The Thyroid Transformation Blueprint with Dr. Heather Stone Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Introduction: Itu2019s Never Too Late to Heal

So many women think I'm too old to get better. I'm too old to achieve health. And I will tell you, I just got a testimonial from a lady. She's 80 years old and she started to implement some of the things that we talk about, you know, in our master classes and online. And she lost 15 pounds like the first 30 days. And then she said, I just stuck with it and I didn't do everything. I have a saying that we just do 2 % better every day. 2 % she goes I just did 2 % better 2 % better within 60 or 90 days I think she lost 30 pounds and she's like I went hiking I went on a road trip and she's 80 and she's like literally getting her life back and she said there was a moment before I started to implement before she first saw me and she said I was wondering if this was the beginning of the end and so It's never too late and it doesn't matter what phase of life you're in, whether it's your perimenopausal or menopausal or your 50, 60, 70, 80, it doesn't matter. Your body is born to heal and your body is always moving towards health until your last breath. Your health is shaped by more than symptoms.

Through real stories and expert insights, we explore how your genetics, environment, and daily choices affect your wellbeing. We uncover root causes and share practical tools to help you find the healing you need. Welcome to the Forum Health Integrative Medicine Podcast.

Podcast Welcome and Thyroid Topic Overview

Welcome back. My name is Amanda. I am your host for the Integrative Medicine Podcast. I am joined here by Dr. Heather Stone. Hello, welcome. Hi, thanks for having me. Yeah, it's so great to have you. We are here at our functional medicine symposium and we are talking to Dr.

Heather about thyroid today. Dr. Heather, talk to me about what you guys do in your practice with thyroid. Who do you treat? Who do you help? How do you do it? Let's dive in. So for us, we really solely focus on women with low thyroid. And it doesn't necessarily matter if they have a thyroid or they don't have a thyroid. A lot of times we will have our thyroid taken out or we have radioactive iodine. And a lot of women also have hyperthyroid or Graves' disease and Hashimoto's. So essentially we work with all women, we work with women with all things thyroid. And the key with really working with women with low thyroid is, you know, most of the time, once we get diagnosed with low thyroid, we get put on thyroid medication.

Who Dr. Heather Helps in Her Thyroid Practice

And we are told that just take this medication and all your symptoms are gonna go away. So they take the medication and they're expecting that their energy's coming back, that they're going to lose weight, they're going to sleep at night, the anxiety and depression is going to go away.

And for most of us, it might get better for a very short time, but then most of the time, all of those symptoms come back. So then they keep going back and forth to their doctor adjusting medication. Management time, time to adjust. And then… Once they get their thyroid medication dialed in, they then tell, even though they have all of these symptoms, the doctors say, oh, your labs look fine. Everything is normal. So you're just going to have to live with it.

Or they tell them that, you know, it's just your age or it's because you're post-menopausal and it leaves a lot of women feeling very hopeless. And like, this is what life is going to be like, and this is how it's supposed to go. So we really take a functional approach to understanding where the symptoms are coming from, what's going on with the thyroid at a deeper level, but going even beyond the thyroid and looking at all the other things that could be causing those symptoms. Because when you have symptoms, it's your body's way of telling you that something is not right. I love that. So low thyroid, what kind of symptoms should people be looking out for to say, I might need to explore my thyroid? Yeah, so the most common symptoms is low energy or fatigue, weight gain or the inability to lose weight, insomnia or not even necessarily insomnia, they just don't sleep well. They have either a hard time falling asleep or a hard time staying asleep. When they wake up, they still feel tired and exhausted. They'll have

anxiety, depression, their hair will fall out, nails are thinning. Those are the classic symptoms of low thyroid. Sounds awful. Well, it's not pleasant. That is for sure. There's a lot of women that are suffering needlessly from a lot of these symptoms. did you get into this?

Common Low Thyroid Symptoms

Well, I got into this from my own personal thyroid story. So, you know, I was that person who was really struggling with weight. I had irregular menstrual cycles. I go to the doctor and I say, okay, and this was back before pre-Google. This was pre-Google. I was… Pre-Google, pre-AI.

Yes. How did we survive? don't know. But I was in pre-med at the time and I go to one of the best OBGYNs in Austin and I'm like, okay, these are my symptoms. I think I might have low thyroid.

Could you check my thyroid? And he says, sure, I'll check your thyroid. Well, I didn't, I don't know what labs he ran because I didn't know to ask. I didn't have enough knowledge to know that. So I go back in a week or two, however long it was, and it was like, there's nothing wrong with your thyroid. Everything is normal. And I think that you have a menstrual issue because you exercise too much. And oh, by the way, as he's walking out, you're probably not going to be able to have children. Whenever you want to have kids come back and we'll do fertility treatment. Oh, that sounds optimistic. So for me, I was like, I'm glad because…

Dr. Heatheru2019s Personal Thyroid Journey

When he told me that I didn't have a menstrual cycle because I exercised too much, I knew enough that what he was talking about was women who exercise so much and their body fat goes too low. I was 50 pounds overweight. Because he told me that, I was like, I'm thankful that he told me that because after that, I did not believe anything that he said. And I was like, this is not going to be my life. And so then once I figured it out, I was like, oh my gosh, I have got to have, there are millions of women struggling with all of these symptoms and that has become my passion and mission from there. Oh, that's so powerful. I love that not that it happened, but the journey is so important. Yeah. And it's not about the destination, but it is about the journey and you wouldn't have gotten here and we wouldn't have such an incredible program and care plans for patients with low thyroid if you hadn't gone through the journey yourself. And you know, who knows where we'd be today. Yeah. How does somebody start the journey of exploring if they have low thyroid or if their thyroid is dysfunctional? Yeah, I think first of all, you have to get appropriate testing, right? So you have to figure out what is going on with the thyroid. Do you actually have a thyroid problem? That's the first thing.

So we can talk about my thyroid transformation blueprint because this kind of puts people on the right path. Let's do that. So the first pillar is that you have to have a constant pursuit of your goals. So first we have to say, okay, I really want to get rid of these symptoms.

You got to set your goals and you've got to really set your motivation behind why you want to achieve the goals because as most of us know, health, like you just said, is not like a destination.

The destination ends when you take your last breath. So it's a journey. you have to have really… clear goals and you have to have your motivations because the motivations are what help you get through the valleys as you go through this journey in this process. But pillar number two is that you have to have comprehensive testing. And most women when they are looking at their thyroid, the doctors are only ordering one lab marker, which is a TSH.

Why Comprehensive Thyroid Testing Matters

And in fact, there are over, there's 12 different markers that make up a complete thyroid panel. TSH? Like what does that tell? somebody who's just testing TSH, why did they pick that marco out of all 12 of them? What does that one tell people that they think they're getting the picture? so TSH stands for thyroid stimulating hormone, and it is the standard, pretty much the standard of care in traditional medicine. Thyroid stimulating hormone actually doesn't even come from the thyroid. It comes from the pituitary. So, figure. We picked a test that's related to the

pituitary figure. To test the thyroid. So when the TSH is high, theoretically, it means that the thyroid is not producing enough thyroid hormone. And if the TSH is low, it means the thyroid is producing a lot of thyroid hormone. So essentially, the pituitary produces TSH to stimulate the thyroid to make T4 hormone. So yeah, they typically only check that.

And you know, it's interesting because I have patients that take all of their labs to, let's say their primary care and say, can you tell me what these labs say? And they look at them, I don't even know what those labs are. I have no idea what that means, but your TSH looks good. So you're good to go. Meanwhile, they have all these other patterns of dysfunction and… most if not all of thyroid hormone metabolism takes place outside of the thyroid. So really digging in and doing a comprehensive testing first. But the second part of that or the next part of that is you have to have somebody who knows how to analyze and diagnose appropriately.

The problem that most women get in in traditional medicine, it shouldn't be called traditional, it should be called like Western medicine, but is that they're just really looking for diseases.

So they're trying to diagnose a disease and give a medication and that's appropriate in many instances. For women who don't have a diagnosable disease, who have a lot of dysfunction, are going to get missed 100 % Because the lab doesn't point to it. That's right. They don't get the diagnosis. They don't get the care plan. Right. traditionally they're looking just at TSH to say, okay, is the thyroid making enough thyroid hormone? And if it's not, they give you thyroid medication, right? Thyroid hormone replacement. But there are many other things that could be happening like you could have the most common other pattern I see is an under conversion pattern. So the thyroid mostly makes T4.

Beyond TSH: Diagnosis and Underlying Causes

Most of the medication that they're getting is T4, the levothyroxine and the synthroid. That's inactive. The body doesn't even use that. So what has to happen is you have to convert that T4 into T3, which is the active form of thyroid hormone. So somebody could have normal TSH, normal T4, have every low thyroid symptom in the book, but they keep going to their doctor and their doctor keeps saying everything is normal. And so then that's where we just get really frustrated and these ladies feel like they're not listened to. feel hopeless. even, the doc, I had a patient the other day, her doctor said, I'm going to give you a psychiatric referral. because I think all of this is in your head because your TSH is normal. So anyway, it makes me crazy, but it happens every day, which is why I'm on this mission to really get this information out to as many women as possible.

I love that. I love that. That blows my mind a little bit. Okay, so step one or pillar one, get your motivation, get your goals straight. need to be motivated because at the end of the day, it's going to take work. This type of care that we do is not just about a pill for an ill. There's lifestyle changes. There's a lot of stuff that people are going to be doing to correct. It's a journey. You're learning a new way of life. Exactly. So, then two is…

two, comprehensive testing. Know your baseline, know what's wrong, identify if it truly is the thyroid and if it's not, then you know, again, another answer for you. to go and get the care that you need, comprehensive testing. Yep, and then pillar number three is comprehensive diagnosis and analysis. And then pillar number four is from there, then you can customize care. So instead of saying you have this label of a disease and you get this medication that goes with that label, we can say, all right, well, let's strip away all the labels. Let's look at your testing. Where are your unique underlying imbalances? now you can customize care based on the underlying imbalances. Right. Is it the conversion of T4 to T3? Is it the body trying to, is it reverse T3 and getting converted to the wrong form of T3? Right. Is it a blood sugar problem? Is it an adrenal issue? Is it an underlying infection? Do you have a gut issue? Like there's so many issues that go along with it. And I think, you know, it's really important to note that most women, 90, percent of women who've been diagnosed with low thyroid actually have an autoimmune condition. So they don't even have a primary thyroid problem in the first place. So yes, pillar number four is customized care. And then pillar number five is you need a coach because navigating this can be difficult, but also having somebody who's done it before you, it kind of is a shortcut. So it took me 23 years to figure all of this stuff out. So it doesn't have to take somebody 23 years to figure it out. So, and you also have to be coachable. I am a very strong advocate for coaching. I am a coach both for health, wellness, and business and coaching, having that accountability, that support.

Customized Thyroid Care and Coaching

I say I'm your cheerleader, but I'm also going to be your tough love coach. I'm going to be the person who kicks you in the pants at the end of the day if You need it. And so I think accountability, support, and coaching, and I love that you put it in there too, because there are times when I've been paired with people that aren't coachable either. Right. So you do have to be willing to, accept help, accept feedback, and show up. Yeah. And I think it's important because all successful people. whether you look at businesses or athletes or any place, they all have a coach. So you need someone, you might have heard the term, you can't read the label when you're in the box. So sometimes solving problems and getting through difficult times, you need somebody's outside perspective or who's had a more experience overcoming these things than you have. But it does take, for me, I have a pretty strict acceptance process into the practice because I know what it takes to get great results. And I think for one thing I learned is that if I care more about somebody else's health and they care about their own health, it's always going to be a bad fit. your health absolutely has to be your number one priority. absolutely. em I strongly believe in the coach, provider, patient relationships and just coaching in general for life. I mean, it's hard to see people not accept help when help is being offered. And I think that's what coaching does for people. offering that hand to help and it's really just don't be afraid to accept help. Everybody needs it. What is one thing that you would want our listeners to know about your program and um the thyroid?

Well, I think one of the things that's really important for women to know is that number one, it's never too late. I think that so many women think, oh, I'm too old to get better.

I'm too old to achieve health. And I will tell you, I just got a testimonial from a lady. She's 80 years old and she started to implement some of the things that we talk about, you know, in our master classes and online. And she lost 15 pounds like the first 30 days.

And then she said, I just stuck with it and I didn't do everything. I have a saying that we just do 2 % better every day. 2 % she goes, I just did 2 % better, 2 % better. Within 60 or 90 days, I think she lost 30 pounds. And she's like, I went hiking, I went on a road trip and she's 80. And she's like literally getting her life back. And she said, there was a moment before I started to implement, before she first saw me.

Itu2019s Never Too Late: Patient Success Story

And she said, I was wondering if this was the beginning of the end. And so. It's never too late and it doesn't matter what phase of life you're in, whether it's your perimenopausal or menopausal or your 50, 60, 70, 80, it doesn't matter. Your body is born to heal and your body is always moving towards health until your last breath. Yes. Oh, I love that. That's such a good note.

Thank you so much for being here with us today. I appreciate it so much. I can't wait to have you back on the podcast and dive even further into thyroid for our listeners. We're so grateful that you joined our Forum Health Network. Tell our listeners how they can find you. The best place to find me is on Facebook. So I have a Facebook group called Happy Healthy and Lean.

There is over, I think, 140,000 of us in that group right now. That's a community. It is a big community and it's all of us are on this journey in different layers or at different levels. I think that's another standout piece because community is so important. Finding people who are walking the walk, talking the talk, but have also been there too.

Finding Community and Closing Remarks

gives such a, a piece of validation, but a sense of like, people know what you're going through and you're not alone. And finding that community that has is going through a similar journey can be just as empowering as anything else to finding that that home for yourself. Well, the group has been amazing for so many. And you know, it's very uplifting and we have people just starting their journey. We have people that have been with me for over 20 years. And so it's just all in between. It's a really great space. That's great. Thank you so much for joining us today.

Stay tuned for next week's episode. Thank you for joining us on the Forum Health Integrative Medicine Podcast. Each episode, we help you understand your health from every angle and inspire your lifelong wellness journey. Follow the show, share it with someone who needs hope, leave a review, and take the next step toward feeling your best at forumhealth.com.