The Real Reason You Have Anxiety (It's Not Your Brain) Transcript

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Introduction: Anxiety & the Gut-Brain Connection

What if I told you your anxiety has What if I told you your anxiety has nothing to do with your brain? What if nothing to do with your brain? What if that brain fog and the mood swings and that brain fog and the mood swings and the depression and the racing thoughts the depression and the racing thoughts at 3:00 a.m.? What if it all started in at 3:00 a.m.? What if it all started in your gut? I know that sounds strange, your gut? I know that sounds strange, but by the end of this video, you're but by the end of this video, you're going to understand why your gut [music] going to understand why your gut [music] and your brain are in constant and your brain are in constant conversation. And why treating the brain conversation. And why treating the brain without looking at the gut is like without looking at the gut is like treating the symptom and ignoring the treating the symptom and ignoring the cause. And today, your gut is cause. And today, your gut is controlling your brain more than you controlling your brain more than you realize.

90% of Serotonin is Made in the Gut

realize. realize. Here's the number that changed how I Here's the number that changed how I practice medicine. practice medicine. 90% of your serotonin is made in your 90% of your serotonin is made in your gut, not your brain. Your gut. Serotonin gut, not your brain. Your gut. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that regulates is a neurotransmitter that regulates your mood, your sleep, your appetite, your mood, your sleep, your appetite, your memory, your feelings of your memory, your feelings of well-being. When people think of well-being. When people think of depression or anxiety, they think of a depression or anxiety, they think of a brain chemical problem, and it is, but brain chemical problem, and it is, but the chemistry is being produced largely the chemistry is being produced largely [music] [music] [music] in your digestive tract. So, if your gut in your digestive tract. So, if your gut is inflamed, if your microbiome is is inflamed, if your microbiome is disrupted, if your gut lining is disrupted, if your gut lining is compromised, the factory that makes your compromised, the factory that makes your feel-good chemicals is broken. And no feel-good chemicals is broken. And no amount of working on your mindset will amount of working on your mindset will fix a broken factory. Sure, you got to fix a broken factory.

The Vagus Nerve & Gut-Brain Signaling

Sure, you got to work on those as well, but we also need work on those as well, but we also need to get to the root cause and help to get to the root cause and help support that foundation. Your gut and support that foundation. Your gut and your brain are physically connected by a your brain are physically connected by a nerve called the vagus nerve.

nerve called the vagus nerve. >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> It's the longest nerve running in your >> It's the longest nerve running in your body, and it runs up and down from your body, and it runs up and down from your brain stem all the way down to your gut brain stem all the way down to your gut and in between. [music] And here's the and in between. [music] And here's the part most people don't know. 80% of the part most people don't know. 80% of the signals on the vagus nerve travel from signals on the vagus nerve travel from your gut to your brain, your gut to your brain, >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> and not always the other way around.

>> and not always the other way around. Your gut is talking to your brain far Your gut is talking to your brain far more than your brain is talking to your more than your brain is talking to your gut. Though they do connect and they do gut. Though they do connect and they do talk back and forth. [music] talk back and forth. [music] It's sending information about It's sending information about inflammation, the levels that are inflammation, the levels that are happening in your gut, your nutrient happening in your gut, your nutrient status, your microbiome balance, your status, your microbiome balance, your immune activation, [music] and your immune activation, [music] and your brain is responding with mood, brain is responding with mood, cognition, which is memory, anxiety, and cognition, which is memory, anxiety, and with focus. When the gut sends healthy with focus. When the gut sends healthy signals, clear thinking, stable mood, signals, clear thinking, stable mood, good memory. When the gut sends

distress good memory.

Leaky Gut, Leaky Brain & Neuroinflammation

When the gut sends distress signals like brain fog, anxiety, signals like brain fog, anxiety, depression, depression, depression, poor concentration, poor concentration, the gut isn't just digesting your food, the gut isn't just digesting your food, it's [music] directing your brain as it's [music] directing your brain as well. Now, here's where it gets really well. Now, here's where it gets really serious. We talked in week one about how serious. We talked in week one about how the gut lining can become permeable, the gut lining can become permeable, that leaky gut.

that leaky gut. When the gut is leaky, inflammatory When the gut is leaky, inflammatory molecules molecules molecules >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> escape into the bloodstream from the >> escape into the bloodstream from the gut. These molecules travel everywhere gut. These molecules travel everywhere including the brain.

including the brain. And if the brain has its own barrier, And if the brain has its own barrier, it's called the blood-brain [music] it's called the blood-brain [music] barrier, it's supposed to protect the barrier, it's supposed to protect the brain from toxins and inflammatory brain from toxins and inflammatory compounds. But research suggests that compounds. But research suggests that the same mechanism that make the leaky the same mechanism that make the leaky gut gut gut >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> can also make the leaky brain, that >> can also make the leaky brain, that blood-brain barrier leaky. So, leaky blood-brain barrier leaky. So, leaky gut, gut, gut, leaky brain. When inflammatory molecules leaky brain. When inflammatory molecules cross into the brain, they actually cross into the brain, they actually activate the immune cells called activate the immune cells called microglia. The microglia create microglia. The microglia create neuroinflammation.

neuroinflammation. neuroinflammation. And neuroinflammation is linked to brain And neuroinflammation is linked to brain fog, depression, fog, depression, anxiety, [music] anxiety, [music] memory loss, and long-term cognitive memory loss, and long-term cognitive decline. This is the connection that I decline. This is the connection that I study through Dr. Bredesen's protocol, study through Dr. Bredesen's protocol, that ReCODE approach to cognitive that ReCODE approach to cognitive decline that recognizes gut [music] decline that recognizes gut [music] health as one of the primary drivers of health as one of the primary drivers of neurodegeneration.

neurodegeneration. neurodegeneration.

Patient Story: Karen's Journey to Healing

So, when someone comes to me with brain So, when someone comes to me with brain fog or cognitive concerns, I don't just fog or cognitive concerns, I don't just start with the brain scan, I start with start with the brain scan, I start with the gut. Here's a patient story that I the gut. Here's a patient story that I want to tell you about. Tell you about want to tell you about. Tell you about this patient, we'll call her Karen.

this patient, we'll call her Karen. She's in her late 40s, successful She's in her late 40s, successful professional, sharp her entire life. professional, sharp her entire life.

But, over about 18 months, she started But, over about 18 months, she started noticing some brain fog getting worse. noticing some brain fog getting worse.

Couldn't find words, missed sentence, Couldn't find words, missed sentence, anxiety that just appeared out of anxiety that just appeared out of nowhere. She had mood swings, trouble nowhere. She had mood swings, trouble sleeping, [music] poor concentration at sleeping, [music] poor concentration at work. She went to her primary care work. She went to her primary care doctor, and she was told her labs were doctor, and she was told her labs were normal. So, they referred her to a normal. So, they referred her to a psychiatrist. They started on an psychiatrist. They started on an antidepressant, then an anti-anxiety antidepressant, then an anti-anxiety medication. She kept getting on more and medication. She kept getting on more and more medicines and seeing more and more more medicines and seeing more and more specialist. But, 6 months later, she specialist. But, 6 months later, she still

had brain fog, still anxious.

still had brain fog, still anxious. [music] [music] [music] Now has bloating, it was complaining Now has bloating, it was complaining about that, and fatigue, gaining weight about that, and fatigue, gaining weight from her medications. Nobody asked about from her medications. Nobody asked about her gut. Nobody tested her microbiome.

her gut. Nobody tested her microbiome. Nobody looked at intestinal Nobody looked at intestinal permeability, and nobody checked for permeability, and nobody checked for food sensitivities. Then, when I food sensitivities. Then, when I evaluated Karen, significant gut evaluated Karen, significant gut inflammation was found. She had inflammation was found. She had bacterial dysbiosis, which is bad bacterial dysbiosis, which is bad bacteria imbalance, bacteria imbalance, >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> evidence of intestinal permeability, >> evidence of intestinal permeability, multiple food sensitivities, low-grade multiple food sensitivities, low-grade immune activation, a little low-grade immune activation, a little low-grade ANA. [music] ANA. [music] We addressed the gut first. We removed We addressed the gut first. We removed the inflammatory triggers, repaired her the inflammatory triggers, repaired her lining, restored the microbiome, lining, restored the microbiome, supported her nutrient status. Over 3 supported her nutrient status. Over 3 months, her brain fog lifted, anxiety months, her brain fog lifted, anxiety decreased significantly, mood decreased significantly, mood stabilized, sleep improved, bloating stabilized, sleep improved, bloating resolved, even her joint pain got resolved, even her joint pain got better. She worked with her psychiatrist better. She worked with her psychiatrist to gradually taper down her medications to gradually taper down her medications under the medical supervision.

under the medical supervision.

Treating the Root Cause vs. Managing Symptoms

>> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> And she didn't have brain problems, she >> And she didn't have brain problems, she had a gut problem that was showing up in had a gut problem that was showing up in her brain. I want to be very clear about her brain. I want to be very clear about something. I'm not anti-medication.

something. I'm not anti-medication. >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> Antidepressants and anti-anxiety >> Antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications and such do save lives and medications and such do save lives and they are necessary for many people. But they are necessary for many people. But here's what I see way too often.

here's what I see way too often. A patient has brain fog, anxiety, or A patient has brain fog, anxiety, or depression, or multiple of those. They depression, or multiple of those. They get a prescription. Sometimes it helps get a prescription. Sometimes it helps and sometimes it doesn't. But either and sometimes it doesn't. But either case, nobody asked why. Why did the case, nobody asked why. Why did the anxiety start? Why did the brain fog anxiety start? Why did the brain fog appear? Why now?

appear? Why now? What changed? What changed? If the root cause is gut inflammation If the root cause is gut inflammation and you treat it with a medication that and you treat it with a medication that doesn't address the gut, you may be doesn't address the gut, you may be managing some symptoms managing some symptoms like putting the fire trying to put it like putting the fire trying to put it out, but the fire keeps burning. And the out, but the fire keeps burning. And the gut continues to deteriorate, which can gut continues to deteriorate, which can lead to more symptoms over time, not lead to more symptoms over time, not fewer. Don't let your first symptom be fewer. Don't let your first symptom be your last and don't let the prescription your last and don't let the prescription replace an investigation. [music] Here's replace an investigation.

Key Lab Tests Doctors Often Miss

[music] Here's what I want to tell you what I evaluate. what I want to tell you what I evaluate. When a patient comes to me with brain When a patient comes to me with brain fog, anxiety, or mood issues, or more, fog, anxiety, or mood issues, or more, [music] [music] [music] here's what I'm looking at.

here's what I'm looking at. Gut health, a comprehensive stool Gut health, a comprehensive stool analysis, intestinal permeability analysis, intestinal permeability markers, food sensitivities, especially markers, food sensitivities, especially the delayed ones, the SIBO testing on the delayed ones, the SIBO testing on occasion, inflammation markers like the occasion, inflammation markers like the HS-CRP, HS-CRP, HS-CRP, homocysteine, homocysteine, homocysteine, >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> or there's other systemic inflammatory >> or there's other systemic inflammatory markers that I evaluate. There's a bunch markers that I evaluate. There's a bunch of deep diving we can do. It doesn't of deep diving we can do. It doesn't have to be complicated, though. I look have to be complicated, though. I look at the hormones, a full [music] thyroid at the hormones, a full [music] thyroid panel, not just the TSH, estrogen, panel, not just the TSH, estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, [music] progesterone, testosterone, [music] cortisol patterns, nutrients like B12, cortisol patterns, nutrients like B12, folate, vitamin D, omega-3 levels, folate, vitamin D, omega-3 levels, magnesium, iron, ferritin, [music] to magnesium, iron, ferritin, [music] to name a few. These are all connected to name a few. These are all connected to brain function, and most of them are brain function, and most of them are never checked on a standard workup for never checked on a standard workup for anxiety or depression. That's the gap.

anxiety or depression. That's the gap.

4 Actionable Steps to Reset Your Gut

That's what I find that others [music] That's what I find that others [music] miss. So, what can you do? If you're miss. So, what can you do? If you're dealing with brain fog, anxiety, dealing with brain fog, anxiety, depression, and nobody has looked at depression, and nobody has looked at your gut, even ADHD symptoms like that your gut, even ADHD symptoms like that can occur starting in the gut. Here's can occur starting in the gut. Here's where to start. First one, clean up the where to start. First one, clean up the gut environment. Remove [music] gut environment. Remove [music] processed foods, refined sugar, gluten processed foods, refined sugar, gluten and dairy for 30 days.

and dairy for 30 days. >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> Start with that, and let's see what >> Start with that, and let's see what happens. Step two, feed the good happens. Step two, feed the good bacteria of the gut. You need a bacteria of the gut. You need a diverse plant foods, [music] fiber, fermented plant foods, [music] fiber, fermented foods on occasion if you can tolerate foods on occasion if you can tolerate them, like sauerkraut, kimchi, yogurt.

them, like sauerkraut, kimchi, yogurt. Sometimes prebiotic foods are good to Sometimes prebiotic foods are good to start with as well, like garlic, onion, start with as well, like garlic, onion, asparagus, as long as it's not causing asparagus, as long as it's not causing bloating, but we can talk more about bloating, but we can talk more about that in other sessions. Step three, that in other sessions. Step three, support the vagus nerve. Do the deep support the vagus nerve. Do the deep breathing [music] exercises, pull that breathing [music] exercises, pull that diaphragm down, belly breathing. Cold diaphragm down, belly breathing. Cold water on the face, singing, humming, water on the face, singing, humming, gargling. These actually stimulate the gargling. These actually stimulate the vagal nerve and improve the gut-brain vagal nerve and improve the gut-brain communication. Step four, communication. Step four, get tested. Ask for gut-specific get tested. Ask for gut-specific testing, [music] not just standard blood testing, [music] not just standard blood work. The tests that I mentioned, the work. The tests that I mentioned, the comprehensive stool analysis, looking at comprehensive stool analysis, looking at the microbiome and inflammatory markers, the microbiome and inflammatory markers, and digestive markers, [music] and digestive markers, [music] food sensitivity testing, inflammatory food sensitivity testing, inflammatory markers, a full nutrient panel. If your markers, a full nutrient panel.

The Hormone & Perimenopause Connection

If your doctor won't order them, then find doctor won't order them, then find someone who someone who This also connects to perimenopause. If This also connects to perimenopause. If you saw my recent video on the you saw my recent video on the Estrobolome, Estrobolome, Estrobolome, you know that gut health directly you know that gut health directly affects how your body processes affects how your body processes estrogen, which affects mood, sleep, estrogen, which affects mood, sleep, cognition.

cognition. cognition.

Summary & Next Steps

Hormones in the gut are never separate Hormones in the gut are never separate problems. [music] problems. [music] Next week, I'm going to talk about the Next week, I'm going to talk about the five-step gut healing protocols I use five-step gut healing protocols I use with every patient, like [music] remove, with every patient, like [music] remove, replace, reinoculate, repair, rebalance.

replace, reinoculate, repair, rebalance. The exact framework [music] step by The exact framework [music] step by step. So, if you're struggling with step. So, if you're struggling with brain fog, anxiety, or depression, or brain fog, anxiety, or depression, or other mood issues, and nobody has looked other mood issues, and nobody has looked at your gut, you're not crazy. Your at your gut, you're not crazy. Your doctor is just missing something.

doctor is just missing something. My leaky gut video explains where this My leaky gut video explains where this all begins. It's linked in at the end of all begins. It's linked in at the end of this video. Take my free assessment. The this video. Take my free assessment. The link is in the description.

link is in the description. And share this with someone who's been And share this with someone who's been told it's all in their head, because it told it's all in their head, because it might be all in their gut.

might be all in their gut. >> [music] >> [music] >> [music] >> Everything I do, every protocol, every >> Everything I do, every protocol, every patient, every video, runs through my patient, every video, runs through my one belief. I'm Dr. Myra Reed, helping one belief. I'm Dr. Myra Reed, helping you to live smarter, stronger, for you to live smarter, stronger, for longer.

longer. longer. Don't let your first symptom be your Don't let your first symptom be your last.