Menopause, Identity, and the Summit Introduction

much of the time, at least here in the U. S., there's not enough, in my opinion, respect for the different phases of a woman's life. And it's often, like you kind of can't win, you're damned if you do and damned, if don't.

In the case of menopausal transition, I feel like all that life energy that was tied up in fertility and reproduction is now being re-gifted back to us.

It's a time where we should be able to coalesce and bring that power back ourselves. This is Dr. Talks. Hello, ladies, and welcome back to Mastering the Menopause Transition Summit 3.0. It's our third year.

I'm still your host, Dr. Sharon Stills, coming at you with all new information, all-new interviews to help you make the best of this time. This is a time to step into your sacred second act and that you can feel better than ever before.

I can do it, you can it. I promise. So I am thrilled to have a fellow ND naturopathic doctor here with me today. Many of you may know her because she's part of the Dr.

Tuck's family, Dr Beverly Yates. She is the nation's leader in online type 2 diabetes care. And diabetes and blood sugar regulation is just a huge, huge piece of managing your health.

I always say we're going to balance your hormones, but we have to put your hormone into a happy, healthy terrain. Having good blood-sugar balance is definitely at the top of that list.

We're gonna have a conversation today and share with you what you need to know for you to make sure you are preventing, doing what can do. So, welcome Dr.

Beverly to the summit. It's an honor to have you here. Oh, thank you, Dr. Sharon. Still, it's a delight to be here. I appreciate your invitation. And I can't wait to have our conversation because you and I both are aligned in making sure that the people that we serve and obviously here the women on this summit really have great info, actionable insights, and can leave feeling inspired so they can take action now to make sure the rest of their years are the best of theirs.

Yeah, I love that. That's that's like a bumper sticker.

Why Menopause Affects Blood Sugar

So let's just dive in, because we are going to just give you the information you need. No messing around. What's going on? Why is menopause such a sensitive time?

I see it all the time in my practice where women who had good glycemic control, who have no problem with their blood sugars, and all of a sudden it's like things are going crazy.

And why is that? Yeah, that's a great question. So, you know, let's peel back the layers here. You know similar to puberty where our reproductive window opens and many of us can remember our puverty being a time of transition.

And then now we're on the other end of that, right? So with menopause, the transition now is leaving that fertility window. And in that journey, a number of things are changing.

I know you're going to cover this in depth on your summit and all the work you've done. One of the things that's changing is our estrogen levels are dropping, progesterone is dropping.

Cortisol, right, the stress hormone is naturally rising. And it's an interesting dynamic because a lot of people may not be aware that with this release of a stress hormone, cortisol, with that rise, there is always, without your consent, an increase in the release blood sugar, of glucose to your bloodstream.

This means then your your sugar levels on average may go up. So you may find where you had great glycemic control, no problems. You may have not had any pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes issues, right?

An A1C of 4.8, and A 1C 5.1, fasting morning sugars in 80s. That's awesome. that might start to change and you might be going, what's happening? Well, it's because the rest of this dance is unfolding.

And for some of us, if it is also a time window, unfortunately, where we are stressed, whether it was financial stress, workplace stress things to do with family or household, our own personal health, caregiving.

Those are usually the five things that are going to affect any number of women over the course of that menopausal transition. your blood sugar will go up even higher.

And it's easy for this to get out of control unknowingly because it is silent. You're not necessarily going to feel it, but you will see some changes and you might start to see changes too.

So that's part of what's going on. Can you talk a little bit about what you may feel and what might see? Are there labs that you want the women asking for or a bit more so they know, get their checklist out?

Yeah, get your checklist out, right? So some of the things you might feel are that your stamina is shifting. You may not have the same energy that you used to have.

If you're one of these women who would wake up in the morning with like, carpe diem, see this is the day. Couldn't wait to get you day going. You know, you might be like, oh, I want to stay in bed, all of that, right?

That's one thing that it could shift. Another is the ability to go without snacks between meals. Some people find themselves in the midst of a menopausal transition becoming very snackish, as I call it.

And if you're usually someone who eats meals and isn't snacking all the time, You might find that starts to shift, in fact, that you are shifting towards craving things that are either sweet or savory or more umami.

more high calorie foods, and you're not giving your blood sugar a chance to rest between meals. If you are snacking between your meals, your sugar is not resetting to a healthy normal range.

And this can start to be a compounding factor, an issue, with the changes that are naturally happening because of the decrease in estrogen, the increase of testosterone, increase in cortisol.

These all have a role to play. Some other things you might notice is you are more likely to be irritable. Now, I want to make a distinction here, Dr. Stills, that I think is really important.

There is this thing around the world, it seems, and often in many cultures, women and females are expected to pleasant and sociable at all times. I'm not here to say that that's our job, okay?

We can be fierce, we can friendly, very chill, aggressive, all the things.

Symptoms, Snacking, and Blood Sugar Swings

I'm simply saying that your own perception, you might feel that the leash is shorter, that phrase, like a woman who doesn't suffer any fools, might be a little more prominent at this moment, and that's fine, but that also might start to shift and you'll find If blood sugar is an issue, you might find that the bottom drops out of your blood sugars.

You might be more vulnerable to low blood-sugar moments, hypoglycemia. And then with hyperglycemias, too

much bloodsugars, You may find you're kind of spacey, kindof foggy, can't really focus.

That blood suger roller coaster is a real thing. Yeah, I think those two points you just brought up about snacking, right? I'm like, okay, the kitchen is closed.

Do what you got to do, women, if you've got put a lock or a sign or close the door or whatever it is, but we have to get used to being okay. with not just stuffing our feelings and eating all the time.

The refrigerator is a great modern invention, but there's some backlash to it if you're constantly going to. And so I think it's great to use that fridge with signs or reminders.

So as you go and open the door, you like, wait a second. I just ate an hour ago. I don't need to be eating again, because I think of it also from an Ayurvedic perspective.

And if you're constantly eating, it's like your Agni is just on overdrive and there's no way to cleanse and you just start getting very congested. Thank you for saying we get to be everything, right?

We get experience the whole range of emotions. And ultimately, it's up to us. I know sometimes when I'm getting like super irritable or cranky, I am like, wait a second.

This, the, um, getting very annoyed at the person in front of me online. Like I, why is that happening? I have to take it back to me. Did I not get enough sleep?

Did I not give enough protein? Did not exercise? So it's that self-responsibility, but also that ability to say, I get to be me. I got to express the full range.

We don't have to these prim and proper. That's old school thinking. Women hear us roar, right? Absolutely. It's our time to shine, you know? I think that the way this is set up sometimes, there's, or much of the time, at least here in the US, There's not enough, in my opinion, respect for the different phases of a woman's life.

And it's often, like you kind of can't win, Like you're damned if you do and damned, if don't. And in the case of the menopausal transition, I feel like all that life energy that was tied up in fertility and reproduction is now being re-gifted back to us.

That's a tremendous transition. If you think about the spiritual implications of that, the energetic and implications of that, the physical implications, of all of the various realms, it's a time where we should be able to coalesce and bring that power back to ourselves.

Probably before menopause, we have been pouring into others, maybe have pouring in to a career, pouring it into children, perhaps other close intimate relationships, whatever it may be.

Now it is time to corral all that amazing generosity, frankly, that we've given to the world and get it back for us. There you go. That's it, women. that's all you need to hear, right?

It's like, that is so true. So, okay, but I want to go back to blood sugar. I'm curious what your thoughts are on continuous glucose monitors and do you utilize them and could you just kind of speak to that for the women listening?

Yeah, I am happy to share it with you about this. Yes, i do use continuous glucose monitors, CGMs. In fact, they happen to have one here. Handy, because much of my work has been that integration between naturopathic medicine, so natural approaches to these lifestyle primary care kinds of issues like diabetes and applying to that the data, the information we can get from a CGM, a continuous glucose monitor, right?

My prior background is electrical engineering from MIT.

Self-Care, Emotions, and Reclaiming Power

living and working in Silicon Valley, love math and science and numbers and data, but I love people more. So people can be served by numbers instead of overwhelmed.

We look for trends when we're looking for how do you use a CGM or continuous glucose monitor so that that way the information isn't overwhelming. It can give you actionable insights.

You can start to see, hey, does my blood sugar really be set in the middle Overnight or do I have an outsized spike, let's say around four or five o'clock in the morning?

What is that about? Am I someone who maybe struggles with going to sleep, maybe have insomnia? Maybe I go to asleep, can't stay asleep. You know, things like that.

Blood sugar often will track it. Maybe you have food intolerances, food sensitivities, and you'll find that your blood sugar, often gets on the blood-sugar roller coaster, so it goes up and down or the bottom drops out.

And you might have hypoglycemia. when you eat things that really aren't in agreement with your body. And CGMs can absolutely help us point that out. Or maybe we're just trying to figure out our metabolism.

We're like, where did my metabolism go? I used to have one. It seems I've abandoned me, right? It really can give you info. Again, the idea is to look for trends and actionable insights.

Really, really helpful and to get more familiar with how your is responding in this moment. I will say one thing about CGMs. Everyone needs to know this.

This is important. CGM's data is about 15 minutes delayed in terms of its blood sugar number. So if you were to get a drop of blood by, you know, sticking your skin, getting a droplet blood, putting it on a test strip, inserting the test trip into the glucometer, that reading is real time because it's actually from the blood.

If you have the CGN, which is attached to your arm, very simply, this reading it delayed by 15 minute because its actually assessing the situation for glucose in your fat cells.

So there's a slight delay. So just know it's not going to be a one-to-one correlation. It's close. That's good to know. Yeah, I've really found, because I used to think, oh, so cool.

I don't just run glucose. So I run hemoglobin A1C. But I find now that even that could be misleading. And just to get a CGM on, even if it's for a couple of months, just really get the data is so important to see your own bio-individuality and how your blood sugar.

that often we feel are troubling us, like you mentioned, sleep, energy, brain fog, can often just be a blood glucose issue. And so, yes, so that's really important that you, I love that, you have it, that was not planned, but you just happen to have one there.

Yeah, speaking of that bio-individuality, this is where we can make those distinctions, even twins, triplets, quadruplets. People do not have identical responses to things.

So what might be a healthy food or meal plan for one person might not be the best thing for someone else. And so when people have these puzzling reactions or they're like, why do I always feel so spacey or I don't feel well or my energy lags, you know, often it's things like this that are going on behind the scenes and without that data, Exactly.

So what do you think the most common mistake women make during menopause that affects their blood sugar? Like what are some of these things that we hear out there that you're like, no, that is not true.

There's two things to come to mind. One is that the whole concept of women having energy, our own energy for

ourselves, like put your own air mask on first before assisting others around us.

So making sure that we are doing our self-care and we often aren't thinking of it that way that, we really have to prioritize ourselves and that that is necessary.

You can't help others if you haven't helped yourself, right? So the word no is a complete sentence. The other mistake that's going to come up is the need to stay vigilant during the menopause transition around maintaining your precious muscle mass.

Because active working muscles are blood sugar sponges.

Using CGMs to Understand Glucose Patterns

They are needed in order to have good glycemic control. And ladies, I'm telling you, if you're thinking that you need just to lift two pound weights, no.

You need two to three weeks to get your form down real well so you don't hurt yourself, you won't be injured. After that, go heavy. Do yourself a favor.

It will be the gift of a lifetime if you build your musculature. You can avoid falls, hip fractures, all these other things that tend to take people out of this life quickly and with a lot of pain.

That's unnecessary suffering. Having a working active blood sugar sponge like your precious, beautiful muscles will keep you out of trouble with blood sugar issues.

It's the number one thing, and I don't think people really know about that. Like you cannot exercise a bad diet. Obviously, you've got to eat healthy foods, foods that give you a great blood-sugar response, but you must, must keep those muscles active and moving and strong.

Yes, it is. I always talk about marrying the mind and the body when we're healing and we have to marry the diet and exercise. It's not a if or it's a yes and thank you.

And so I'm thinking, wow, like such great just tips that I'm pulling out of just what you're saying. Know is a complete sentence. Lift heavy things. Utilize a continuous glucose monitor.

Have an understanding. have a relationship with what your blood glucose is so that you know if it is in fact affecting you. And understanding that stress is happening as hormones are dropping that's stressful to the body.

And it's important to take care of your stress and have good self-care. So you have the Yates Protocol for healthy blood sugar. And I'm just curious if you could just talk about it, tell us what it is.

I just want to know all about. Sure, I'm happy to share. So I recently signed a book deal, and we anticipate the book will be released in early 2026. The working title, thank you, the working is the Yates Protocol, Five No Shame Steps to Fix Your Blood Sugar and Eat the Food You Love.

And in it, we have five no shame steps. They are nutrition. We all know nutrition is going to be the bullseye of the target for all blood sugar things, but it's not the only story.

Next would be meal timing. The time of day you eat your food and what's on that plate matters. There's some things there that truly are not obvious. You know, after 30 plus years of clinical work and the thousands of people I've helped with this, I'm really clear about we need to do a better job as health professionals and medical experts in explaining to people what it is and why, right?

So now we talked about nutrition and meal timing. Our next step here is going to be stress, being aware that stress can be a bully and hijack your blood sugar, and to understand what it's doing and why we need to have a proactive

strategy about what will work for us for stress relief, because people, once again, they're different, right?

We have bio-individual responses. Someone who loves and is interested in conflict and mediation will be fabulous in stressful situations for most people because It's calming to them.

They know how to navigate the conflict. Someone else who is like a martial arts instructor and likes to fight, they too will be calm in a situation that most of us would say, no, thank you.

Now those same people might not thrive so much if they were working in a preschool. Completely different environments, that makes sense? Yeah. Right? It's different, we're different.

And so with that in mind, you have to understand how stress is affecting you and having a CGM really can make it clear to you what's working, what not working.

Number four is going to be sleep. Sleep is so precious. That sleep is where all healing happens. And sleep, unfortunately, can be part of a menopausal transition that's less than optimal.

This sometimes gets really quite blown up for us as women, and it's very important to protect your sleep. Do whatever you have to. You gotta sleep! You have be able to rest and restore and repair.

Common Mistakes: Muscle Loss and Overtraining

It happens when you're asleep, not when your super active. Number five will be exercise and strength training and making sure you're not working too hard because I see some people in a gym for an hour and a half, two hours a day.

Wow, that's a lot of cortisol being released. It's too much. So for all the goodness that they're getting from their aerobic exercise, et cetera, they are pounding themselves.

You just can't do it. If you look at what professional athletes do, Olympians, etc., they make sure they rest. They repair, They restore. they don't pound themselves into the ground.

So if they're not doing it, why would the rest of us do that, right? Now, that's not saying you get to be a blob and never move. I am not that saying that.

But we're looking for that balance, and we are going to focus and emphasize on strength training. And for women about age 45 to 50, 52, it becomes from the science that we know the research exercised three times a week in terms of the strength-training portion, And going heavy is the way to win when we talk about blood sugar management.

I always come from the perspective of eat your largest meal in the middle of the day, and I'm just curious if you have any tips for the ladies listening about what you think about meal timing.

Yeah, so for meal time, it's a great question. I was just thinking of a specific patient. This is perfect to share the story about this. i have a patient that I worked with now for about 17 years, And when we first met, her original part of her story was she had prediabetes, Her entire mother's side of her family had all kinds of insulin resistance and blood sugar issues.

They weren't all necessarily diabetic, but they were sensitive to the kinds carbohydrates that they ate. One of the things she liked to do was to go out with her friends midday for lunch when she was at work and there was a restaurant that had fries that were cooked in duck fat.

She loved these fries. And they would go out and have the duck-fat fries and a big platter of nachos, et cetera. So that was her lunch. Now, if you're thinking about what that is, that's mostly simple carbohydrates in the way of the chips.

Lots and lots of gooey cheese, right? And the duck fat fries, which would be white potatoes dipped in an oil and cooked and fried. So this was really a blood sugar bomb.

Blood sugar bombs one and two was that. And so she was finding that her weight was going up, the fat on her belly was growing up. She was feeling really tired and lethargic.

When she originally came to me, she worried she's going to lose her job because she really was not so productive. People could see how tired she and sleepy she is after lunch.

There were a lot of clues here about what wasn't working. So she loved to belly dance. One of the things we worked on was increasing her belly dance so that she would do her routine for 20 minutes a day, the days of the week when she wasn't with the belly-dance troupe.

Because I thought that was such a great communal thing. It was very empowering. She loved to be able to perform. But I didn't want her to wear herself out.

And because her job was sedentary, I felt that if she got 20-minutes on her off days, of just movement, that would be enough. Then we shifted what she was eating so that when she went out, she had a different strategy, you know, helped her look at the restaurant menu.

Here's what you can order. Make sure your friends understand you're not trying to be part one of the girls or non collegial, but you got to do this for your health.

So you. Can decide you going to have five or six of chips. You're. Not going. To plow into an entire bowl. Okay, so I'm not saying zero, I am saying some restraint, and meanwhile you're going to have that with a salad, you are going get the salad and you going add on.

You can choose from and they give you options, like the wild caught salmon, the beef, You could go with garbanzo beans, other kinds of beans. There's lots of ways to get protein in here.

But you have to be strategic. You can't decide you're going to have all carbs, simple carbs for that matter, and it burns so fast they're basically sugar, right?

Along with this high fat and expect to win.

The Yates Protocol: Nutrition, Stress, Sleep, and Exercise

And in her case, she had a goal. She wanted to able to lose weight specifically around her belly. And she wanted to be able to fit into some dresses she used to enjoy wearing.

And after about a six-month commitment to that, it worked for her. It was, and she realized she felt better. Interestingly enough, as she dropped dramatically how much she was eating in the way of those simple carbohydrates, the cravings went away.

So she didn't feel like she wasn't suffering. I love it when people get pulled forward into something healthy because now they can take the reins and make it work because they feel for themselves that they And that's great story.

And so as you were saying it, I'm saying to myself as your saying, and her cravings went away. So for those of you listening, that is what happens. If you're being pulled, as Dr.

Beverly says, by craving, you have to kind of, it's like, muscle through sometimes but once you get to the other side it's like they don't own you anymore and often cravings are due to nutrient deficiencies or I always think in the terms of sweet things when from an emotional perspective it can be craving sweetness in your life if you don t have enough joy and you're not loving on yourself enough so I think it all just starts folding back in on each other the things that you have shared with us today that are so So important and I love that you are including stress in your

book.

I got Mazel tov on your books. That's so exciting. Can't wait to read it. Thank you. And I always say stress is 99.9999999% of all that's going on and it's not about getting rid of stress.

I think when we die, I maybe we don't have stress, but if you're alive and in the human body, then you are going to have stressed and it's learning how to dance with it, how relate to it.

How to respond to rather than knee-jerk reaction and getting all crazy. And really, what is that? Is it going matter in five minutes, five weeks, months, years?

And putting it into perspective because sometimes And often, to just tie it all back in, often when our blood sugar is off, that's what I was trying to say before, you know, we get crazy about something that we're like, wait a second, this is not worth getting myself all hung up.

You know? This is NOT an issue. So what's going on with me? And have I not fed my body today? Have I NOT slept? have i not moved? All these wonderful things that you're talking about.

Thank you so much for coming and sharing with us. Is there any last words of wisdom? Because you're just like wisdom bombing us that you want to share with the women about blood sugar, about menopause, and of course, where can we find you for those who want Okay.

So with this in mind, one more thing to share is just please be kind to yourself. Recognize whatever stage you're in and whatever age you are at. And we all have seasons we go through in life.

Some seasons are more demanding than others and pull in the people that you love and who are close to you. Let them know what's going on if you can. If the People that You thought were on your team turned out to not be good teammates, it's time to recruit others.

One of the best piece of advice that my mother gave me, my dear mother who's now departed, I'd love to Share with everyone. is to make it a point to making friends with women who are a variety of ages.

Women who're older, women are your age, and absolutely women that are younger. Let's be friends and bring each other forward together as a community, knowing we're going to need different things as time shifts because, you know, we don't really know what the future's going bring, but we do know we need eachother.

So that's the message I'd like to leave people with. Where you can find me, my website is naturalhealthcare.com. Natural spelled, just like you would think, N-A-T-U-R-E-L, then H-e-a-l-t-h-c- a-r- e dot com.

Meal Timing, Cravings, and Practical Blood Sugar Strategies

And I'm on the social media channels at Dr. Beverly Yates, including YouTube. I am going to get that wiggling real soon. That's inspiring. I love what you just said.

When I used to live in Tucson, we had a group of women that we all would hang out and go to dinner and listen to a lot of music. And we have a 20-year-old, a 30- year- old.

At the time, I was representing the 40- years-olds. We had 50, 60, 70, and 80. awesome. So I love that. I don't live in Tucson anymore. And you just reminded me, I need to recreate that because there's such value.

The younger can learn from the elders and the Elders can Learn from The Youngers and it is really such a beautiful thing. If you walk away with nothing else from being here all the days at the summit is to just learn to have kindness and love to yourself, that you're doing the best you can and that it's enough and you are enough, and to really pour into yourself.

I use that oxygen mass term all of the time that we need to take care of ourselves before we take of others. We need fill our own watering cans so we can then water others.

And now more than ever at this menopausal transition, no matter where you are on your hormonal journey, it's time to just own that. If you haven't owned it, that's okay.

Don't beat yourself up. Be kind. Just work on what you can do to start owning it now. So thank you so much, Dr. Beverly. You're just Such a joy, such a force of wisdom and wellness in the world.

And I really look forward to reading your new book and just thank you for being a part of the summit and coming and sharing with the women. You're welcome, Dr.

Sharon. I'm hopeful everyone will get what they need and get their own cup filled. Yes. Okay. Well, you ladies, You've got lots of wisdom and lots tasks from this.

So, and you know, I love that we talked about the things emotionally, but also physically getting a CGM, lifting heavy things and so forth. Think about, even if it's just one thing, what's an action step you're going to take.

And I look forward to seeing you at the next interview. Bye for now. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health.

Closing Advice, Community, and Where to Find Dr. Yates

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