hormones that are fat soluble in your body are going to be like estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and cortisol. Those are the fat soluble ones. So, those are the ones that are somewhat dependent on lymphatic flow, right? So, here are some of the things that be an indicator that your lymph system ain't working so great. That would be holding on to water, rings getting tight on your fingers, ankle swelling, um being tired or lethargic because you're not delivering the fatty acids for baseline energy. um food intolerances because if you don't break the food down properly in your stomach and liver and gallbladder and pancreatic enzymes, they will end up the undigested proteins as fast will end up in your lymphatic system altering what's called the gut associated lymph which is also as we know the gut immunity which is 70 to 80% of your immune response. So poor digestion causes lymphatic congestion which is extra weight around your belly is where it first starts. It can come out through the skin associated lymph and create rashes or skin issues. It can go into the brain lymph and lymphatic system which are linked to a host of health concerns including autoimmunity and anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, inflammation, infection because the brain can't get rid of its trash. It doesn't know how many fire trucks to send to an immune event somewhere in your body. So, it sends too many or too little. So it can be it can be you know not getting the trash out of your joints. So your joints start to ache.

You can wake up tired and lethargic. You have to get moving to feel better. These are all drain clogging issues and that's what the lymphatic system is doing.

Taking the trash out carry immunity and delivering fatty acids for energy and hormones and things like that. So there's a whole list of things. is we have a lymph quiz you can take to take the whole quiz and find out, okay, I got check, check, check, check. My lymph's congested, so now we got to fix that.

And then we got to fix the upstream cause of that, which is some breakdown of your digestion, and we got to troubleshoot that, which isn't rocket science.

>> Yeah. You know, it's uh you know, like all those things that you just described, I think women are probably sitting here going, "Check, check, check, check, check, check, check, check, check." you know, because there's there's also the the understanding that we've got changes to vascular system, lymph transport, and everything else because of the changes in estrogen, right? And and all the sex hormones during pmenopause and menopause. Uh so, you know, when we also think of that, so I want to back up now that we sort of identified those pieces.

When we talk about the digestive tract, you know, a lot of people focus and I mean I've been in the functional medicine community for 22 years and they focus kind of on food sensitivities, food allergies, food intolerances. And for women in pmenopause and menopause, we see this sort of accel for a lot of women acceleration of these symptoms.

They're like, I don't understand. And I can tell you after these 22 years of being, you know, in the science trenches of this world, you know, I I'm very much of the mindset, not to say that food sensitivities aren't real, you know, and celiac's not real and all those other things, but I think the appreciation of the function of the digestive tract and how it works completely gets missed because it's always the chicken or the egg. Is it the digestive tract that's not working? Is it the microbiome or is it the food itself? or is it the actual function of digestion that then drives those other drivers? I'm a firm believer that it is a lot of functional issues of digestion. You know, >> I could I couldn't agree with you more.

In fact, I wrote a book called Eat Wheat, which was not necessarily that we should all be eating wheat. It was just the fact that wheat has become a public enemy. Um because we've been told that it causes Alzheimer's and all these concerns and it clearly the science really shows it absolutely doesn't.

However, it is a hard to digest protein, gluten, and so are a lot of the lectins and the grogens and the oxalates and the nightshades and the phytic acids. And we're being told, don't eat, don't eat, don't eat, don't eat. And we end up bubble wrapping the diet, not giving the body any challenge. And when you challenge the digestion, it's or hormesis effect. You know, it makes you stronger. When you our ancestors ate everything, right?

Digestion, food intolerances, and lymph congestion

and they got stronger as a result of they didn't have food intolerances because they were barely you know they they ever whatever they could get their hands on. So when we actually take the hardest to digest foods out of the diet we don't end up with the irritation slight irritation of the intestinal mucosa that triggers gut immunity. our immune response is because we need something to be create an immune system for and those harder to digest lectins and nites they provide that little bit of irritation that little hormetic effect that causes gut immunity. So, when you bubble wrap your diet and take all the food out of your diet, and I get it. If you don't eat feel don't feel good eating wheat, of course, don't eat it. You don't feel good eating anything, don't eat it. But don't just think you fixed it by just taking the food out of the diet. You just took the stressor away. You didn't fix the reason why you can't digest it.

You could do it when you're 18, but now when you're 45 or 50, you can't. Like, what happened? Well, the digestive system broke down. And like you said, there's many reasons for that. There is the food, there is the environment, the pesticides, there's a whole bunch of things. But what ends up happening is our digestion breaks down. And this is a study I'll quote for you said the study showed that if you don't break down the proteins, the gluten and all that, and the fats, the 70 million tons of environmental pollutants we dump in our atmosphere, which filter out everything, they're fat soluble for the most part.

If you don't break down those fats and those proteins, well, they will go incompletely digested into your intestinal tract. And because they're not broken down, they're too big to get into your blood and nourish you. They get uptaken into the lymphatic collecting ducts, which makes you creates issues with gut immunity, which is a big deal. And it also creates extra weight around your belly and hips. And then it goes into your lymphatic systemically makes your skin associated lymph breakdown. You start getting your skin doesn't look the way you'd like it to be. You get rashes. It can go into the brain lymph and that can create brain fog and cognitive issues. As I mentioned, it can go into the general lymph where your joints begin to ache, you feel tired, you just start feeling old. These are all drain clogging issues which start from the upstream issue. So, what we really want to do is troubleshoot. Is it the stomach? Is the bile, the pancreatic, the walled enzyme, the environment of the intestinal lining. Is it the intestinal lining? Is the lymph around the gut? We just troubleshoot those with a simple questionnaire. And then you kind of figure out, oh, this is my problem. and then I fix that and you're you're you can start eating wheat again or whatever it is that you're intolerant to.

>> Well, and I think especially the bile flow gets completely missed in this in this arena. Very very sensitive to estrogen levels through the liver and the and the and the gallbladder. I mean, if you look at just how many people get gallbladder removed, it's like 10 to one female to male. and and so you know women continue to narrow down their diet and then they you know have all these ensuing sort of uh digestive problems and other problems with it you know and and I agree I think we narrow the diet and of course in today's social media world that's very popular like the people that get the most hits and the more virality are the ones that have the most extreme you know sort of stance but I think it makes people very frightened of food and then you know and then it obviously gets narrower and narrower and then they can't tolerate anything and then they feel worse and worse and worse and the nutrient, you know, situation gets worse. So, so if you were to look at somebody having all those problems, a woman having all those problems and they recognize, oh, you know, I can't get my rings off. My feet are swollen by the end of the day. I I have all this going on. How would you sort of help them? And I know you have a questionnaire, and we're going to send everybody that that website so you can find the questionnaire. How do you help your your clients understand sort of how to how to layer this approach to because there's an order to things because that's get missed all the time too. It's like I have to do everything. It's like no, there's an order in which to address these problems.

>> Yeah. So there's two sides of that. One, we have to kind of when we can do this real quick today a little bit um troubleshoot what part of the digestion is broken. But the other piece of the puzzle which is never really talked about, tons of science to back it up, is that the diaphragm is the number one pump for your lymphatic system. So we don't think about the diaphragm as a lymphatic pump, but that's exactly what it is. And studies show with elite athletes, 91% of them did not have a diaphragm relaxing and fully contracting fully. Which means, you know, none of us really do because every time we get a little stressed out, we change how we breathe. That little bit of shallow breathing becomes normal. And then another one comes along and next thing you know, your rib cage, which has one job, squeeze air out, becomes rigid and the diaphragm becomes weaker. And that means you lose your lymphatic pump. And there's 15 studies easy that in the medical journals that show that if you strengthen your

diaphragm, fully contract, fully relax it, something called in maximum inspiratory breathing, you'll reverse the heartburn, the gird, the reflux, the indigestion. Other studies show it lower your blood pressure as fast as a western medication. It's the pump of the cerebral spinal fluid to wash the three pounds of trash and plaque out of your brain every year while you're sleeping at night. So, if you don't have good diaphragmatic function, you're not pumping the trash out. You get brain fog. Things start happening here. The brain doesn't know how many fire trucks to send for an immune event. Problems happen. And then, of course, the diaphragm is the pump of particularly pumping the lymph out of your abdomen, which is why we get all the X-ray around our belly first is the lymphatic congestion. So strengthening the diaphragm is super easy and I can show you like a five minute a day technique to make sure that diaphragm stays turned on for you for the rest of your life because it's critically important.

>> I would love for you to do that because I think you know I was having this conversation actually with uh one of the founders of of one of the little devices kind of like an aura ring. We were talking about heart rate variability and what he he found when he was going through kind of all this additional testing is his heart rate variability wasn't that great and it literally had narrowed down completely on a on a V2 max test and some other additional tests that he did that he was literally never diaphragmatic breathing. You know, it's like, so if your heart rate variability is terrible, this may actually be a sign that you actually are not extending your abdominal wall completely out and fully diaphragmic breathing. And I was, you know, I was like, you know, a great signal because most people have no idea that they're not breathing properly.

[laughter] >> It's true.

Diaphragmatic breathing as a lymph pump

And and the research on this which I thought was really fascinating suggested that it had to be what's called maximum inspiratory breathing which unfortunately and I'm Ayurvedic practitioner and I I study and research and write about praiam techniques incredible research there but very few of any of the prideam techniques actually give you maximum inspiratory breathing and that's the trick right now the trick is the f when you think maximum inspiratory breathing you're thinking >> [gasps and laughter] >> as big a breath as you possibly can. And if you take that kind of upper chest breath, it sort of triggers the fight orflight emergency bear in the woods feeling, which we don't want. So, we have to trick the body to take a maximum breath without activating the fight orflight stress response. And that's what we do. So, what you do is is you would um you would I'm not sure if this is going to be a video or just audio or not, but um we >> do both. We always do both.

>> Okay, cool. So what you would do is you would you would learn to just it's always going to breathe through your nose. You have to breathe long, slow, deep, and maximal. And you would do a first a three-part breath. Breathe in through your nose. Fill your belly only like a Buddha. Stick it out.

>> Mhm. >> And then go to your chest and then the upper chest. And then to take it to maximal, you take little sips there. When you go all the way to the top, you'll feel a little pull under the rib cage. That's your diaphragm going down and your rib cage sort of going up, right? So then you breathe out all the way. The key is also you have to breathe out all the way. Squeeze that abdomen to get every last bit of air out. You do you do get used to doing that three-part breath and then you start using your arms as levers. Reach for the sky. Do the exact same breath. Fill your belly through your nose. Fill your chest through your nose. Reach for the sky as you go into the upper chest. And then take little sips of air through the nose. As you reach, sip, reach, sip.

Your arms are like levers bringing that rib cage up. And you feel a bigger pull under the rib cage. And you do 10 like that. And then you do 10 to the side to get the lateral rib cage. So you breathe in belly, chest, upper chest, sip, sip, sip to max as you laterally bend all the way. And as you sip, sip, sip, sip, you feel a big pull right in here. Do you feel that?

>> Yeah, >> Dr. Betty. So, and then when you breathe out, you go all the way to the other side. So, you do 10 straight up, 10 left, 10 right. Takes you about five minutes. You can do it in front of your computer. Um, and that just frees up that rib cage from your and your diaphragm from being literally stuck and adhesed together. And that's what happens to most of us over time is the rib cage gets tight, the diaphragm gets weaker, they kind of get glued together, the the stomach and all the digestive organs depend on a functional diaphragm.

Because if you're not breathing into the diaphragm, you're fight or flight upper chest, which tells you don't don't don't be ordering pizza when a bear is chasing me, this is not the time to eat. So if you don't have access to a full functioning diaphragm, you don't really get the full neurological activation of a digestive system and you know, and the stomach gets stuck up against the diaphragm, all kinds of burping, heartburn, indigestion. These are all diaphragmatic issues. And when was the last time you went to the doctor for heartburn and they said, "Oh, you can do these breathing techniques. There's great research on if all you got to do is this breathing technique, it'll reverse your heartburn." That never happens. And I feel like some of this is like so is like malpractice because no one tells you that you can do so many of these things yourself just by brea literally breathe away your your heartburn, breathe away your blood pressure, just by getting your diaphragm, the extra belly fat, the brain fog, the cognitive decline, those are pumping issues. And the major pump is your diaphragm. And as we get stressed out and get rigid and we sit in the couch and the rib cage gets pushed down in the diaphragm, pushing it in a downward position, we literally are just making it more and more difficult for us to have full respiratory capacity and efficiency, >> you know, and I'm I'm glad you brought up kind of the fight orflight because it's it's it's the parasympathetic drive that really allows all those things, even just the migrating motor complex.

So even if people are like oh I don't have heartburn I don't have indigestion constipation diarrhea all those things require appropriate sort of migrating motor complex and and parasympathetic drive to work right you know and and function completely >> yeah and I think that's you that's the first step is get your diaphragm turned back on and get that pump going. I mean, you know, studies even show women with breast cancer have more congestion of the anterior diaphragmatic lymph nodes, which is the that that diaphragm is a pump for lymph, which is taking all the trash away from your breast tissue obviously is more lymphatic base. And if you don't have that pump, you know, we can't take the trash out the way we could, and that can create real problems. So, it's so logical and so valuable. And um um I went into a restaurant a few years back and there was a couple of elderly folks in their 90s coming out of this like doors that were swinging and they were really struggling to get out of this restaurant. Their mouths were open. They were really frail. And I looked at them I said, "Man, if someone would have told them they could just breathe away the heartburn, the gird, the reflex, the indigestion, they could breathe away the brain fog and the co age related cognitive decline. They could actually lower their blood pressure by actually breathing. they can get help get their digestion turned back so they digest the food and deliver it the way they were dying when they where they could when they were younger. This is like all hard science and again we just don't talk about it. And then the second part is how do we kind of turn the digestion back on and kind of give some basic info on troubleshooting it which is not also rocket science pretty straightforward.

>> Yeah. You know, so the other thing that I think about too is, you know, if we were to look at just one thing someone can do, so obviously every day they somebody could do that exercise, but even if you're sitting down to eat, if you just did five five of those breaths, you would actually probably improve your entire eating experience and your likelihood for symptoms, right? So it doesn't doesn't require a lot of hard work to just improve that. Um, so so let's let's now kind of move. So we talked a little bit about breathing and moving the lymph. I want to talk about kind of the physicality of the body because you know the the reality is in the western world we don't move very much. You know, exercise is people's greatest form of punishment for whatever they did the day before, if they do it at all, right? We spend hours, I mean, I spend hours sitting at the desk and I have to get up and do, you know, do things to move around. But our lymphatic doesn't have a pump like the heart. And, you know, Ayurvedic medicine, um, ayurveetic principles there, there's an important part of the overall system to respect and understand that the body is a moving organism and that we need to support it. So what are some things that people can do that helps move the lymph and even the fascia which I want to get into a little bit too because that gets missed in the conversation.

>> Yeah. So if I were to give folks one thing to do would be clearly the most important thing is what Ayurveda calls pavali which means take a walk after your meal. The impact of the food going through your arteries, particularly in your heart. The most damage and irritation happens after a meal. So if we go eat a meal and then go plop on the couch and sit in that slouch position, oh my god, that is so devastating to the cardiovascular system. But if you get up and eat the eat the meal in a relaxed way, you could even rest for a while or talk for a while. You could do the dishes and before you go plop on the couch, just take the clicker if you can't go outside and just march for 15 minutes. With the clicker in hand, you could like find the Netflix thing you're looking at, whatever. But I'm just saying just move for 15 minutes. And what that will do is if you're breathing through your nose properly as well, like I was doing like we're saying, you'll you'll empty you'll increase how quickly the food leaves your stomach so it doesn't go up against your diaphragm.

It'll lower your blood sugar spikes, which are dramatically inflammatory for your gut.

Walking after meals and moving the fascia

It'll lower your blood pressure. Um, it'll take all the stress off your cardiovascular system, which is huge, which is why so many people get heart attacks after a really big late dinner. They go to sleep when they wake up with a heart attack, middle of night, and game over. It's really, really a game changer to just before you sit down on the couch, just move for 15 minutes.

It's such a powerful tool and that of course will get your lymphatic system moving which is also taking a lot of the trash out after digestion helping your circulatory system really function. It's one thing folks can do which is a dramatic key >> you know and the other thing we have solid research showing that that same action will lower postprandial or posteating blood sugar almost by half right because you're using it as you're moving so even if somebody's blood sugar is running a little bit high their A1C might be getting a little bit higher like that is that also has a huge metabolic effect as well uh you know so so obviously lymphatic only pumps when we move so The more sedentary we are, the worse the lymphatic system is is at functioning. Let's talk a little bit about fashca, too, because our lymphatics run through fashcia and and we don't probably treat our body nice enough and do things to also support our fascia.

>> Yeah. So, there's um your your your fascia is like that saran wrap that wraps every organ, every muscle, every tissue in your body. And that actually that has a drainage system called interstitial fluid which are little tubulars which drain into the lymphatic system. So the fascia has a direct lymphatic drainage system which is supported by movement. However, if you have poor digestion and you keep dumping undigested proteins and fats into the lymphatic system, well then you're going to begin to start having some of that lymphatic congestion. And of course that's why yoga was created thousands of years ago to actually use breathing. You know in that there's an article that I wrote based on these exercises I gave you the harm stuff I just taught you and it's called the best diaphragmatic breathing exercises. And the third video in that article was actually to do some very simple yoga postures like go into a twist and then do belly chest upper chest sip sip sip to max flip it the other way. belly. It's like you're ringing out the rib cage, the diaphragm, the stomach, the upper digestive organs.

And it's there's so much science to show that this actually works. And you don't have to do anything really major or like I'm not a yogi by any stretch. I'm not super flexible, but doing like child's pose and doing the slow maximal breathing and then a sphinx or a cobra and then flip over to a bridge and then and then do a gent throw one leg over and do a twist in the other direction and all of a sudden you start to create some elasticity that you didn't have.

And that's so critical for the fascia, you know, and the lymphatic system and of course the delivery of fats as hormonal precursors because if you don't have the delivery of lympho lymph system delivering fats, you're not going to actually have the hormones, the fatty acids to make the hormones with. But we go to the doctor and they say, "Oh, your hormones are low. We just give you hormones." And I think that's fine, but don't you think the first step should be like, why is your body not making its hormones? You we're going into menopause. Your ovaries are retiring.

We're opening up a new manufacturing center in Mexico. They don't really know what they're doing down there. So, we're going to have to help them. And that's your skin and your liver are now trying to make hormones. So, they need two things. They need the delivery of fatty acids, which are the precursors for the fat soluble hormones. And they also sometimes need um all the ingredients in the pantry to make the the bake to bake the goods, right? You need to have, you know, certain hormonal precursors. And that's what Ayurveda also delivers with some very simple whole herbs or foods to make sure that's there. And then more often than not, and if the the the other piece of the puzzle is the lymph, there's a there's a lymphatic drainage from the reproductive system. And if that's compromised, again, you're simply not going to make those hormones. So, they're going to go to the doctor and say, "Oh, you're low, which is the gas tank says low. Let's fill it up." We never ask the question why, and we just go right to the hormones. And maybe they're good, and maybe they're bad. I don't think anyone really knows. There's science on both sides of that aisle. Um, but whatever you take a hormone, by definition, it means you're g it's going to block your production. So that's not necessarily what folks really want. I mean, they want the longevity benefit of the hormone, but we also kind of want to be able to not become dependent on a pill or a powder, which is

unfortunately the way we do it in Western medicine today. So that's what makes so much logical sense. Let's give that a go first. And if that doesn't work and you can't, then yeah, of course, do the bio identical hormones. But do we have to start by just doing the job for the body? Why don't we just try to get the body to do the job? Makes more sense.

Yeah, you know, I it's it's interesting that you kind of bring that up because the average age in Western world is about 51 for menopause. Some people go earlier like I was about 48. You know, some I have a woman that's 58 and got and it's like when is this going to end?

But you know the uh app flow did a study and I can't remember if it was John Hopkins uh but they did a joint study survey of of their users and their users are predominantly women who are not in that kind of pmenopausal menopausal state but are more of your um fertility and just period tracking. And what they found that a good third of the women that answered that study now granted probably because they were having issues were already having symptoms that are associated with pmenopause and menopause. So we're talking 35 years old and you know some of that could be yes but it again you look at it and you go well why you know stress response all of the things that we're talking about here I think that's why we're seeing you know toxins in our environment all kinds of things we're seeing like younger and younger women going through kind of early ovarian failure or early ovarian sort of shutdown that may or may not need to be there and I so I agree you know because we get contacted a lot by very young women I'm like oh ho Oh, hold on a minute. Let's figure out what's going on first. Right.

>> You're so right. You know, I I experienced that in my own practice where many many years ago, probably 20 years ago or so. I started noticing that women with, you know, PMS symptoms which are, you know, breast swelling or tenderness or holding on to water, you know, skin breaking out or, you know, anxiety and, you know, stress related, you know, issues. And all those symptoms that I was seeing, they looked exactly like lymphatic congestive issues. Right?

So I went into the medical journals and I found out that there's actually a a premenstrual lymphatic drainage pump that pumps not pump but drainage lymphatic system that drains from ovulation to the beginning of your flow.

The lymphatic system is taking some of the trash away waste away from the reproductive system like a premenstrual detox process. So the onus of menration doesn't only flow during those four days. The body helps kind of predtoxify the system through the lymph. And if you're dumping that lymph into an already congested lymphatic system, it's going to create pressure. Breast will swell, become tender, you'll break out, you get more anxiety and worry. And so I started giving women o an herb called menista which is the classic ayurvedic herb for lymph and in like 50 to 70% of the time they all got better. So I wrote an article on my website called it may not be hormonal it might be lymph and we should evaluate that first before we just go give you hormones. And it was that was a long time ago.

Hormones, menopause, and why root causes matter

Now I written wrote an article recently about all the volumes of research linking hormone related issues to congestion of the lymph and now it's like again buried in the medical journal not in medical practice but it's really there and that's what I wrote about say hey you know what we really should take a better look at this because there's good science to back it up they've been doing it for thousands of years understanding it that way why don't we you know take a look at that >> yeah and so I want to talk a little bit about manual therapies because I think this also gets missed is a lot of people go, "Oh, well, I go get massage or I get this or I get that." But people are often doing deeper tissue things that actually can damage the lymph that actually do not help it. Talk a little bit about that and and then also a little bit about kind of the different other therapies people can use whether it's dry brushing and other things to sort of stimulate their natural function.

>> So, you're right. You know, there's deep tissue massage, which of course, well, any massage is going to help your lymphatic system. But the skin associated lymph, which is right under your skin, and that's underneath there, it's carrying your immune system. So, if you get bit by a mosquito, then that little red dot on your skin, there's an immune army, which is your skin associated lymph right under there. And that keeps you from basically dying from that mosquito because who knows what's on that little needle that they bite you with, right? So that's the skin

associated lymph taking out that trash and that's that's actually moved by very gentle lymphatic movement. So they do that with a very special technique. Now in Ayurveda they actually use a skin brushing technique with with raw silk gloves and they would do a vigorous massage going back to the heart and that would actually create two things. static electricity where you actually get zapped sometimes when you touch something and also ozone according to the science. And when back in the 1920s when all the health spas started coming up, they had static electricity clinics in America where you go get zaps and that was designed to create alkalinity and move your lymphatic system. Well, here we had thousands of years ago, they actually created a technique to actually create to support that skin associated lymph by actually creating static electricity with a raw silk glove and also studies show it also increases ozone which is also a natural lymphatic mover. So in Ayurveda it's called garana gloves and you take these gloves and you just give yourself a dry brush massage or or dry brushing would actually work that's going to be more aggressive not to create the static electricity maybe as much. Um, but it's just interesting how this ancient wisdom really understood that aspect of it. And then of course any type of movement like the sun salutation, you've probably all heard of that, you know, where you're doing flexion, extension with coordinated breathing. Um, that's powerful, you know, because that's when your diaphragm is engaged, which is your lymph pump as you're extending and as you're flexing. You know, critically important that we actually do that somewhat on a regular basis. Even if you're older and you can't do it, we have a chair version of that which is really easy. So, it's like it's something that everybody should coordinate breathing and moving because that's that's the lymphatic pump, you know, in action.

>> I'm glad. Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely. So, tell me um so let's talk one last thing about kind of visceral fat accumulation. So, we've sort of danced around that conversation.

Um and so the abdominal fat and other things and let's sort of circle back to that and the relationship with the lymphatics also because what we often see is you can get almost kind of toxic fat. You get fat fat that's basically holding the toxins and you've got the faucia around it and the lymphatic that can't move it. And so I think a a lot of women experience these sort of symptoms but they don't realize that that the lymphatics are probably one of the primary players here.

>> Yeah. You know I think there's two sides to that equation. You if you have lymphatic congestion which would be cellulite extra belly fat weight around your hips that's clearly lymphatic congestion. Um so you have to decongest your lymphatic system. um things like you know herbs and like uh berries are really cool for that because they don't get digested in the small intestine.

They go all the way 95% of them go all the way to your gut and they actually support the integrity of the gut associated lymph which is where it all starts. That's that lymph around your belly is the lion share of the lymph in your body. So those those berries are so critical for lymph even though they're water soluble and they absorb into your blood. They don't even go into your lymph. They actually create a powerful support for the first part of the lymphatic system which is around your gut which is critically important. So again we want to decongest the lymph with yoga and breathing and alkaline foods and you know anything that would you know dye your skin red black or blue like a berry or a cherry or a beetle or a pomegranate or or anything cranberries that would make a white shirt red.

that's going to be a lymphatic mover for you. Uh green foods will be a lymphatic from you. Hydration is a lymphatic mover. Breathing through your nose as you exercise activates the lymphatic.

That was my first book, Body Mind Sport, which we did research on nose versus mouth breathing. And that's a powerful lymphatic move. When you go for a walk, just breathe through your nose. And really simple technique um is to count how many steps you take for your inhalation through your nose and how many steps you take for the exhalation through your nose. And your goal when you're just going for a regular walk, walking your dog is 10 steps on your inhalation and 15 to 20 steps for your exhalation. You do that, you're going to start activating parasympathetic dominance. you're going to start moving your lymphatic system in a bigger, deeper way because you're forcing your diaphragm to fully contract and fully relax. So, those are some really simple ways to make sure that that happens.

>> Yeah. So basically the the rundown here ladies is if you're frustrated with your abdominal belly fat, yes, diet,

exercise, fiber, all of those things play into it, but the other side of it is the trash collection and excretion has to be working in order for your body to actually get rid of some of that fat as well, right? So you have to do the lymphatic support as well.

>> Yeah. And then troubleshoot the digestion. And if you have indigestion or heartburn or you know bloating or gas or that's your digestion then obviously you're not delivering the food in a in a properly prepared way. So then all the trash that's not properly digested goes to your lymph and that's going to create extra weight around your belly and hips.

It's really not complicated. It's really that simple. There's harsh science to back what I just said which is like stupidly simple but we just never hear that. We say oh take digestive enzyme do the digestion for you. Sure, if you need them, but why don't we try to get because whenever you take the enzymes, the body stops again, goes on welfare, says, "Why bother making it my own? Now I'm dependent on a new pillar of powder." These are not long-term strategies. They're short-term strategies for symptoms, not to get you back on track. And that's really the ult that was the goal of traditional systems of medicine to help people get well and be well and not do it for them with a pillar of powder that they that certain people make a lot of money on selling all the time for the rest of your life.

You get now you go on a medication, you don't ever get off of it. That's the new new that's the new rule, right? When I was a kid, you go to the doctor, you get sick, you get something for the medicine, you get on, get better, get off. Now, that's all not the way it goes. Now, you get on a medicine for the rest of your life. It's not it's not the right way to do it. We can do way better than that.

>> Yeah. No, I agree. I agree. and and like you said, you know, when we look at particularly permenopause and menopausal women, there's, you know, hormone receptors in the gut, that was a big part of my PhD research. So, we get all of these things that sort of compound on top of each other. But again, it's always the what I call the unsexy sort of cornerstones that we have to sort of address before we start just pulling out every stop because a lot of people do go on hormone replacement and other things and they're not feeling better or it's not working the way they want to and it's because those cornerstones probably haven't been addressed along with it.

So, I agree. So, you've got some quizzes and obviously a an incredible amount of of blogs and articles and other things that we can point my listeners to because I'd love to do that. Tell me tell tell my listeners how we can how we can find out more.

>> Yeah. So to get some of those those quizzes that everybody should take first off um my website is lifespa.

Dry brushing, visceral fat, and practical lymph support

com lifespa.com and there um on the banner right on the homepage it says new here start here. If you click on that it'll take you to a page where has all those quizzes has the lymphatic quiz, the digestive health quiz to troubleshoot what part of your digestion is broken. uh your body type quiz and all the kind of get started information that you need is literally right there and that's at lifestyle.com and you can also just like search up your health concern. We have literally over 1500 articles with all ancient wisdom and the modern science to back it up. We really done the research to kind of put those two together and all those articles are for free. So just, you know, kind of just geek out in there and find out what might be underlying the underlying cause of what concerns you.

And then of course we have an aggravated store. I've been formulating aggravated herbs for go almost 40 years now. Um so um that's also available for you guys.

And we've got a newsletter you can sign up and get the newest latest research all which I'm constantly digging in there. There's still so much more research in the medical journals that explains these ancient practices that I haven't written about. It's sort of mindboggling to me that I'm still writing about these things. You think, but there's just so much research that nobody knows about. None of us in practice. And that's kind of what I try to bring.

>> Yeah. You know, it's because nobody goes to a doctor's office with a journal and sits down and says, "Can I educate you on what just came out?" It's the only time that happens is a drug rep bringing lunch. [laughter] I'm just

being honest.

>> And they're bringing med they're bringing not research. I mean, they're bringing research on their drugs, not research on how you can do it. I mean, that's the part that makes me really sad is that the med the pharmaceutical companies are really running the show now. And doctors don't have time to read medical journals. They don't really know. And they just, you know, I mean, melatonin, like for example, you can buy it in the grocery store.

If you ever have, if anybody ever has cancer, you should type in PubMed, which is the research med, and then type in melatonin, and then type in the type of cancer that you have. Just that simple.

And watch what happens. Volumes and volumes of research on melatonin for cancer. And none of it's in medical practice. I've never had an I treat a lot of cancer patients. I've never had an oncologist ever tell their patients that they can supplement their chemotherapy with melatonin because it just never happens. And again, it's because the research you're going to read is mindboggling. I did a podcast interview with a melatona researcher and the research is off the charts. But here again, you know, never never in medical practice. I feel like it's just malpractice. were just, you know, there's just they're blinded to what how we can get the body to help itself.

>> No, I Yeah. No, I agree. It's it's actually I had an entire podcast on what informed consent really means. And a big part of it is is every drug every drug insert says when diet and lifestyle no longer works. I'm like, so informed consent means that you must have a conversation with your provider that talks through the hundred other ways that you could take care of whatever it is you've got going on that is not the drug, is not the procedure, is not the medical device. you know, and in some cases maybe there is less stuff, but most of the time there's other there's other avenues to treat, but that's getting skipped over. So, most people are never getting informed consent.

>> Yeah. And of course, we're not saying that drugs are all bad by any stretch. They say lives are really valuable. It's just that that um there's a time and a place where um where we have the luxury and the room to rope to actually try something ourselves before we have to go on a medication. Just like it says in the in the in the, you know, in the drug inserts, it says, you know, do the the the lifestyle and get through all that first and then take the medication. But we seem to jump that gun a little bit too quickly sometimes.

>> No, I agree. I agree. Well, Dr. Gard, this has been a great conversation. We were talking earlier. I actually we met, but it's been like 25 years ago. And actually you transformed my uh running and cycling because we were talking about no nasal breathing and I was lamenting that I was having a hard time improving my V2 max and my speed and you were like breathe through your nose exclusively and it was like okay so I slowed down to then speed up. So >> yeah that's a whole another discussion we didn't even get there about the value of that what that actually does. We post some studies on that. It's pretty amazing.

>> Yeah. Yeah it was really really amazing. So, so thank you so much for being on and everybody definitely go to Dr. Dillyard's website. Give it again. It's lifespa.

>> Lifespa.com. Yeah, >> lifespa.com. Check it out. And for everybody that is watching this on YouTube, don't forget to subscribe and leave a comment because we love comments. And if there's something you would love us to talk about on Menopause Mastery, I would love that. And if you happen to be listening on your favorite podcast platform, don't forget to give us a five-star review. And thank you so much. And we'll be back next week.