The NAD Connection: How to Support Energy, Metabolism & Healthy Aging for Women Transcript

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Intro to NAD and ATP

Our body is producing ATP, and we use ATP for energy, so our cells can do essentially what they need to do, okay? In that process of producing ATP, NAD is a key factor in there.

We need N. A. D. in order to produce that ATP. As we get older, nad levels decline, though our body's not as efficient to make that ATP that all of our cells need to function properly.

It can be a result of age, it can also be result our lifestyles, that could be the result the diets that we're following, the environment, It happens, right?

What can we do? We can help support healthy NAD levels by giving our body the substrates it needs to produce more NADA. Do you feel like your hormones have turned against you?

Trust us, you're not alone. We're Dr. Serena and Dr Heidi and on Hormone Heroines we explore all the root causes that are behind hormone imbalances and we teach you how to thrive through them.

Join us for real talk, expert tips and even a few laughs. Hello and welcome back to Hormone Heroines. Today we're going to be talking about NAD and supporting your metabolic health and energy and cellular health.

today we are going be taking to Lauren Maneker who is a registered dietitian. She's a women's health registered dietician expert and Niagen Bioscience partner.

Lauren is an award-winning registered Dieticians, three-time author and speaker with over 22 years of experience making evidence-based nutrition practical and approachable.

Welcome, Lauren. How are you today? I am well. Thank you for having me. Great. We're very excited to talk about it today, so let's just dive right in.

To start, why don't you introduce yourself and share a little bit about your background as a registered dietitian and your work in women's health? Sure.

So thank you, for that lovely introduction. You've covered a lot of it. I have been a Registered Dietitians since 2004. And I have worked in many different areas.

I started working in inpatient in the hospital. And right from the start, I was working with the Women's Health Focus, working In the NICU. I was Working with women in high-risk pregnancy, things that cover the gamut.

From there, I worked In a perinatologist office, outpatient. And from there went more into industry, helping with Nutrition products that focus on maternal health and infant nutrition.

So got to see that side of things.

Lauren Manakeru2019s Background in Womenu2019s Health

And right now, my focus is, again, women's health, but more on the communication sides, translating the information in a way that people will understand and hopefully pay attention to.

You know, there's a lot of noise out there, and unfortunately, I feel like Women can be targeted for things that we

don't always need. Um, you know, there's many stages in our lives that are very emotional.

You know? If you're trying to have a baby that can. Vulnerable stage of life, perimenopause, and I. see some people trying to take advantage of that, sometimes very successfully.

So I try and be that voice of reason to share what actually has science behind it. Yes, that is such a great thing to do, especially I feel like in this day and age with all the longevity practices and all these things we're trying optimize our health, a lot of the research is unfortunately just done on men and doesn't always translate to women.

So having your voice out there to help women navigate all of that and get their best care is super great. Yes. And really needed. Men or mice. Which isn't exactly us.

Our bodies work very differently. I don't know if people know that, but our bodies are very different than men's and mice's. We're not just big mice, Yeah.

So on that note, let's really talk about how some of these things specifically apply to women. Many listeners might not be familiar with NAD and how that can affect body or how it affects body.

Can you explain what it is and why it's so important for cellular energy and overall health? And if you can frame it for women, that would be great. Sure.

This is the part where my job's tricky because I'm trying to make high school biochemistry, something that people want to listen to on their own free time.

So we all took these anatomy and physiology classes. Thinking back to the Krebs cycle and producing ATP. Hopefully this is ringing bells for people. I'm not getting into the whole crap cycle.

Well, I'll cry. Yeah, please don't. That gives me bad PTSD. Everyone's going to have flashbacks of when they were in high school. Okay. So high level, we're trying, our body is producing ATP and we use ATP for energy.

Our cells can do essentially what they need to do. In that process of producing NAD is a key factor in there. We need N. A. D. in order to produce that ATP.

Okay. So as we get older, N-A-D levels decline. Our body is not as efficient to make that A-T-P that all of our cells need to function properly. That can be a result of age.

It can also be result our lifestyles. That could be your result the diets that we're following the environment. What can we do? We can help support healthy NAD levels by giving our body the substrates it needs to produce more N. A. D.

So hopefully I covered it. We need that N A. D. To produce ATP. ATP helps the cells do what they need to do throughout the entire body. So you did kind of touch on that the levels go down as we age.

Can you go a little bit more into that and why is that so relevant for women's health? Sure. Well, because that NAD is essential to help keep ourselves healthy throughout our body if our cells are not producing ATP.

What NAD Is and Why It Matters

effectively, then it can impact so many aspects of our health. I focus a lot on reproductive health, so I automatically think about our, our egg health are you have healthy eggs that are doing what we, if we want to get pregnant to do what want them to.

It takes a lotta energy. So our eggs need that ATP in order to take this egg and go through all of the steps to produce a baby. So if our NAD levels are lower, our bodies may have a harder time.

In the case of the egg, having the eggs do what we are hoping that it will do. Right. Being viable enough to actually produce them a viable pregnancy.

Exactly. Yes. So metabolic health is a really big topic right now. How does NAD play a role in metabolism and energy production in the body beyond just egg production, but also just talking about ovarian health and how there's lots of mitochondria or energy needs in that aspect and that can affect as we age as well.

So again, in every aspect of our cells, we We need our metabolic health to be as optimal as possible. So you mentioned mitochondria. That's another word that I think triggers some people from high school.

I was trying to avoid it, but here we are, which actually is fair because that comes up a lot too, especially on social media. The mitochondrion is the powerhouse of the cell.

this is happening, the ATP production where the NAD is playing into that ATP, production is all happening in that mitochondria. So we want to keep the mitochondrial health as optimal as we can in order, again, for all of our cells to do what it needs to.

I mean, we talk about ovarian health, and we talked about things in the world, but also things like even our skin health. We have cells in our skin. We want to make sure that those cells are functioning as optimally as possible, our brain.

I mean, every single aspect of our health depends on metabolic health and cellular health. Right. And I mean, so basically what you're saying is NAD, because it helps with the ATP production in the mitochondria, which is the powerhouse of the cell, is helping all of metabolism throughout the body because, it's making those mitochondrial be able to work like they need to because its basically giving it the fuel that it needs to.

Absolutely. Yes. It's giving the energy that is needs in order to do what we're hoping that will do. And also, I think it's important to point out to listeners and all over really, mitochondria and metabolic health happens everywhere in the body.

I feel like a lot of times when we say metabolic, we're solely thinking about our weight or how you know, how we burn our food and how that turns into either like fat or muscle.

But like you were just saying, metabolic health happens everywhere in the body and that impacts our brain health, our ovarian health our skin health. Like you're just.

So let's kind of dive into the next aspect of how can support these pathways better. Beyond supplementation, what lifestyle factors like nutrition, sleep, stress management can help support healthy NAD levels?

Sure. So I'm glad you asked that because we can't just take a supplement and hope for the best. We do have to pair smart supplementations with lifestyle choices.

NAD, Metabolism, and Womenu2019s Health

And, you know, some of this advice people have heard before. It's more of a matter of actually getting people to do it. Yeah, that is the hardest thing, and it's hard for us as well.

Absolutely. But sometimes all it takes is one motivating factor in order for people actually take those steps. So things like sleep, right? You don't need a master's degree to know that we need seven to eight hours of sleep every night in to support our health in so many ways, in absolutely so ways.

We know this. but we're not always doing it. So sometimes when we hear something like proper sleep supports our metabolic health, that might be motivating enough to get someone to actually practice proper sleeping hygiene.

With all that being said, sleep, obviously, I think is incredibly important. And taking the steps to support sleep. Not

just saying I'm gonna get eight hours of sleep like actually go to bed at a proper time when you know that you have to wake up at six in the morning the next day.

Turn those screens off, limit or avoid your alcohol, stop caffeine before I say noon. I said the screens, I still enjoy magnesium glycanate. And I know that was trendy and now we're not talking about it as much, but I very much enjoy it.

Yeah, you too. It's part of my routine. We don't get enough in our food. Like our soil is depleted. So there are a lot of supplements that we do need to take because we don' get it from food, even if you eat an all organic healthy you know, diet.

It's still, you're not getting enough. I don't think I've encountered one person who is consuming enough magnesium in their diet So prioritizing that, right?

Like not just making these goals. So in terms of diet, we want to eat the fruits and veggies. We want eat whole grains, lean proteins. Those fatty fish, I think are incredibly important.

As Americans, were not consuming the recommended servings of those oily fish. Salmon, mackerel, sardines. Yeah. Enough healthy omegas, basically. We're trying to get those omagas and the other nutrients too.

Speaking of supplements, I encounter people that are like, "I'm just going to take an omega-3 supplement." But there's data showing that you're not getting the same benefits by taking the omega as you are by actually eating the fish because of that nutrient matrix.

So I'm very much pro the food first and then the supplements as a plan B. Yeah. exercise. There are just so many things that play into it, and you can't just, I mean, you could choose one or two if you're trying to kind of revamp your life, but you just can say, all right, i'm going to start eating fruits and vegetables, then neglect everything else.

They all go hand in hand, so we really do need to prioritize all of those. And even simple things like when you're waking up in the morning, go get some sunlight.

Don't wake up and go straight on your computer. Move your body and get a little bit of sunlight, we're talking 10 minutes a day, can really have a profound effect on our health.

Yeah. Definitely. And I mean, I know that like, you know, in perimenopause and postmenopausal especially, it's really important to actually focus on these things.

I think when we're younger, we just push through and we shouldn't. We should not. So you're young, don't do that. But, obviously it is too late for me in that earlier part, but now I'm really trying to focus like I've never been good at stress management ever.

Like I just lived a very busy life. If I am a typing personality, just go, go go. But now I'm actually trying to do like in the mornings, I do, you know, 10 to 15 minutes of Tai Chi because it is a body movement, but it gets me limber.

It gets moving. And it's not like a harsh workout that's going to, spike my cortisol. I'll do a like five to 10 minutes meditation that I really try really hard to.

But I've not got at it yet. So. But like trying to do those things because sleep is hard in perimenopause and postmenopausal.

Lifestyle Habits That Support NAD

It's always disrupted by hormones. I mean, obviously, you know, HRT is great and it can help, but sometimes you still have those issues, plus all the stress with life, everything.

You've got to try to get your best to all those thing in, especially in period menopas and menopsause because you're having all of the hormone issues as well.

Absolutely, yeah. And the aging, so are NADs going down naturally anyways? The NAD going down naturally, there's the hormonal shift. I mean, lifestyle, I'm 45 years old, and I smack in the middle of my perimenopausal journey.

Myself and all of friends, There's a lot going on in our lives, too. There is a lots of outside stress. A lot of us have aging parents and younger children.

So that's some major factor as well that we can't just overlook. And there is there a a lo going. Things that are happening in out body that unfortunately we're not always given a heads up about before they happen.

So it's a little surprising and then you're not really sure what to do. Even just weight distribution when you are entering this life stage because of the changes in our hormones.

It happens. There's nothing wrong with you, but being aware of it and being equipped is just empowering and something that I think we're missing a lot of.

Yeah. Well, and fatigue is, is very big in perimenopause and post-menopausal especially, even if you are on great hormone levels. And I, I attribute it to mitochondrial health because our mitochondria health goes down and could be because NAD is going down.

I mean, probably from a lot of factors, right? But I myself take niagen, i've taken it for over a year now and I love it. Um, And it helps me with my energy levels, can you explain to our audience what niogen is and how it helped to support NAAD levels in our body?

Yes. So Niagen is a patented form of NR. NR is precursor for making that NAD. And remember, NADA is needed to produce that ATP. I really think the Krebs cycle needs like a new marketing person because these are all just like really acronym after acronym.

It's hard to. Yeah. As a reminder, I like to think of it as the NED can be a bottleneck. for producing that ATP. If your body doesn't have adequate amounts of that NAD, you're not going to produce enough ATP for yourselves to do, to function properly.

So NR, As I mentioned before, I'm repeating on purpose because of all these letters, NR is a precursor for NAD. So you take the niogen, which is the patented form of NR, and then your body uses that NR to make NADA.

So then your NAD levels, data shows this, your NA levels go up. So, then, you're body can use that NADA to produce that ATP. The challenge is there are some supplements, or there ARE supplements on the market that are NAAD, which intuitively makes sense, right?

Your NNA levels goes down just like if you have low levels of vitamin D, You'll take vitamin to have those levels go higher. But the same truth doesn't hold when we're looking at NAD.

If you take N. A. D., that doesn' mean that your N A. D., cellular N a.d. levels will go up. And the reason why is because N ad is actually really big. So follow me here.

Tell and I would love to know your opinion if this makes sense to you. I think of this as you're living in a New York apartment, those teeny tiny apartments in New york.

You want a new couch. So you buy a couch, a fully assembled couch. And then you're trying to get it through your door and it's not getting in. So, you can't use that couch in your apartment where you want it because it is too big to go in the door.

Versus, You buy couch and they give you all the pieces. You bring all of the peices through the doors and then assemble the couch inside your appartment and you could use it the way you wanted.

So NAD is that couch that you're buying before you bring it in. It sounds great, makes sense, but you can't use it the way you want to. The NR are the little IKEA pieces that your bringing into your door to put together.

That's exactly what I was picturing when you were talking about unassembled. I'm like, it's an IKEA couch. Yup, its an Ikea couch, in my opinion, better quality than the IKEA Couch.

Well, and to be fair, I feel there's a lot of things that it is better to take the precursors for things. So like glutathione is one of the great detoxers of our body.

And you can take glutothione. I don't see as good of detoxing with it as I do when I have people take NAC, which is the pre-cursor to glutathiol. So when your body actually does the work to make these things that are like powerhouses of our body, it seems to work a lot better anyways.

Yeah. So I definitely like, but I love your analogy. Thank you. And I like your example too. Okay, so diving deeper into how energy is boosted. There's a lot of information online about metabolism and boosting energy.

Niagen, NR, and Supplement Misconceptions

What are some common misconceptions you see, especially among women? I mean, we just talked about how you can't always just take the thing like the fully assembled couch to get the benefit.

Sometimes you need those precursors. So I think that's one major misconception out there. I think another misconception is, and I blame social media for this, is that there is one thing that you need that is going to make a world of a difference.

And it just doesn't exist. I mean, I love NR, but you cannot just pick one. You have to take a holistic approach to it. So yes, NR supplementation to support those NAD levels, absolutely love it, but also have a salad once in a while, maybe an apple might help.

Go for a walk outside. Have some cheese or have some veggies. I mean, I do always try to tell people you are not going to out supplement a healthy lifestyle.

Absolutely. That being said, we also should maybe talk a little bit about, you said that niagen is a patented form of NR. What makes it different or better?

Because like I said you can't out supplement a healthy lifestyle, but also not all supplements are created equal. So what makes niogen the better version of what's available?

So, what make me comfortable taking it is there are actually studies that focus on these specific form versus there's other ingredients out there that is in my mind, the world nebulous is coming to mind.

I don't know if it's really applicable. But the NR, the niagen form of Nr is patented, it's studied. It has been shown to increase NID levels. And I just feel like if you're investing in these supplements and taking the time to take it, why not take the one that has shown in clinical data to actually do what we're hoping that it will do?

Well, and to be fair, the clinical data was there were women in the study, just so you know. Yes, eight plus for that. Not just mice and men. There were woman.

I'll admit, once in a while I watch. real housewives, please don't judge me. But you're seeing a lot of, you know, we're talking about the supplements, but also there's a big trend doing IV, getting IVs to get nutrition.

And it seems to be very hot to Get NAD in an IV bag. We actually have people call our clinic to see if we do that. I

was like, no. Yeah. So I go by the same rule of If you're trying to increase your NAD levels, but you want to go the IV route versus a pill, there is NR that you could get to help support those NID levels.

Okay. automatically pull something in that your body may not be using appropriately or in the right area, which is why IVs, in our opinion, aren't always the best option.

There are certain things they are. For iron, it's great. Iron sucrose is great for people who are super anemic or iron deficient anemia. It's, great because that's where it needs to go to be used.

But yeah, there's definitely a lot of things that we do. You can have the same exact supplement, but in different forms like, you know, IV versus you know, sublingual versus oral versus injection, and they're all completely different.

They're the same exact thing, but they are all different depending on how you put them in your body. Yeah. I think there's a reason why influencers are called influencers.

People are very influenced with what they see. And to be fair, Most people don't know where to even look to get the information to verify if what they're doing is appropriate for them.

I mean, of course, they could go speak with a health care provider, but that's sometimes a barrier as well. So then we're seeing people doing these IVs or taking these supplements that probably aren't really doing that much for then or not doing as much as what their hoping that it would do.

Right. Okay. So for women looking to support their metabolic health and energy as they age, which you and I are pretty, I'm 46, so we're pretty much the same part.

What are some few practical habits or strategies you recommend starting with so that, you know, we can build upon them? So just a few that we could start with and then build up to getting the whole thing.

Yes. So I think the most underrated thing that people can do, even in the colder months, is to get 10 minutes of sunshine in morning. I thinks it gets your body going.

It tells your bodies that it is daytime, it's morning time, and it helps reset your circadian rhythm. So hopefully it will help you sleep at night because that sleep, as we said before, can be a huge challenge.

doesn't have to be a whole event just if you're drinking coffee in the morning drink your coffee outside or at the very least by a window if it's way too cold those sad lamps can be fantastic so that's That's a very, in my opinion, a, very achievable thing for people to do.

It costs zero dollars to go outside and get some sunshine. Although we do live in the Northwest, so I will tell you nine months out of the year, there is no sunshine in it.

Okay. So there are some lights. I am very spoiled in South Carolina, I'm in a tank top right now. And then just taking small steps to include more of those fruits and veggies, it sounds so basic and we've been hearing it since we were five years old, but there's something to it.

Practical Tips for Energy and Healthy Aging

It's not just the vitamin C that we're getting or those micronutrients that hear so much about it, also those plant compounds that is They have supplements for them, but I just don't think that they do what it does when you're getting it from the food.

Also just getting the nutrient matrix, there's really something to be said for that too. So if there is any opportunity to like chop up some celery if you're making tuna salad.

It's so underrated and it can really have a profound impact on your health. And then moving your body. Again, we don't have to do like the $50 Pilates classes, although I do love them.

Come in at walks, go call a friend. If you have friend around the corner and you are both talking on the phone, I know people of a certain age don' t talk on phone.

I Sometimes I'm like, that's our generation. Yeah, exactly. Well, she does, but she's an older. She's like talking on the phone. But sometimes I just meet me on The Corner.

If we're talking anyway, let's just go for a walk. I work at home. So sometimes, especially if meeting with another dietitian, I'll say instead of having a zoom meeting, Let's both hop on our phone and have a meeting and we both get our shoes on and We both walk while we are having our meeting.

Walking is another thing that, in my opinion, is completely underrated and it gets you moving and accessible. It's free. Again, I live in South Carolina, so it's a little easier for me to do.

But when the weather is nice, it just something I find people have a hard time believing that just a simple walk can really make a difference because it is not hard and you are not sweating and not strenuous.

From the data I've read, even those 10 minute bursts of walking is really important just to get moving. We have people walk for 10 minutes after each meal.

Yeah, I love that. It really helps with metabolic health too. There's great data showing. I mean, it's such an easy thing, easy for most people to do.

But if you get a dog, you're forced to walk anyway. So your dog can be a great investment in your health. My dog doesn't give me a choice. Well, also, even if you can't go outside because it's too cold or you don't want to go out in the rain, you could pace around your house.

I do it all the time. Pace on the phone. Just walk in through the kitchen back and forth because at least I'm moving. Yeah. But I think really what you're saying to kind of summarize it for people is that sometimes the best thing for you is not the hot new topic.

Sometimes the things that we really need and that can go the farthest in our health are the simplest things and like you're right people don't want to believe that but you know there's a reason why eating a whole food diet and moving your body are The best things for you and it's not gonna go away and everybody says it all the time, but nobody listens And then smart supplementation.

You know, it seems to me to want to take all the powders and potions out there, but really looking at what, first of all, what your body can actually make.

So in a situation like NR, You have to find the NAD you could find in milk, but you need to drink a lot of milk. There's no way. I mean, you have so much milk in order to get what your body needs.

So in that case, there's really not a viable workaround. But if you like grapefruits and oranges, in my opinion, instead of taking a vitamin C supplement, having a grapefruit can help you meet your needs Well, you also get the fiber from it too, right?

And I always talk to people about fiber and they're like, oh, I can take a fiber supplement. I was like no, i want you to eat your fiber. Because us as humans do not chew completely.

And so we get those little strings of fiber going down, we swallow them and, they work much better than a powdered form. I'm constantly saying that. Also diversity of fibers because you want to feed your microbiome.

So all the little bugs that help us break down food, then they want a diverse diet too. Having a divers diet for them

is going to keep them healthier.

They make a lot of the things for us that we would then need to supplement. If we feed them, they'll make all of things we need. Yeah, I totally agree.

I think that's something that isn't always clicking. It does take a little bit of an effort, but once you get in that habit, then it just becomes part of your day.

Yeah, exactly. So to wrap things up, if listeners could take away one message about supporting their long-term health and vitality, what would you want that to be?

I would want them to choose their supplements wisely if they're going to supplement. So explore things like Niagen, the patented NR, to help support healthy NAD levels, which helps support their ATP levels.

Everyone got a high school biology review they never knew they needed today. I know, right? Getting some eight-mail after this. That's fine. At least you didn't go into the full names.

My brain can't do that either. And yes, when you're younger, but as you get older, sleep is so important.

Closing Thoughts and Resources

So anything you could do to support that sleep, which is starting your day with some either sunshine or that lamp, cutting your caffeine before noon, limiting or avoiding your alcohol, moving your body.

All those things are good for your health, but also may support your sleep as well. So again, everything's playing into each other. You can't really target one, that's my big package for people to start.

That's great. Okay. Any last minute plugs that you wanted to leave our listeners with, like where they can find good information or where can they find those higher quality supplements?

Well, people can, oh, well, so the higher-quality supplements, um, I would go to the True Niagen website. They have some, all their options around there.

they now have a beauty line too, which is very exciting. I haven't seen that one yet. Yeah, no, and they combine the NR with some other ingredients to just help support that aspect of our health.

So it's pretty exciting to get into that world. And then if anyone has any lingering questions, can I share my Instagram handle and people can read it?

Yeah, absolutely. So I'm at laurenlovesnutrition. I am always happy to answer any nutrition related questions especially as it supports women in this unique life stage. I talk a lot about bone health too.

Very into bonehealth these days. Yes. And any questions I can answer, I always am happy That's great. Thank you so much for being here today. We had a great time.

I loved it. Even, even though you brought up the Krebs cycle. Yeah. Well, thank you. We will talk to you later. Thank you, bye. You know how us women are always just pushing through it and then when we go to find help, we're often not taken seriously or told, oh, that's just part of being a woman.

Yeah, We've lived through prioritizing everybody else and that our own health falls to the wayside. That's why we started blossoming longevity by women or women.

We created programs that meet women where they are, addressing the root causes and all of the struggles that come with every stage of life. Like our vitality program.

It reconnects you with your youth and your life so that you can thrive through the years. And with Clarity, we go beyond the skin to restore your health, clear your complexion so you feel radiant from the inside out.

With our Silhouette program, we help you reclaim your strength, optimize your metabolism, and your body composition so that you can feel great in your own body again.

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