The Overlooked Link Between the Liver, Gallbladder, and Thyroid Symptoms With Divya Gupta Transcript

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Introduction and guest background

Hello and welcome to the thyroid pharmacist healing conversations podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Isabella Wentz, and I am so excited to have Divya Gupta here joining us today.

We're going to be diving deep into the liver and gallbladder connection with thyroid health. I'm going to tell you a little bit about Divya. She's a board certified holistic nutritionist and restorative wellness practitioner.

she helps busy professionals create a healthier future than their family history might suggest. Through personalized functional nutrition plans, she guides clients to regain their vitality and live life on their own terms.

Her journey bridges two worlds, a successful corporate career and a profound understanding of chronic health challenges. After experiencing gallbladder removal and Hashimoto's thyroiditis, Divya intimately understands the limitations of conventional approaches.

This personal journey transformed her into a passionate advocate for functional wellness. She is a soon-to-be mother of two. She balances family life with her mission to transform others' health.

She's based in San Jose, California and embraces an active lifestyle from hiking local trails to exploring new destinations, practicing yoga, and creating nourishing meals.

Her story embodies the transformation she offers clients moving from managing symptoms to thriving and vibrant health." Thank you so much for being here with us, Divya.

Welcome. Oh, thank you, Dr. Isabella. And you have no idea how excited I am. You are somebody I look up to while I was on my healing journey. Everything you said makes so much sense.

It's such an honor to be here. Thank you. Oh my gosh, it's so kind of you to say that. And it is amazing to have been sick and to just have created something to put out there because I didn't want others to suffer the way that I did.

It's amazing how many people it has impacted. People like yourself have taken my work and gone deeper into healing. So it was such an opportunity and such a honor to be here and get to learn from you.

I'm so glad I was able to part of your healing journey. Oh, thank you. The feeling is mutual. A lot of us get into like functional nutrition and leave conventional medicine, or maybe, you know, maybe we don't completely leave Conventional Medicine, but we open up our eyes to alternative medicine to nutrition to integrative medicine because of our own life experiences.

Can you share What led you to become more interested in this? And how are you here now talking about nutrition and liver and gallbladder connection to the thyroid?

Oh, my God. Someone had told me when I was growing up, this is what I would be doing. I Joking or I don't even know what you're talking about. So, like, my story is very stereotypical.

I'm an Indian immigrant, so we are either doctors, lawyers or engineers. And I went the engineering route in India, but that's what everyone did. and I finished my undergrad in india and i came to the US to do my masters, you know, the living the American dream.

And things were going great. I worked for a top consulting firm, I lived in New York City for eight years, was climbing the corporate ladder, and I was there for 16 plus years.

So for me, sitting here and having this conversation about liver, gallbladder, It's surreal at times, I sometimes have to pinch myself. But, you know, the universe has their own plans.

And as you said, we all go through either, some people know that this is what they want to do, and that's great. I mean, my life experiences, not just with my health, but even seeing my mom go though a health journey really got me to where I am today.

So, when I was 20, still in India, doing my engineering, It was, if anyone, I'm going to be going through labor and I'll still take labor over gallbladder pains.

It, oh gosh, still have, had PTSD for a while after those pains, every time I would, my stomach would hurt after the gall bladder was taken out, would be like, Oh my God, like the phantom pains would back, it was so terrible.

And I probably had symptoms before, but you don't know. to look for or you're not really listening to a body. So, and it was within a matter of a few months, the pain just progressed every night.

Every night at 2 a.m. I would be up facing the room. Like that's the only, I couldn't sit, couldn t lie down. That's only the thing that helped. And it would be for 15 minutes for 20, then 30, and it kept intensifying.

And initially, I was like, you know, You ate something, maybe it's gas or maybe whatever, right?

Divya's health journey and career shift

You know you don't think much of it until I finally told my mom, we all live with our parents until we leave. So I'm like I've been waking up every night and she's like finally next time wake me up.

So after these episodes continue for weeks, and we tried everything, nothing worked. It was between two and three. We know the connection now, it's like the gallbladder connection at that time.

And finally, I'm like, let's just go to the ER at this point, because the pain was excruciating. Like I think at one point I was I said, my mom, I want to die.

I can't take this anymore. If I don't wish this on my enemy, it was so bad and fine. You know, went to the ER, they had a radiologist. They're like, oh, you have stone.

So that was a relief. At least we know why we the pain's happening. But So what? And I had no idea what the gallbladder did at that point, what its role is, why it's there, because I was completely out of studying computer science.

And we go to an endocrinologist and I'm sure you can guess what, oh, we can take it out. You can live without a gall bladder. It's a laparoscopic surgery and that's it.

I had planned it after my exams, but life had other, no. One day it was so, maybe this was life. Maybe this wasn't the only option for me. That's what I want to believe, that it's such a foregone, like the gallbladder was such bad state because by the end of it, I was throwing up.

I can't take it. They had to do an emergency surgery, got my gall bladder out. So I'm still 20 and you recover quickly and fine. and you get inculcated with new foods, the stress of an Ivy League school, stress finding an internship and a job.

And lo and behold, by the time I was 24, 25, again, my accident, I get my Hashimoto's diagnosis. Now I know there was a connection between my gallbladder and my thyroid, which we'll dive into a lot today.

But again I had all the symptoms of low thyroid. For me my biggest was muscle ache and pain. I knew you got diagnosed at 27 too for me. A young 20 something dealing with muscle, ache, and joint pains.

like if anything goes like off script over the way I slept the next day, I know I'm going to be in tremendous pain. I remember going into doctors and getting dismissed saying, oh, you're too young.

It's in your head as if there is an age at which you are going get muscle aches and pains. No matter how much I sleep, I needed coffee, the 2 PM, 3 PM coffee to get through the day.

But again, we just get used to her. This is how it is. It's very normal because everyone around you is dealing with something similar. I never really thought of it much until I happened to go to an OB-GYN for regular yearly checkup and she actually felt my thyroid, Isabella.

These days, doctors don't touch and feel you. Back home, they would at least feel your organs, what can she like? Oh, it seems inflamed. You know, you should go to an endocrinologist and I got, she did some blood tests.

My antibodies were like 4,000 or 5,00. Oh it's TSH was pretty high. Or you have Hashimoto's. It runs in your family because my mom has it too. And then here's your Synthroid.

Off you go. Again, not a lot of education. This was a long time ago, almost two decades ago. So I'm like, this is it. But what switched, you know, sorry, I'm getting to being a little long winded, but my mom, who also had a gallbladder removed, got Hashimoto's and now got her second autoimmune condition of rheumatoid arthritis.

And it was really painful to watch her, the joint pain, and she was probably in her early 50s at that point. Her life just ended. It was in a box. She had to take a ton of steroids for her pain.

I don't know what something in my mind clicked. If I didn't make changes, Just like her, I'm following the same footsteps and I don't want that for myself.

So that's what got me into this looking into what can I do, what I can control while I was taking the centaurine, which really did work for me. It really helped with a lot of symptoms.

I won't say that the medication didn't work, but I'm like, What else can i control? So diet is something I control. So started looking in to the diet factor.

Oh, and this was so long ago when nobody was talking about gut health or the gluten connection with the thyroid, I was just, okay, whatever I could get my hands on or read up.

Okay, let's try this juice glass. Let's take our dairy and do it for a week and see how I feel. And I'm like, wow, I've not bloated. I didn't realize I would bloat it until I took those foods out.

Like, I don't have a bed or like, you know, the little pouch, it was just bloat. So that's what my love affair with nutrition and lifestyle changes started.

And I just wanted to go deeper. I'm like what's more? There has to be more. There have to more I would talk about it with everyone. 15 years, 17 years later, just completely shifted my career.

Like I couldn't keep doing what I was doing. I figured things out, I went back to school to study nutrition, got both certified, you know, then I'm like, diet and lifestyle will take you this far, but okay, there has to be more.

So how do I do get stool testing done, from a functional perspective? So that's when I became a restorative wellness practitioner, so I can run those tests more on myself.

And then, like why aren't people talking about it? Why aren''t doctors still talking? I just had to switch, stop what I was doing before. and just really focus on this because this is my calling.

I can keep this information to myself. If I have to help share and if I help have an impact on even a few lives or one life, I just feel I've played my role while I'm on the planet.

I really, I, really love that. And I know I can really resonate with a lot of the things that you said. I was working in pharmaceutical sales at the time that I.

Was diagnosed and started seeing some of. The lifestyle changes and pharmaceutical. Sales and becoming like a medical science liaison for a pharmaceutical company was sort of like my career trajectory was like, my ideal job.

And all of a sudden, I'm there, and I've studied so hard for this. I did all the right moves in my career to get to that point, to even be considered for such a great job.

And yet I was like, oh my gosh, why am I talking about drugs and all these things when there's so much more to healing than just drugs than medications?

And I feel like probably for you going through and getting all your education, And advanced degrees for you to be like, wow, this is actually something that I can't do anymore.

Like, it's like your eyes open and then you can close them again. You can go back to your day job. But you have to you really have get the word out there.

Right. Oh, yeah. My dad spent a ton of money for my education. I'm like I want to do something different and. I'm in Silicon Valley. I worked in a ton of startups.

This didn't feel very authentic and the stress of Silicon valley job. And I was like, this isn't resonating with the life that I want to lead and it's not good for my health.

So I totally get what you're saying. It's and it's hard for an immigrant because I'm an Eastern European immigrant. So I am from Poland and same it is like you go to medical school, pharmacy school.

You become a health care professional. My brother is an engineer and you like, you have certain expectations when you're an you know, work really hard, and then it's challenging for when your parents are so proud of you because of what you've achieved and you're like, I actually don't want to do this anymore.

And I remember my mom was like what? What are you gonna do? You know? And everybody was, like oh my gosh, you are going to something different. I'm sure that was really challenging to have those conversations.

They were, it was very Trump, like, you know, slowly, they knew my passion, this side. And I want I'm very lucky. They're very supportive. My mom still say, as long as you're happy.

We are we are good. But they'll always be like you, know with finances, how are you doing? Because, if you had a good six figure salary coming in, and you in the beginning stages of any business, is it takes a while.

So like any immigrant, making sure financially unstable. Dad would always, I lost him just three months ago, but he would be like, you got to work hard, it's business, don't expect to, just invest, do your work, hard work.

And if you're honest, if have integrity, things will work out. So I still remember, take that. Yeah, I'm so sorry for your loss and. Yeah I totally relate with with that immigrant struggle of really wanting to make your parents proud and hopefully, you know, when they see the lifestyle changes that you're doing and they, see your transformation.

I know when my parents. being Polish and not eating gluten or dairy was kind of a big deal because it was pretty much 90% of the food that I grew up with.

And so at first they were a bit skeptical, but then when they started seeing that a lot of my symptoms vanished and I felt so much better, they became really supportive.

I wanted to ask you, you know, a lotta times when I work with people with thyroid issues, many of them have had their gallbladders removed.

How thyroid health connects to the liver and gallbladder

Many of then I see with a with like a liver backlog, what I like to call it, where really they just need some liver support to feel human again. And we do know that hypothyroidism increases the risk factor of gallstones.

Can we dive deep into that? What is that connection between thyroid disease and the gallbladder? Oh yeah, it's my favorite topic because I wanted to get him like what happened when I was friendly.

So it was my favourite topic and I feel there's so much I still don't know because our body is so beautiful, like nothing in the body works on its own.

Everything is interconnected and nothing performs just a single function either. Every organ in our bodies is very multifaceted as well. So for our thyroid to work well, you know, we need, our brain, of course, a thyroid gland to produce the hormones.

We also need our liver, adrenals, and our gut, all of those organs to sort of work in a symphony and orchestra to really do what they need to do. And I know your audience knows and people listening, just setting the base foundation that Each and every cell in your body needs thyroid hormone because it controls everything from your metabolism, from I'm thinking about fertility, energy, mood, digestion, everything.

You need the thyroid, you need a thyroid hormones. Again, we'll talk about T3D active form of it as well. Nothing in the body can function without it.

And there, between the thyroid and the liver, there is such a symbiotic or synergistic relationship between, the two. And is it sometimes like, is the, liver that costs hypothyroidism symptoms?

The symptoms are also very similar when you have liver issues or hypathyroid, but it's brain fog. you know, fatigue, skin issues. So much of it could be confused with, oh, you have hypothyroidism, but it just could just be, as you said, just a liver not doing its job.

And liver, gosh, it does so much. Not just one function, at least documented 500 or so. It probably does a lot more for us than just detoxing the blood.

That's what people, that just helps me detox. So when I'm going to just, you know, just talk about a little bit about the gallbladder and disconnected.

So a gall bladder is like a pear shaped organ that sits right below the liver on the right side. And it's a storage unit period. It distorts bile, but not just stores bile it also then helps concentrate the bile.

So that we have it in the right quantity, in right concentration when the body needs it. So it plays a huge role. When doctors say, oh, you can live without a gallbladder, yes, but how well are you living is a whole other question.

Even when my gall bladder was taken out because of stones, But the problem was never really solved because let's go upstream. Let's look at the liver.

The bile which is stored in the gallbladder is produced in deliver. There is a synergistic relation like there's the lever and one of the main constituents of bile is cholesterol, which again made by the level and thyroid hormone plays a huge role in sending the signal to your liver about, hey, we need cholesterol production.

I'm sure you see it in a practice and I haven't seen anybody that my clients that I work with that don't have high cholesterol and thyroid going. The lipid panel is always not where it should be.

So bile is made up of cholesterol, and also water, which a lot of us are dehydrated, not drinking enough water and bile salt and it needs lecithin and a of the different components, bicarbonate to make the perfect portion of bile.

so then it can go into the gallbladder. Now, if you have liver issue, the liver again does so much with blood sugar regulation, vitamin D synthesis. It also helps with the conversion of inactive thyroid hormone T4 to active form of thyroid hormones T3, which is our go-to hormone, is what every cell has a receptor for, because we can't do much for T-4.

while liver is doing so much, it could be, is it the liver that, and it's not listening to the thyroid, or is the subclinical? Even if your thyroid is maybe dysregulated, could it be hyperhypo, not sending the right signal, then now you have too much cholesterol in this bile or too many of some other portion.

Now, this bio that is produced by the lever is not how it supposed to be. Maybe it has more cholesterol. Most of the stones have 60 to 70 percent of cholesterol stones.

And it's too thick. If I go back, if you remember earlier, I remember each cell in a body knee has a receptor for a thyroid hormone, which is our active thyroid Hormone T3, not T4.

So and it's just not for energy to do a stuff to get up, get out of the bed and exercise. It's also for the cellular energy so that we don't probably feel or see, but every cell needs it too.

So once now, okay, so the bile is producing, it is in the gallbladder. it still has to be squeezed out into the small intestine through the sphincter of odd eye at the right time.

And if you have even, you know, thyroid, low thyroid hormones, even if it's subclinical, that's my biggest pet peeve I've seen with TSH and other thyroid.

Even if just CSH, most of them just have that and don't have other values, but it is like 4.5, 5, 6. If you're still edging, whether it in the outer end, your sub clinical still may have all the symptoms or you may not be doing enough conversion, you know, maybe you're not producing enough T4, then maybe there's not enough, not Enough conversion of T-4 to T3 happening.

Now, your cells are also low on that, they don't have the energy to squeeze out the bile and the Bile now backs up. And it keeps backing up, it creates a sludge, and they may eventually can get converted into stone, into stones.

So, again, so as you can see, just for it, you would think just creating bile, it should work. It doesn't. You need the thyroid to work, you need our livers to produce the bile.

Cholesterol first, then the bio, and then it needs to be stored and it also needs be squeezed out. And it's so complicated when you think of it, but it is so beautiful how it works when it work in such amazing synchronicity in our body and we don't even realize what our bodies doing for us.

Yeah, it's amazing to think of the body. I think a lot of times conventional medicine looks at the Body through almost like, okay, this is your thyroid and this Is what it does.

And this? Is your gut and This is what? It does then your liver and then this. Is Your left arm. This Is you're right arm, but it doesn't necessarily consider like our Body is a system or our body is A hole and all of these hormones all Of these organs the glands They all talk to each other and our bodies like a symphony, right?

It's not like the solo act. I think that's such a great description. You explained it so well. For people that may be wondering if they have some gallbladder dysfunction, could you share some of the symptoms that they might experience?

Oh, yeah. My first symptom was this gall bladder attack, but I was probably not listening to my body or paying attention. So when now, and again, it was so long ago, but you know, I want to say to everyone, early signs could

be, you're having really difficulty.

Let's start with a bucket of digestion, right? Digestive with fatty meals. You don't feel good after eating a fatty meal. And you probably are burping, belching a lot more.

and you might have a loser stool. You had a fatty meal and then a few hours later or your next time you go to the bathroom, it's much looser. Could also be happening and feeling bloated after eating something fatty, greasy, stomach distension could also a symptom.

The other is, I don't know if we want to talk about stool or bowel health, but it is so important in our life. We need to about it. But bile is what, you know, even provides the dark brown color to us too.

So if that's really like, quite advanced, if you start seeing clay colored stool, then, there could be some bile obstruction, your bile probably is not flowing in your gut.

And the other is, you seem to want to keep wiping. Your stool is quite sticky and you just have to wipe multiple times or it leaves streaks in the toilet bowl because there's a lot more fat content in your stool and bile helps to break down the fat into fatty acids, so our pancreatic enzymes can help really digest our fats.

We can get into that too. If you start seeing that as well, could be one of those early signs that something is off. Again, cholesterol levels are off the charts.

A lot of people, when you have hypothyroidism, you are, I think I was reading some stat, 300 times or maybe don't quote me have to go look, but you know, child of getting a non alcoholic fatty liver disease because your fat metabolism, it's our compromise as well.

And the other interesting, this is something, you remember, experiencing, But I didn't know then I had a lot of right shoulder pain prior to it, because of there's a meridian, your liver gallbladder is right here.

I would love to get into Chinese medicine at some point, but there are different meridians that connect to the body. So I was always would deal with a lot of pain over here, like really stiff.

And that could be an early sign. If you start experiencing those pains, as well, again, you, if you have pain on your right hand side, at 2am at night, for sure, that's like your body screaming at you because hey, You're not listening.

Again, there could be bloating and other digestive issues coming up, but those are some major signs. When I see the fat-soluble vitamins low, they're taking all the supplements, 5,000, 10,00 units of vitamin D and the vitamin E comes out to 20, 28. I've seen as low as nine in my practice and I'm like, You can't supplement your way out of it.

If you don't have sufficient bile, if you're not digesting your facts and you won't be able to really absorb the supplements either. You're low in your fat-soluble vitamins, that's A, D, E, and K as well.

Things manifest differently for everyone, but these are some key symptoms and signs to look for if we suspect something is going on with your gallbladder.

Yeah, and that makes so much sense because the bio is so important for emulsifying our fats and getting the nutrients from our fatty foods. And this would be like the fat soluble vitamins.

You mentioned vitamin A. That's so for eyesight. Vitamin D is immune function. A lot of times people with hypothyroidism are going to be very low in vitamin D.

I would say definitely fat malabsorption is a big red flag. If you're low on this, especially if you've been supplementing, we know vitamin E is so critical for thyroid health and antioxidant status.

And then vitamin K, great for bones and teeth. So this is something super important as well as Fatty acid

deficiencies, so getting things like omega threes, sometimes people might have omega three deficiencies, maybe some with fat malabsorption that I've seen.

Well, they might be more depressed or they may have dry skin or dry eyes. Do you do any kind of testing do you recommend for gallbladder function to see how somebody's gall better might be doing or are there maybe some tests that you can do like a stool test that might give you some indication or some red flags where you might Be like, yeah, actually, this is something that we need to address in this person.

I know you Do a lot of functional medicine testing. Oh, yes. Definitely love the GI map stool testing, I Know that's something That you run as well. So So there is a marker called steatocrit in there, which, you know, if there's a fat in the stool, we would see that going higher.

So it doesn't really directly indicate that something going on with the gallbladder, but hey, there you're not really digesting your fats well, so then that could be downstream impact.

And then elastase as well which is the pancreatic enzyme that helps to digest the food. If I see less than to less than 500, we know that, hey, you're not really digesting your food.

So, light pace comes in after the bile does its job to help really absorb, break down the fatty acids. The other marker there that I like to look at is the beta-glucuronbae, because bile also helps.

Because bile, again, everything is multifaceted. We have multiple talents. One of the jobs of bile is to also conjugate to our hormone metabolites, excess hormones, excessive cholesterol or toxins, and get it out in our stool and our urine.

It does that job. If estrogen is, if you don't have enough bile flow in the gut, our estrogens are getting deconjugated with the beta-glucuronidation.

Again, dysbiosis can also lead to that. And then it's recirculating because especially with women, they deal with a lot of estrogen dominance issues. Definitely in peri and menopause, I see that, but even prior, like a of my clients are young 20 something with PCOS and high estrogen dominance.

Gallbladder dysfunction symptoms and testing

So that's one test that can start giving some clues. But when it comes to blood work that could really point to if there's liver or biliary obstruction is getting your liver markers.

As we said, you know, gallbladder is just a downstream impact. I always have to go upstream. looking at GGT as well, and getting a full thyroid panel that everyone watching, not just the TSH.

Even if I see that subclinical outer edges, knowing that that could also be playing a role. With that, again, lipid panel is good. It's not everything, but also seeing where your lipids panels are.

Getting a good liver marker, those blood tests, that really helps to pinpoint that there could be some biliary obstruction, there Issues going on. Um, I don't diagnose not a doctor, but, you know, there are signs of that.

And that's where I like to start with everyone because when it's your thyroid, that just the tip of the iceberg. That's just screaming, they're just calling out the alarm.

We have to work on a liver. Our digestion, our gut adrenals. The thyroid will stop screaming. You know, it's kind of like a lot of times, sometimes it is like the chicken or the egg first, right?

Did the thyroid get dysfunctional first or was it the liver that happened? Where did it all begin? Like, was that the adrenals? Was it a stress response?

What is some kind a gut infection? And there always seems to be a two-way street where thyroid hormones impact bile production, and cholesterol production.

What is the connection between bile production and thyroid hormone absorption? Can we talk about that? That's a bile. If you go back, bile also aid helps to digest the fatty foods.

That we all let's put that away once it squeezes out. And again, it has to be in the right concentration, right? Because it's like soap. We don't want diluted soap to wash our dishes.

it will take a lot of scrubbing to get the grease off the pan. So we want it to be slightly concentrated so the bubbles form and the lipase can come in and digest.

That's one. The other function of bile is also when it It also acts like an antimicrobial. We get exposed to the outside world all the time, we don't fall sick every time we eat or go out.

So it also act as an anti-microbials in small intestine, making sure it kills anything that's there so it doesn't get further down in our gut. And the third is also to combine for all to helps with the conjugation of excess toxins, you know, hormones and to get rid of it as well.

The other, the way, you now, we need, again, an average symbiotic relationship where we the bile for Bile also helps within the gut when, like we talked about the T4 to T3 conversion that happens in the liver.

That's conversion, that's happening also in that gut. And bile plays a huge role in conversion as well. Apart from there are other enzymes, B-iodinates, too, helps with that conversion.

T-4-to-T3 happens, in our kidneys, and our peripheral tissue, so the body knows what it needs and how much it and it does that for us. So if we don't have enough bile flow, so maybe we are producing bile, but it's not flowing as well, we're going to impair the conversion of T4 to T3 in the gut.

Bile also plays a huge role in our gut lining integrity that a lot of people don t realize. T-3, our thyroid hormone, also helps to ensure that a gut lining stays tight.

So for everyone, a good lining is just one cell wall thick. It's supposed to be permeable, so things that need to get through, get true and everything else stays in.

But when it starts getting looser, like the gut lining, because most people with autoimmunity are familiar with leaky gut, you'll realize it's not just a thyroid hormone.

The conversion is not happening. We don't have enough of that hormone, but the bile is there because bile also gets recirculated back to the liver because the body is amazing.

Let's recycle, let's keep producing bile all the time. So that's another way how bile can influence our cell wall integrity and disrupt the absorption of the thyroid hormone as well.

I think that's a really great summary. It just paints to show, like, whenever you're supporting somebody with a thyroid condition, we want to make sure we're looking at the thyroid hormones, but we also want a look at what else is out of balance in the body.

I know cholesterol is going to be a really big thing that people struggle with when they have a thyroid condition. And I knows some people will continue have elevated cholesterol levels, even with getting on thyroid hormone.

Do you have some suggestions for why that might be and perhaps some recommendations on how to optimize that? In the conventional system, this is one value where the doctors really want to go low and that's the opposite.

We don't want it to be super low. Yesterday, I was with a 72-year-old client and her cholesterol is 113 and the

doctor said, great. I'm like, no. No, that's really low because we need it for a cognitive function.

Every cell needs cholesterol. We want it to be nice and supple so things can get in and get out of the cell. You don't want plastic cell walls around the cells.

When I see high cholesterol, it depends on how high are we talking. Again, your age and your sex matters with the levels as well. I'm sometimes unconcerned if it's in total cholesterol is closer to 200 and as long as the HDL is like 65 and LDL again, even if its a little 100, 101 because it is important.

It's doing the job. Its going to the sites where a body needs it as well. For me, I think when I see triglycerides are high, that's what I want to go after because that a lot of triglicerides influence a lot from our food.

I really want to look into what are they eating? Even if it's gluten-free, gluten free can also not always be healthy. It's a a process of glutenfree carbs.

Really helping them manage getting the triglycerides into more optimal level is where I would go into. Also, when I run the blood work, look at other lipid panel, like, you know, especially if they are concerned about cardiovascular health risk, looking at APO A and B, which are much homocysteine levels, because a lot of people could have methylation issues with, if you have NTSHR genes, SNP.

So those are better indicators of cardiovascular risk. And there's such simple fix of getting some methylated Bs in and managing that, then really going after the cholesterol.

A lot of people want to stay away, unless it's really high. There are some people with genetic disposition of no matter what they do, their cholesterol always goes high and maybe they are good candidates for medication, but have they tried everything else of reducing the inflammation in the body?

Really getting your thyroid level if your thyroid level is dysregulated, getting that into an optimal range. Stress, changing your diet, eating healthy fats, working on your gut because your cholesterol also needs to get out, it gets out and excess cholesterol gets through our gut, this is getting reabsorbed.

If all of that isn't doing the trick, then my husband is one of those. Trust me, I worked on him. It's still high, and then it's just so genetic familiar, like no matter what you do, it should be like 300, 400. Those are good candidates to go medical.

I'm not against medication, there's a time and place though, after you've done all of it. That's my way, my approach when I look at cholesterol is what else?

Why is it high? It is the question I always want to ask, why is that high and go after the triglycerides first. I mean, and that's such great context because I feel like a lot of times in conventional medicine, it's just a focus on cholesterol and almost like it is one of the things that is flagged, but really backing up and seeing the big picture of what actually contributes to heart disease.

is looking at that homocysteine level and like you said, methylated B vitamins, you know, B6, um, bq, betaine, trimethylglycine, those are all things B12 that can be very helpful for lowering those homocistine levels And that can be really great for heart health for triglycerides.

I know, um, high dose fish oils, omega threes can, be incredibly helpful and sometimes nice and which, which is, you know more of a vitamin be helpful for.

Maybe just balancing a little bit of cholesterol and yeah, same with me, I'm not against medications. If somebody is on a statin from a pharmacist's perspective, are we making sure that they're also taking coenzyme Q10 because that can cause the depletion?

But there's a time and place and I think a lot of times people, I will say if they have high cholesterol and they correct

their thyroid function properly, sometimes they be under-medicated on thyroid hormones or maybe they don't have T3 thyroid hormone on board.

But sometimes that might just self-correct.

Supporting bile flow, cholesterol, and thyroid health

And then, you know, they feel good and their conventional doctors are happy. But I know some people will say, oh, my gosh, I need to go on the vegan diet and get my cholesterol as low as possible.

And it's like, no, because cholesterol makes all of your hormones. It's so great renal health. I a lot of times the ladies that I've worked with, we also help them with their adrenal health to really get their cholesterol and balance.

To me, it's sort of like if the cholesterol is elevated is like, what is your body? Of course, there's like genetic reasons, but also what does your buddy trying to tell you?

Why is it saying like we need to up the hormone production? And sometimes, sometimes that's in pregnancy. I know my cholesterol during pregnancy was like okay, this is going to be high, But that makes sense because you're actually building a new human and you need all of these hormones.

I appreciate you talking about that because I feel like a lot of times I get that question of, oh my gosh, I have a thyroid condition and I've high cholesterol, what do I do?

Sorry. I'll just add to that is there's always a trifecta. They never exist on its own. There'll always be a blood pressure issue then, hey, pre-diabetes or diabetes, 93 percent of people are metabolically unhealthy.

So now condition exists on its own and always lo and behold, they will be on a blood pressure beta blocker as well. I'm like, how is that helping or not helping with your thyroid hormone as Well, so that's why we have it like in a functional space.

You want to like take a step back and look at the bigger picture of what's going on and ask the question, why? Why is the cholesterol going up or high again?

and age, taking age and sex into account. If somebody had a gallbladder issue right now and they had maybe some gallstones, are there things they could do to help themselves feel better or potentially help with those gall stones?

Oh, yeah, absolutely. I, you know, we wanted if you can keep your organ, keep the organ. Please. That's the number one goal. The last time I looked at the stat, maybe CDC hasn't updated, it was 2021, like there's some 600,000 gallbladder removal surgeries set up in the US.

Again, many some of them are absolutely necessary, we need to do it, but how many of that could be saved, is my question, and then the downstream impact.

So if you are experiencing gallstones or gall bladder attacks, really start working on there are a few strategies, you know, we can start supporting your digestion, because a lot of people would probably like, do the GI map, I highly, highly suspect they have low stomach acids as well.

I was one of them. For sure, it took me, really supporting a diet, hydrochloric acid, taking like a beta, like there's certain supplements like ox bile, bile salts that can help support your digestion and again, you don't want to force or really go too much after it, but slowly just help your digestion, support that so it could slowly.

Maybe the stones may dissolve, maybe they won't on their own, But you just want it to be slow and easy with it. So the ox bile, hydrochloric acid, some bitters, I love some apple cider vinegar before meals, just to ensure that you have all the digestive fire and the power to digest your foods.

Second is to really back off on spicy food. If you had alcohol in your diet, why trigger? Why add fuel to the fire? And perhaps remove the unhealthy fats.

not the healthy fat, but remove the processed foods if you're consuming that. Start taking those out so you reduce that load on your liver because in the end, the liver is producing the bile.

That's the other strategy I would go with. Three is definitely get your thyroid numbers in. Just rule it out. Get a full thyroid panel and do we need to help support the thyroid?

Is that what's causing the imbalance with your cholesterol and your bile production. And then it's really thick. So really get a full thyroid panel done.

It's a long game, it is a marathon, not a race. And I would always go with, you know, like, what are the different toxins around you that you can reduce to reduce the burden, control the controllables in your house.

So whether it is cleaning products, whether its your self care products that your using. get a good air filter in the house, control the environment so your liver is not burdened with one other thing that needs to handle and take care, and just working on the gut is also, I love making sure we have the good microbiome balance going as well.

Again, it's a multi-pronged approach, but to start looking at all those aspects. While you still have your gallbladder, you might still be experiencing pain.

but you're able to slowly, hopefully manage that and reducing the inflammation by getting a full blood panel, the liver health to see what else could be going on.

In 1968, Dr. James Brennan described the gallbladder diet. He thought that gall bladder attacks were the result of food sensitivities. And so he would recommend like a specific elimination diet to help them identify their triggers.

Eggs were the biggest offender. Pork, onion, milk, poultry, coffee, oranges, nuts, corn, and tomatoes were some of the foods that he mentioned. Have you found any correlation with foods as a nutritionist?

Maybe some those foods are different foods? No, interesting. Definitely those are like, if I see it fall under the citrusy, spicy, eggs, definitely because of high choline content.

I could see that I, again, I always run a food sensitivity test as well with all my clients because they really go very well hand in hand with the GI map because if you have, you know, we most people have a leaky gut.

If you haven't autoimmune condition, You probably have developed some food sensibilities. So taking for me really testing it and taking those trigger foods out.

Absolutely. I can see how it can help. But coffee can be hard. I know it's love. But for me, really starting, yes, there are food sensitivities taking those out and all those foods, whether it is eggs, coffee, oranges, I think tomatoes.

Also talk about nightshades and maybe some histamine reactions that again goes back to the gut. So I have seen that and it has helped. What can the person implement is more important.

than taking out all their favorite foods, but definitely alcohol, spicy foods and maybe citrusy food for sure, starting there and then working from there.

If egg comes up a lot in the food sensitivity test, the one that I run, then yes, eggs as well. Interesting. What is the name of the Food Sensitivity Test that you run?

I ran the MRT Mediator Release Test by Oxford Biomedical. So that's the test that has been really When I ran it on myself, spinach came up really high for me and I was doing spinach in my green smoothies almost every day.

Even though I would rotate my greens, the spinach is healthy. Until I took it out, I'm like, wow. Olives and a few other foods, those are healthy foods that we're eating, so they were not healthy for us.

I really liked running that test. Interesting. I've heard really good things about that test. Um, I'll have to try using it a few times. Are there foods you recommend utilizing?

I know I love to recommend like green smoothies, cruciferous vegetables, green juices, turmeric, fermented foods. Are they anything that you like to utilize for people?

Oh, yeah. everything that you mentioned, like, you know, how do you support the liver? Liver love bitter foods. So adding bitter food to your like arugula, endives, there is an Indian vegetable called, in English, it's called bitter melon, if this bitter or in Hindi, its called karela, It is bitter.

And I love it. We know we saw adding that bitter foods, dandelion greens in smoothies or in salads, you know, adding those foods cruciferous vegetables, from cauliflower to broccoli, like, staying in season as much as possible.

I love adding those foods and, you know, getting those herbs and teas too, like, milk thistle, dandelion, artichokes. I'm drinking raspberry tea. It's supposed to be good for the uterus and lactation later on.

So getting those teas, getting it in the tea format is, I love recommending those. And bitters, you know, lemon, a lot of lemon. I wake up, that's my first drink.

Lemon with some salt, adding some lemon to your diet. Food first approach, absolutely. Like, let's go with food and some additional support as needed.

But that, everything that you mentioned. Hi, one of my favorites and I use this for people who maybe want to wean off of coffee is dandy blend. It's the lion based.

I don't want call it a tea. Maybe it's like an herbal drink. it comes in this powder and it actually looks like coffee. And some people say it tastes like copy.

But I find that a lot of people really, really enjoy that and that that can be very helpful to for liver and gallbladder support. Yeah, I've tried that.

I know it has barley in it. So some people will question or barley or some dried, but it is supposed to be gluten free. I have it, I think Rasha is the brand, it's sitting in my fridge.

There are times I will take a break. I love my coffee, but never break to go with that. No, I like that I know there are some nutrients that are supportive for gallbladder health.

Do you have a few favorites that you like to use? I had talked about utilizing ox bile. I like oxpile, bile salts, again, hydrochloric acid. And the dosage, you have to figure it out.

I remember when I was starting on my journey, I didn't have too much of it. It's not pretty. But so you to have figure out the right dosages. Tata is one of my favorite supplements that I highly recommend and I take as well.

Please don't ask me how to pronounce it, it's very difficult. pronunciation, but it also helps with the liver with bile production and the bile flow because there are some people, is it the production issue?

Is it by the flow issue, you know, and if, if you don't have a gallbladder, it could be both I'm still producing bile. but it's just flowing directly into the small intestine.

It's prickling and it is not getting in the right concentration. So if you don't have a gall bladder, you definitely do want to have these supports because timing is important.

When you eat your meals, make sure you have the ox bile and bile salts available. I like tatka and then beets is another one which is which can be great for gallbladder and liver health as well.

So getting beats in and they are in a lot of the supplements that are very supportive for the gall bladder. I love beads. A lot people were dealing with if you have gallbladder issue deal with constipation, too, at times.

So, beets, it can also help with, you know, raw be. If you have graded raw beads, can really be helpful to relieve consti That's really fascinating and thank you so much for sharing about what people can do when they no longer have a gallbladder because I feel like there are things that you can absolutely do to feel your best.

So fun couple of fun facts. so I definitely had some mild gall bladder fat malabsorption issues never was diagnosed with with. You know, with call stones or anything like that, but I, interestingly, I started to take liver and gallbladder support that has, like, touring milk, this whole X file.

Methionine and also tall and my seasonal allergies went away. Like, used to have just like. Allergic conjunctivitis where I would step outside. in the spring and my eyes would start watering and just like allergic rhinitis.

That just went away and I got down this rabbit hole about mole toxicity. Bile can be very helpful in liver and the gallbladder for clearing that out of our system.

I feel like not a lot of people are aware of that, how important that is for not just hormones, but also like mole toxins as well as infections and so on and I was researching for a pediatric client where I would like, okay, we definitely need to get this client some detox support and he doesn't swallow pills.

I'm looking at Amazon and Fullscript and all these other places. And I've noticed a lot of supplements now you can take in gummy form. So I ordered a Tadka in Gummy form just to taste it.

And it is disgusting. But you know, I was like, Oh, maybe I can get it. It's disgusting, but I feel like you as as a supplement, it's incredible, incredibly helpful.

Definitely should not be in a gummy. Should be definitely like in the pill that you could swallow because it doesn't taste very good.

Diet, supplements, and listener resources

Yeah, quite. I would think so. Quite bitter. Yeah, for kids, if they need digestive support, apple cider vinegar in gummy forms. I haven't tasted it, but that's a suggestion I've made to some of my colleagues.

Let's try that. You know, kids are very resilient and they can probably hopefully the apple cider vinegar does some lemon water could help boost their digestive system.

But interesting. Good to know. Things that are out there. Yeah. I mean, it's amazing that there's so many more resources out and I know there are certain people that less likely to swallow pills.

So I know I love, I think Dr. Shades makes a digestive bitters formula and then Wilena makes the digestive bidders formula. These might be some suggestions.

I now every now and I'll get a person that's like I want to do all these things, but I can't swallow, right? There's some liquid forms of or pictures you could try.

But breaking up some capsules, you can break it up and mix it with things. That could be tough. Even the other is even grapefruit, right? I love grapefruits.

Grapefruit and it's bitter and citrus. Again, if you have gallbladder issue, You may want to avoid it. I loved it for the liver support as well. Oh, that's such a great suggestion.

I love that suggestion always forget about grapefruit. And I like, I loved it. It's so tasty. But I have like oranges and I buy lemons all the time. and then I'm like oh yeah, there's grapefruits.

it's it so good for us. i would love for you to tell people where they could learn more about you and your work. and maybe give us some of the links for your website and Instagram handle and tell us about the wonderful resource you're providing to our community.

Absolutely. People can go to my website, divyagupta.net to find me. I'm quite active on Instagram. My Instagram handler is at underscore divgupta is where I try to post helpful tips, what I am doing even to keep my thyroid health.

And the resource that I have for everyone is, you know, really, I want everyone to become the CEOs of your own body. When you go to the doctor, they work for you.

It's not the other way around. So it's okay to ask questions and it is okay challenge them. If they are not cooperating or not answering, find another one.

So, you know, we talked about getting a full thyroid panel, just not the TSH. So I have a resource built with a one, like a common symptoms of hypothyroidism.

The list is exhaustive, I could have kept going in that list, but you listen both for men and there are some men only symptoms as well as we know our men, they are also dealing with this issue more and more.

I'm coming across a list of symptoms and also the six tests that I highly recommend that everyone should get. for full thyroid panel and what the optimal ranges, not a standard range, what they optimal range is.

If you already have a blood panel, go grab that resource and see where you are. Do you still have symptoms maybe because even though your doctor says you're fine, it may not be the optimum range.

I created that site and want each of those values. We talked about reverse T3 and T2, but what does it even mean? A little layman term explanation. you can have a really educated conversation with your endocrinologist or your doctor that you're working with.

Thank you so much for providing that to us. And thank you for joining us here today. Before I let you go, I was hoping I could ask you a couple of rapid-fire questions.

Let's go. What's the wellness hack that your refused to participate in? Do you have any of those? I will always try everything once, for sure, before I say, no, But I, the cold ocean plunges, I don't think I will do that again.

I've tried it. Not for me, i would prefer the coal chamber. i've Tried those and those are a little bit more tolerable. And I like it, but no wet cold.

That's not for I'm with you on that. My version of a cold plunge is like a bathtub, but it has to be hot. Definitely not on my list. What about the most outlandish thing you've ever tried for your health?

I'll say not ever try, I want to try it. I haven't done a coffee enema yet, and that's on the list to do. If I got pregnant, it would have to wait. But that is something I would like to mindset into doing that.

I'll try that and let you know. Yeah, definitely keep me posted. I know wellness is kind of a slippery slope. When I first did a stool test I was like, I'm pooping in a tiny little jar and this is so outlandish and now my comfort zone is way over here.

But I still haven't done a coffee enema and I don't know that it's necessarily on my list of things. So when you do it, please let me know how it goes.

Yeah. Like keep reading such great things about it. I'm like, okay, let me just, as I said, I want to try it once to see.

So I am going to. That's fair.

Like your attitude that you do try things once, but you know, also at the right time, right? Right. Divya, thank you so much for joining us. It's been such a pleasure to connect with you and to have you on here.

Your personal story is so inspiring and I love, you know, your glowing right now and i love that you've taken charge of your own health and now you're teaching others to do so.

Everybody listening, I hope this has been healing on your journey. Until next time.