Tick Season Is Here: How To Protect Yourself And Your Family Transcript

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Intro and immune health basics

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Getting sun, getting your vitamin D levels up, eating food that has zinc in it, keeping your gut healthy, avoiding stressors. You know, the list goes on and on, and that should be the basis of any health scare or concern or any virus or bacteria or anything.

We need to keep an immune system that is able to mount a response. Hey, it's Dr. Jen. I just wanted to talk about tick-borne illnesses and what is going on right now, what you have to be worried about.

So stay tuned. This is gonna be a great mini episode with me sharing what's going out there. Okay, so let's first talk about prevention of ticks. As you all know, if you follow me on Instagram, Integrative Doctor Mom, we have lots of chickens and lots Guinea fowl.

Honestly, I ordered I think like 17 guineafowl and the shipping was not good. A lot of them passed, but I ordered them and we only had two survived. So we had to guinea fowls from the shipment and then we got four more at the local like Edwards feed that we go to.

Tick prevention and yard safety

And these guini fows are so cute. They look like little dinosaurs. they have these little things that hang down and wobble and they're so, they are loud.

I will tell you. But it's great because they're not only tick-eating machines, they will eat up to a thousand ticks a day. So we have six right now, so that's 6,000 ticks per day, ticks that are not getting on my cats, which are bringing them inside, Which we need to pick off a lot.

Those are 6 thousand are getting off my kids that aren't getting it on me. And then we also have about 30 chickens, who are going to be eating up ticks too, because chickens are good at eating ticks also.

So the guinea fowl, we also have three that we hatched right now. They're actually kind of easy to hatch. And the thing is, I don't care if they're male or female because their job is to eat ticks, but we do obviously have males and some females.

They lay eggs. They're called a clutch of eggs when they lay them. And our guinea fowl think they're chickens, so they laid them in the chicken coop. I actually need to try them still. I have some that are fertilized, obviously, but not sitting on them and I need a cook that maybe I'll go do that for a snack today and let you guys know.

So that's one way to help with ticks. Other are essential oils. Oil of lemon eucalyptus, rose geranium, cedarwood, and thyme are ones that have some evidence showing that they can be helpful.

So you want your kids to just spray up with that. They could use it as cologne if they're older, but that would also be a good thing if you're playing outside or you are going somewhere where there's a lot of ticks, maybe friend's house that doesn't have guineas.

If you're going into long grass or the woods, make sure you are wearing a hat. They usually recommend long pants

and like tucking or tuck in the pants with socks.

So this is like if you going hiking, if know that there is going to be more tick exposure, also permethrin, they recommend spraying that over your clothes so the ticks don't get in there and then crawl.

that, you know, permethrin can have neurological consequences and high doses, so you have to be careful. With our cats, they were bringing in so many ticks and we do check them, but every once in a while we let one go or we don't get to it because we have So we did treat them with just regular conventional stuff because the natural stuff just wasn't working because they are crawling into all of the long grass around our property because, they think that they're little like cat warriors and, you know, on the prowl, I think they were big cat predators.

So that's another thing, keep your grass short. It's that long, grass that can also get ticks on you. and my husband and I were cleaning out the duck hutch and we put some of the hay that was basically manure in our woods that's just in the back that is not cut and i got one on my sock.

I saw it right on the white sock coming out. Be careful with that. And then we also try to tell the kids and ourselves to just wear hats because looking for a small, small tick in your hair is really hard.

In some of these, especially the Lone Star ticks, they are so tiny. They are. So tiny, so let's break down what we need to worry about right now. The studies have shown that the more exposure to the saliva of the tick, the Lone Star tick that's what carries alpha-gal, that is on their saliva and then the times bitten, more sensitization or allergies they're getting and they've noticed that this allergy will kind of wane down and if they get bit again it will ramp up again.

So for me this is similar and I've seen this in food sensitivity studies because this isn't IgE reaction it's like a delayed sensitivity that if we work on their gut health and their overall health in immune system guess what happens their food sensitivities and allergies go away.

So I feel like this is very similar to Alpha Gal. And I actually did a podcast on this two years ago, I think if you search.

Alpha-gal syndrome and immune resilience

So, just want to reiterate that again, this about getting good sleep. It's about sun, getting your vitamin D levels up, eating food that has zinc in it, keeping your gut healthy, avoiding stressors.

You know, the list goes on and on, and that should be the basis of any health scare or concern or any virus or bacteria or anything, we need to keep an immune system that is able to mount a response.

That brings me to alpha-gal, and then there's other things like auricular therapy that can help with that, but also lowering stress of the body, doing ventral nerve stimulation, all of those.

And I can leave my recommendations in the show notes. But we have another emerging virus that is really getting a lot of news fear, I guess, because whenever there is something that's fatal, It's a concern, even though chronic disease is fatal.

And we have, you know, over 600,000 people dying of heart disease and cancer a year, but, and those are all chronic diseases states. So Powassan virus is one that is hitting the headlines because there is a guy I think in Hampshire possibly that, is in the ICU for this.

This can cause brain inflammation, brain swelling called encephalitis. And what happens is, this is a flavivirus. Flaviviruses are single-stranded RNA viruses that go into the body and replicate, right?

So we know RNAviruses. Some of the other ones in the same class is Powassan, our yellow fever, and West Nile virus, Zika virus. Right? A lot of those are mosquito-borne.

So these are vectors, insects are vector for these. Now what's interesting about the RNA is that if your immune system sees this, it's going to take care of it.

It's just like that security guard or bouncer that is watching the crowd and scanning it, looking for problems in the cloud and then they see it when they take it and remove it they don't see a problem and just watch it and let it escalate and cause problems and chaos, no.

You're kicked out, you're done. So your immune system is like a bouncer and a security guard for these viruses coming in. And Poison virus is the same instance.

It's the So what is scary, I mean this is, but facts over fear, is that this does cross the blood-brain barrier. It can if that virus is replicating and replicating the body and there's no bouncer to kick it out or take care of it.

So it can pass the brain barrier and once that's happening, once it becomes neurologic encephalitis, it's about a 10% or 1 in 10 fatality rate. And then we also see once it hits the encephalitis or the brain swelling and inflammation, about 50 people continue to have neurologic symptoms.

I mean, this could be like a headache, but it could also be other things, you know. So this is a concern with that. But what do we do? Prevention. prevention, prevention of getting the deer tick bite is what this one is from.

And we also want to make sure we are boistering our immune system. So it's kind of twofold. What's interesting is if you dig into the research for flavivirus and what you also wanna do is stop the RNA replication and actually from it docking onto the cell, right?

So that is the viral entry and also just replicating, and this is similar for when we went through the pandemic. So actually, for flavovirus, I love this one article that I was looking at that does show it does help with flavivirus actually the dock in from the virus entry.

That's very interesting because it's The same kind of thing we've been through. When we look at viruses, we treat them differently because there's always not a treatment or, you know, a jab for it.

So we have to look outside the box. Quercetin specifically for Powassan virus can be helpful. I have my kids taking histate and histate junior that I have on my website.

You know, every day basically I had them because it has vitamin C in it, it's got quercetin. What else is quersetin? Heavy apples and also rootin would be helpful with this specific virus and that's in apples.

Also, capers are really high in quorsetin, so that is good.

Powassan virus risks and prevention

But here's the thing, Powassan virus, it is rare, but it does keep infectious disease doctors concerned because it can cross that blood-brain barrier and attack the brain.

So this is where 1 in 10 cases are fatal, the survivors can have long-term neurological problems. but we don't need to just run around scared with this or have this stop us from going outside.

We need get adequate sleep. You need fix any vitamin D insufficiency. we need a fix to any lack of zinc in our diet or supplementation. So we make sure we're getting adequate protein and we have good metabolic health.

Make sure our gut health is good. Let's switch to alpha-gal syndrome. This is triggered after that tick bite, and it creates an allergy to beef, pork, lamb, venison, even sometimes dairy.

And this is the IGP, but it's a delayed life-threatening allergic reaction. It's so interesting, I think, because When we look at alpha-gal, it's an attack on red meat, right?

And red me is something that we know fixes metabolic disease and does help. I'll have to leave this link. This was from 2016, and it was in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

And this alpha-gal, which is a sugar from the ticks get it from a deer and then it crosses. It was actually this hypersensitivity was with this, they found it with his cancer drug.

Satuimab and this was in 2004, first-year Myosquib was investigating a monoclonal antibody treatment for metastatic colon cancer. And after the infusion, certain people would get a really bad reaction and these people were in like Tennessee and the Southeast area.

So then they actually found that during the carbohydrate analysis of this drug, this They found that this was that alpha-gal molecule, and they found the people that were having the reactions were exposed to alpha gal through ticks.

It was the IgE response, that allergic response. It's really interesting because the red meat connection of this, they found the Red Meat connection in like 2006 and 2008 and found it that way.

So it's just really interested because when we moved to Tennessee about a year and a half ago, I was curious about ticks and I have been told by many people that have lived here for decades that The specific tick that carries alpha-gal, the Lone Star tick, was way, way worse, like in the last year and then this year, that it wasn't even really a thing.

And it's called Lones Star Tick because it started more in Tennessee or in Texas. So very interesting, and it has this little dot on it when it is mature.

So what happens if you see a tick on you? So where are you going to check? You're going do tick checks. It's just going be normal. And really this is like all throughout the Eastern part of the country now at this point that everyone should be.

Even Ohio, where we move from, people are, my friends are sending me messages that they're finding ticks on their kids. So behind the ears, in the scalp, armpits, waistband, groin, behind knees.

So it's all these places of warmth. And when I found a tick on me here, it was right in my belly button area. I'm like, how did it get there? That's so weird, right?

So maybe for my cat coming in. Then what can you do? We'll send in ticks every once in a while. You can just send it in, usually it is like $99. If you're in certain states, it's free and you can see what's going on in the area around you.

I know on my road, someone did test positive for Lyme disease. So that is a bacteria, Borrelia, and that as a spirochete bacteria. You do want to get it right away.

If get a rash or it was an engorged deer tick, you might, if you know that the you know, concerning for Lyme, then you probably want to treat with doxycycline.

Lyme testing, treatment, and tick removal

And there's studies that show just a one-time dose, 200 milligrams of docycyclin, you now, within one to two days of the tick bite can be helpful. If it's gone further than that, if you've waited for the rash or whatnot, or you waited the test to come back, well, than you're going to probably be doing 100 milligrams twice a day for two weeks.

So it really just depends on each situation, and this is why It is so important that you come up with a plan. If you're concerned about this, a Plan Now with your doctor.

You know, so like if you have an integrative doctor, like, if someone's working with me or a patient's listening, let's

have a appointment just to come If you got a tick bite, you know, do you have ivermectin in case you're worried about the virus?

Do you do have doxycycline if you are worried it's Lyme? If your worried its Alfgout, what's the plan right now to build a robust immune system and work on your gut health?

So this is all stuff that you should just be planning ahead so you aren't jumping or concerning or being stressed out when it happens. You just need to be prepared and that is why it is important to work with someone that that knows this.

So the actual tick removal, get a tick spoon. I will link below my tick guide that can help you guys out. Use a Tick Spoon to scoop it out, you don't want to burn it, leave the head in or anything like that.

And then if you do not have any guinea fowl, I recommend getting them. They're really so cute. Oh, I love my little guinea fowl and we raise them with chickens.

So they just like love us and stay here. They are not like cuddly. Like I've tried to like hold one to get it cuddley and they're game foul. You know, they are just not that.

But they do love like they will like come. Anyway, it's really funny and I loved love love when I watched them like when they were out in our long grass and such.

It's like so good. I hope this was helpful. If you have any other questions, why don't you leave them below? Once again, facts and faith over fear. I know, you guys, it's scary.

It's scared to think of all this. That's going to happen to you or your kid. But here's the thing, like we serve a God that is greater than all of the stuff in our broken world.

And fear is really the enemy's way to paralyze us and trap us, and especially health fear, okay?

Faith, preparedness, and closing remarks

So if you feel fear at all during this episode, that was not my intent, this was to educate you and be prepared because we do and are called to be good stewards of our body and part of that honestly is being prepared.

You know, I know a lot of people that just like stick their head in the dirt and they don't even want to learn about this stuff and that's not what we should do either.

Let me just leave with some scripture. So for everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the word, our faith.

That's why facts and faith over fear. I'm sorry, that was from first John five. No fear, let's move forward. If you are going through something like Lyme or Alpha Gal, you're learning from it.

The Lord will use that. He will make that for good. All right, Dr. Jen signing off.