Introduction and personal connection

Welcome to Mold, Mycotoxin, and Chronic Illness Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Ann Shippy. And today we get to talk with one of my dear friends, Dr. Amy Myers.

She's a New York Times bestselling author and she's internationally acclaimed functional medicine physician specializing in autoimmune, thyroid digestive issues and so much more.

She's such an incredible wealth of information. Thank you so much for joining us. And we. Thank you. I'm already tearing up and you and I have been through so much.

God, I did not think this is how I would start this interview at all. Well, thank you so much. I had so much going on right now. And I just This is precious time with you.

Oh, no. It's just thinking about all of the history that you and I have together through our. It's been a lot we've helped start with very first learned about.

How did you know it was a thing and a medicine that we were missing all the time? Well, that is actually from you, because I used to think everything was mercury toxicity.

So for those that don't know, I'm classically trained as a conventional physician, as are you and ER medicine and then went into functional medicine and through my own health history with Graves Disease and started practicing along, as you know, in the same city as you and you and I became friends.

And, you know, I had many things going on with me. SIBO Candida had been a vegetarian forever. Graves Disease, you name it, I had it leaky gut and mercury overload.

And so I went through that detox that I do think that we see things from a certain lens. And so you kept telling me all about mold. And I thought, Oh, no, no, there's nothing going on here with that kind of like lyme.

I mean, you know, until I met Darin Ingles, you know, nothing was Lyme either. Now there's so much that's all three of these things, but, you know, it wasn't until my own experience that I was getting sick again, I had helped myself recover.

I had my thyroid ablated, so I couldn't get that back, but my autoimmune markers had gone negative and I was in an office and I had bought an older and I'm in an older office in Austin and had bought an older home in Austin, and I felt drugged in the house when I moved in and my dog.

Pretty fast, if I remember. Correctly. Yeah, very fast. I mean, yes, it was I, I clearly was sort of tolerating my office to some degree and then I. Wasn't great either.

No, it wasn't. But I think the house was the big problem because I moved into this house, started going through renovation while I was living there. And I just felt drugged.

I mean, like, I you know, I'm a person. If you can't tell, I have high energy. I'm you know, I never, you know, don't generally drink caffeine. And I just wake up with a lot of energy.

And I was literally feeling drugged like I could not get out of bed. And I had a dog who was 13 years old at the time, and she literally started having incontinence out of nowhere.

And I took her to the vet and they said, Oh, she's 13 years old. Well, of course, you know, long story short, uncover

that it's mold, go through the entire thing.

And I can speak to going through mold, you know, as a single person I can speak to going through mold as a married person, I can see mold going through or speak to going through mold as a married person with a child.

So I have experience in all three of them. So having known you and and known, you know, how sick patients can get and having been sick, I just, you know, literally moved out, went and stayed with a friend.

And the very interesting thing, obviously, my fatigue stopped immediately. But my dog the first night there didn't have incontinence. I never put her on the medication and her incontinence went away immediately, literally overnight.

That's amazing. And that's such a good point because a lot of times our animals get sick even before the humans do. And so they're they're really the canary sometimes.

First mold exposure and recovery

Right? So once I got triggered, I now am, I think, very similar to you that I can feel it a lot of places. I had patients coming in to see me who without doing anything, I would just say, look, I'm just going to tell you straight up, you got toxic mold.

I can feel it all over you. So I became that sensitive. But I mean, I did. You know what? I imagine some people I don't know who you've had on the summit, but I mean, I got rid of everything. Literally everything.

I moved into a brand new apartment with my dog, and I bought a mattress and slept on the floor and brought nothing with me other than my dog. And so, you know, I have that experience of of getting, you know, I don't know where you want me to go with this, but I have the experience of literally getting rid of everything and starting from ground zero, recovering and then meeting my now husband and dating him.

And again, I'd gotten all my autoimmune markers negative and everything, and then I start dating him and suddenly I'm having these hand swellings and my hands are turning like red and white.

And I was like a kid in a candy store because I had my own clinic. So I would check my labs all the time, and I saw some pretty scary autoimmune markers which were negative.

But, you know, as you and I know, I mean, they weren't zero, but they were negative, but they were creeping up. And so, again, I just went on this search.

He was in a brand new house. So I thought, you know, certainly that can't be a problem. Literally, brand new had just moved in And again, just kind of looked under every rock, every under rock, didn't want to believe it again and discovered that it was back in his house.

And the interesting thing this time is I remember it was in February and our anniversary is the beginning of March. And I looked at him and I just said, I'm moving out and finding a brand new apartment.

You can come, you can go, I don't know. But these autoimmune markers are so scary. I have to get out of here and again, like, leave everything behind and again started over with a mattress on the floor.

And that time I actually got really sick afterwards, which was interesting. I had all kinds of digestive issues. I started having panic attacks. I got hypothyroid again.

That seems to be a thing for me that my, you know, even though I don't have a thyroid and I'm on the same dose, I get hypothyroid. But again, started over.

I mean, I was so sensitive at that point. I also get chemically sensitive. And so, you know, the walking in the target

and the, you know, just everything, you know, the laundry aisle, of course, I don't really care for that on on a given day when I'm going.

To get day. Yeah. You know, I mean, like, I couldn't even smell new clothes kind of stuff. And I was literally on our one year anniversary sleeping on a balcony.

I was so sick I couldn't tolerate anything. But being outside again, you know, just went through my program. The things you do, you know, to get the mold out, the glue that I own, the charcoal, really the biggest for me has always been just removing the exposure.

You know, so many people don't want to do that because they're so tied. And this is where I'll start getting emotional again when it comes to my daughter.

But they're so tied to their things and I wasn't tied to anything. So it was pretty easy for me. So I just got rid of things and just moved. I mean, having worked with so many sick patients for mold, I knew how bad it could get.

But the hope in it all is I also know how you can recover from it, because I've had other patients that couldn't tolerate things and were sleeping on balconies as well.

And you know, I know you can recover from this, but you've got to get. Away from it, even though you know you can recover, it's oh. My God, Yeah. When you're a very scary so and of course, you know, when you're trying to find another doctor to try to take it out of your hands, it's so difficult because there are so few that really understand it, you know?

And anyway, so my husband and I are mostly me went on a quest to we bought some land in Austin, outside of Austin, a couple of acres, because, you know, it's one of those things like if something happens to the house, I don't want have a neighbor next to me.

I want to be able to go camp outside or, you know, and it's terrible that you have to be thinking these ways. But that's how I was thinking, because I thought, I can't go through this ever again.

And then I realized, why am I buying a land in the allergy capital of the world To me, because I am I doing this? So we went on a quest of the high deserts and went to bend, Oregon, went to places in Colorado, came to Santa Fe and settled on Santa Fe because I still have my company in Austin and we still have our home there.

And, you know, it was a way to be able to go back and forth very quickly. But the humidity here generally is low. And then I went on a quest to build the most bomb proof mold proof house on the face of this earth.

And beautiful too. You. I achieved it except for the fact that the builder didn't follow the architect's plans. And it was one area that nobody consulted me on and it wasn't involved in, and it's the one area that I had a problem with.

So we built a house out of pumice, creed and steel, so I would have no wood in the house. We use dense glass instead of sheet rock. So we had I mean, you have to have something for a ceiling.

So we had dense glass as our ceilings, but all the walls are pumice great, and if they couldn't do a pumice great wall, then it was steel and dense glass.

But the requirement was every wall that had plumbing in it had to be pumice. Great. So I don't know, eight, ten leaks later, thank God I had built the house the way that I had built the house.

Because you had you literally had at least I do. I literally cannot count the number. But there there's six bathrooms and there was and every single sink or toilet in the entire house.

So, I mean, when they turned on the water, there were three leaks behind the wall in the plumbing, just from nails, from the people that put in the we then had plaster.

So it was pumice crepe walls with plaster over it. And plaster has a cage, so to speak, a metal cage. And then they'd nail it into the plaster and it's nailed through the, through the piping, which is a very normal thing to happen.

Not normal, but a common thing that happen in quick construction, all this kind of stuff. But in a custom home that took multiple years to build, didn't think it was happen.

The worst part of it is a builder didn't even tell me that it happened or the architect until there was a weeping leak that then the plaster was wet all up the wall and they had to call to tell me that there was going to be a delay in the build.

And then all trust was lost at that point. And I had to fly my mold inspector up and everything. And luckily at that point all was well. We don't know about the cabinets, but we just threw those out.

And my builder, anyway, I was okay and then this was the place that I thought, I've done it. I've, I've done it everywhere else. You know, I don't know about your house, but everywhere else I had lived since losing everything from mold was furniture, from Target and, you know, inexpensive stuff, because I always had that fear that it would happen to me again.

And I never wanted to invest in clothes or art, literally. You know, our house in Austin doesn't have a single thing on the wall. I mean, it's kind of a horrible way to live.

Second exposure, house build, and family impact

But, you know, I never felt safe to have nice furniture or to hang anything on the wall because I was always in fear that something was going to happen.

I was going to have a leak and and lose. Everything would be disposable. Yes. Right. And I bought things like leather sofas and pleather chairs, things that you could wipe down and that were kind of bullet proof. Here I took the other like, I've built this house, I've done it, I've mastered it.

I had all these leaks and I managed to get through it all without having issues. And then and then so I, you know, bought nice furniture and I bought things that were porous and I bought things that were, you know, very.

Difficult to buy when you're decorating. Yeah. I mean, just the normal things that most normal people buy, new furniture that hang art and on Christmas Eve we had a few drops of water.

It was pouring down rain, it was freezing cold. And we had a couple of drops of water drop down on the floor and, you know, I thought, well, what could this has to be coming from the roof?

And and it wasn't. And the builder said, Oh, no, no, no. I think it's coming from I think it's coming from the the drier air duct because I noticed it compensating during the build.

And I was like, what? And and he said, yeah, but I just, you know, I thought it was like what you thought once you closed the ceiling, it would be okay.

So it was actually quite humorous that they noticed that something is not humorous. I can only laugh at this point. But anyway, they installed the dry air vent instead of as the architect had drawn it, they installed the dryer vent.

And we have these very, very tall ceilings and they had the dryer vents. First of all, if you're building a house, you always want your laundry room to be on the outside of the house.

I did not know that at the time, and nor should I have needed to. But certainly my architect and builder should have confirmed that knowing, you know, who they were building this house for.

So our laundry room was in the middle of the house. And so it came out and then went up. And right at this bend it

had been condensates because the air differential in the space was, you know, hot, too cold with this hot air blowing through.

And then over time, as it was continuing to condensate, every time we did laundry, likely it eventually broke down. It had this mastic around it and then water dripped.

And then they opened up the cavity saying, like, you've built this house in a way that there can't possibly be mold. So they didn't contain it. And of course, you never want to believe that after everything I've done at this point, to never be exposed again, to believe that this could be happening to you again and so I go along with it and know there's water with dryer lint coming through, and now I have mold spores all over my house You could feel it immediately.

I could feel it immediately, immediately. I mean, I started reacting before we left, but it was like we left like 24 hours later or something. But it was like being away from it and walking in.

It was like, Oh no. So and that was something really hard for me to grapple with, with everything that I had been through and, you know, the interesting thing is that my mold, you know, my Richy Shoemaker labs were all positive very quickly, which was so interesting.

And the interesting thing is I had just done them in October because I was thriving and I was doing so well and all my autoimmune markers were negative again.

And I was literally like celebrating with my functional medicine physician, like, I'm great, you know, in October. And then this happens in January. And, you know, the the labs are all elevated.

So, I mean, luckily I had the, you know, the negative and I was thriving and anyway, I can't I'm as you can imagine, I'm in a large lawsuit over this now.

But yeah, I mean, it was back to we had to move out, got rid of everything that I had just bought. And this time it was really, really difficult with the child because I don't care about anything.

I own it stuff. But when you have a five year old that's asking, where is this stuffed animal or where Mommy, mommy, can you go back to the house? And I want these princess shoes and I want that costume.

And she's like, I and if you don't know where they are, I'm going to tell you exactly where they are. Mommy. And meanwhile, I know that they're not there.

I know that they're, you know, in the garage in a bag. And so it was extremely difficult. Or when we finally were able to come home, you know, the most important thing to me was salvaging as much of her stuff as I could and not having this be a part of her memory or history.

And that's frankly all. I mean, obviously I cared about getting well, but, you know, my exposure time this time was only a week. And so I didn't physically get as sick.

But mentally, I mean, I got diagnosed with PTSD traumatic. I was unable to work for almost a year. I just took my first flight that had a layover with my daughter in however long that's been now because it manifest in flying for me.

So, I mean, the ripple effects this time were so much greater than the physical, you know, and then coming home and, you know, I'll ask you, where is this or where is that?

And you're like, oh, you know, I don't know or mom, you know, this stuffed animals hair didn't look like this before. Why is it look like that? I mean, anything that I could just buy another of.

So she didn't notice I did. But there were certain things, you know, that Santa had brought her that I couldn't find new ones. And so, you know, I wash them and then they didn't turn out the same.

And I have an observant child, you know, who's like, what's wrong with this? And just she moved on. But for me, it was the biggest dagger in the heart.

And it you know, it was just devastating for me that I even had to go through that with her. So anyway. Well, the good news is that she's in a clean environment and that she doesn't have to look, she really has.

She's so healthy. Yeah, of course. So yeah. So I don't know where you want to go from here, but I can talk about it from a medical perspective, from a personal perspective, from a, you know, how do you do it as you're alone with somebody without somebody?

You know, I had always told people you need to flee and there's no way you can remediate your house. And it was a difficult concept for me to think that this home could be remediated.

But given how I built the house and the humidity levels here and, you know, just the types of surfaces with steel and with the with the plaster and things like that, you know, we felt like it could be cleaned.

But I mean, I got rid of everything again, you know. So now let's talk a little bit about well, let's keep with the relationship side of this, because it's really it is such a big part of this.

Like the relationship with ourselves and how we talk to ourselves about our situation, our decisions. And you have an amazing husband that is, you know, really respects your opinions and wants to support you in such a great way.

But even then, it's challenging for him, right? Oh yeah, I mean, you know, I was thinking if you needed another interview, you probably interview him of, you know, the trauma of all of it.

I mean, I think probably this time around the hardest and I can't speak for him, but I think the hardest is, you know, I am so strong and I can do anything.

And for him to see me so incapacitated, I think that was the hardest. Yeah. And for the most part, I was able to hide that from my child. But there were times that I couldn't.

And that was very difficult for me as a parent and as a woman and as a strong woman. Yeah. So what why do you think the key things have been to really help you to to find your.

I did EMDR therapy. I mean, that that truly was I've tried EMDR in the past for very old childhood stuff and I didn't find it helpful but in such an acute that and lots of Xanax.

I am I am a very controlled person, you know, in the sense that I don't even barely ever drink. And so, you know, I remember one day calling my doctor in tears saying that I had had to take three Xanax in a day.

And that was the most difficult thing for me, because I do believe that I can get through anything and I can do anything. Ten so much. And this was so out of my control and had affected me emotionally so much.

I mean, it's a it's a fundamental, you know, mad loves hierarchy of needs, having a safe place to live. And I felt like if this home wasn't safe, how was I ever going to have a home that was safe after everything that I had done?

I mean, everybody on this job knew who they were building this house for and why they were building this house. And everybody knew. I mean, I met with everybody, the roofer.

I don't want any seems. How are you feeling? The themes of a penetration has to go through the roof. What are we doing it? The windows. I mean, every Friday for almost three years there were conversations about how are we going to handle this, How are we going to handle that?

I was involved in everything and then I'm kicking myself because the one thing that nobody asked me about was literally the only way I could have had mold in my house.

And it happened and they didn't ask me about it and not only did they not ask me about it, they didn't follow the architect's plans. So, you know, I mean, I guess there's nothing you can do when they're just, you know, bad people doing not following instructions.

But I wasn't involved. But anyway. That so vigilant about every detail. And then to have this one. Yeah I mean so it's just back to Yeah, I mean it affected me so to the core because if you don't have a place to sleep and a place to live that safe and now the ante was so high, I now had a child, you know, it wasn't me again, where I could just do it.

Or even my husband, who you know, begrudgingly yet, you know, did the other things. I had a child. Now the stakes were so high and I had spent so much time and money, money and energy to build this house.

I mean, the stakes could not have been higher for me. And then I was having this, you know, literally like a nervous breakdown over the whole situation and having to take, you know, prescription medication to get through a day, which was just frightening on so many levels for me.

So, I mean, the only two other times in my life I've ever had Xanax were when I had hypothyroidism. And I was literally it had my thyroid and I had dumping, you know, had moments when my thyroid was dumping and I would have spikes of hormones.

And then by the time I was sleeping on the balcony. So, I mean, it's not something I mean, you know, me like I was not, you know, other than my thyroid, I'm not taking prescription medication.

I'm getting to the root cause I'm you know, I'm you know, I drink a few times a year, you know, that's it. So so, yes, this was it was very difficult for me to, you know, be in that situation to have to take those kind of drugs to get through a day.

So you decided to try EMDR for. The EMDR. What that is. And yeah, so it's I mean, what does EMDR stand for? Do you know? I forget. Okay, I'll have to look it up. What?

Oh, you've never done it. Okay, well, so. It's these patients that have done it. Yeah, like I said, I. Mean, it is. Sure. Yeah. I mean, like I said, for I had done it before and it had not done anything for me.

So I don't know if this was the difference of the practitioner or I think it was that it was this highly emotional and very specific event that was also highly acute, that it was very easy to trigger and to get into the thing.

So what happens is you get into you, you start thinking about whatever it is, and then you can either do rapid eye movements or have or have a sound in your ears, alternating in your ears that resets the neurological pathways in your brain to, you know, to basically to reprogram your brain as if the situation was different.

And so that was very helpful. It was so helpful that I had the woman who helped me out. She didn't live in state. She got licensed for me, which was so kind and amazing.

And I flew her to the house and I walked through every room with her to try to reprogram me so that I could live in my house. I mean, I could physically live in the house, but mentally it was you know, there was anger, there was sadness, there was anxiety.

There was this whole emotional component that I can't say is even 100% gone, because clearly I'm literally in my office staring out at the house and you asked me about mold and I broke into tears.

I mean, please go look on the Internet of the times that I have ever had an interview where I'm like, bawling, crying, You will not find it. All I'm doing is crying this entire interview.

So clearly I am still triggered by this, but not in a way that I, you know, I'm able to work.

Trauma, EMDR, and acute treatment

I do have to take a half a Xanax if I have to fly, but that's the only time, you know, I need it at this point. So it's I've made great strides in, you know, overcoming the situation once again, I bought new furniture and I've hung some art.

And, you know, I still have my moments in the house for sure. And I still have my moments of questioning and things like that. You know, I don't know how someone like you and me can go through the world and not have those moments when we've gone through what we've gone through. But, you know, so I now can speak to the emotional component.

So, yes, I mean, it was lots of EMDR, lots of EMDR. I mean, it was lots. Of ten sessions. 20 sessions. I you know, I don't know. I mean, I really don't know.

And the whole like two days, I mean, she was here at my house for two straight days of EMDR to walk around the house. And, you know, I mean, it's something that I just got to a place where I'm functioning and so I've stopped.

But, you know, there are things that come up that I literally have just had some stuff going on that anyway that I need to probably go back to it to just as a like to not all the time, I would say, you know, just to convince, you know, medicine that there is a time and a place.

And I would not have made it through without Xanax. I mean, I would not have. And, you know, I think probably something for me to tell people is there there's a time and a place for it.

And and I told that to my patients all the time. Right. I mean, you don't want to be on immunosuppressive drugs. You don't want to be on these things. You want to get to the root cause.

But in an acute moment, there is a time, if you are a, you know, sick and you have a bacterial infection and you need antibiotics. I mean, I had a situation that I mean, all it took a while for the EMDR to take hold and to work and for the situation to, you know, unravel itself and get better and get somebody to come in and clean the house.

I mean, that was the big unknown for me, was getting on somebody's schedule and getting it cleaned. And I don't even want to get into the whole botched thing where I hired one company and they actually made everything worse.

And so I then had to have another company come in. And so there was the unknown of knowing whether I was going to be able to get back in the house was so anxiety producing that once I got over that hurdle and they started cleaning and I was able to enter the house, I mean, I didn't enter my house for, you know, there's plastic up, containment up everywhere.

I don't know how many months it was before I was able to actually go into the house without a hazmat suit and a respirator. And so, you know, conventional medicine, I guess what I want to say is, as hard as it was for me to take it in as broken as I felt I was to need to have to take it, it saved me.

I mean, I could not have gotten through if I didn't have that. And I so I think taking things in a cute situation and not using it as a long term crutch or using it as some long term solution for yourself, if I had never gotten to the root and never done the EMDR, you know, and I just thought Xanax was my solution to this anxiety and PTSD that was not the route that I was going to take.

Right. And so I think that's an important thing for people to know that it's okay to need to, you know, do conventional methods and means in a acute situation.

Absolutely. And it really is fascinating how I see anxiety being a barometer for a lot of people for what their environmental exposures are. So any time people are feeling like, oh, okay, I need to address that anxiety again, we have to look deeper because it are, I would say, pretty much always there's an underlying trigger.

Oh, I mean, I had a family, a woman come see me and her daughter and they the daughter had depression and, you know, she was a teenager. But, you know, some other things that easily could just not be explained by mold.

But of course, I tested her and everything and and it came back that it was mold and she didn't want to hear it. Fine. You have to be ready to hear it.

You have to be ready to act. It's not something that you can sort of do, half hearted or otherwise. It's wasted effort in a lot of cases. And, you know, it was a few years later, you know, she wrote me back and said that they finally realized it did something about it.

And, you know, it was like she the mother had anxiety, the daughter had depression, the newborn had something else. It was like it all went away. So, you know, and I'm sure you or others have talked about this, that it can manifest in people in so many different ways.

And that is why it is so tricky unless you're working with a physician like yourself or when I was practicing, because someone who's been through it, somebody that really understands it because it can be anything, I mean, for me it's this, it's this hand swelling, redness, white, almost like Raynaud's, but it's not cold.

And they're swollen. And then it really doesn't. And then it's a fine rash that my skin feels like it's burning, but nobody else can see it. Or people will say, Oh, you look like you've been out in the sun or something.

But like, I would always be like, Hey, Javier, can you see it? Can you see it? You know, he's like, No, I can't see it. Like, my skin is on fire. I just felt like my skin was burned and then it really the only other thing it is is my autoimmune markers, like ones you do not want to have start creeping up.

So, you know, on the outward surface, my symptoms are not debilitating or even overt to anyone. But what is going on in the inflammatory response inside of me that unless I'm checking my labs you would never know is really scary.

And okay, so back to the things you know. So I have an infrared sauna. I'm I'm very lucky. I have a hyperbaric machine. You know, I, I have a supplement company so glued to the iron charcoal.

I mean, to get the stuff out. Blood of iron. Charcoal. Of course I wasn't doing hyperbaric or or that in the acute stage, but later I was doing those things and I kind of do them on a regular basis.

And those are things that I certainly did, you know, back when it when it was way more physical and my exposure had been longer this time. Like I said, I think my the biggest thing that helped me was a, you know, getting the house cleaned and and retesting and and, you know, knowing that there wasn't something here and and then the EMDR and then, you know, this just added reassurance of of our special clinic great safe.

Yeah so the sonnet I have a very good if I on charcoal are your most important things to to keep your head further above water so that the other kinds of exposures that we get all the time that we can't control, that your body zips them through.

Yeah. I mean, as you can imagine, owning a supplement company, I take all kinds of things. A little bit more because you're such a wealth of knowledge on that.

What are your assets? What am I going to things? Well, my Myers Way multivitamin, which is our number one top seller we have three methylated B vitamins in it.

So for the average person that's going to be amazing. I mean as it's six pills. So it's chock full. I mean, people even just taking three a day can generally feel something from it.

With in terms of energy, I have mutations at my IFR, which also don't help me clear, you know, or makes it more difficult for me to clear certain toxins such as mercury, which is why I had mercury overload.

I don't know. I don't think we know yet if that has any aspect in terms of clearing mold. I have other genetics that don't allow me to clear molds. And they're commonly with people affected by mold and it seems to accelerate the detoxification.

So I think it's critical actually. Right. So I take then I take methylation support, which is additional pre methylated B vitamins. Those are kind of, you know, that I try to take glutathione of my own every day.

I don't take charcoal every day, but I don't travel without food of iron and charcoal because you never know. And I can get into a whole thing about travel and, and just, you know, hotels and Airbnbs and all kinds of things fish oils, vitamin D, probiotic.

I mean, I say the the the four essentials are a multivitamin, fish oils, vitamin D and a probiotic. You know, I take some things for mitochondrial support.

Absolutely. They're so affected by the necrotizing. Yes. I'm trying to think of what else. I mean, you know, the box is chock full of things of those are I mean those are really my main go tos.

I make a product leaky gut revive. I also don't travel without that. I just drink that whenever we have a strawberry lemonade flavor. That's delicious.

So I just, you know, when I want something refreshing, I drink that we have a paleo protein powder that, you know, I don't do these things every day, but and then a reds and a greens.

And so I just kind of as I want them, I'm getting them in my diet and I go through phases of I'm doing this every single day to, you know, just by me sort of craving them.

I get them in, you know, three or four times a week kind of situation. Try not to be with our diet, too. Like, I guess your diet is foundational. You want to share a little bit about that.

Sure. I mean, I think it's also you know, I was vegetarian for 27 years, and when I found out about functional and really, although I'd had my thyroid ablated, I just knew as a person with autoimmunity I was three times more likely to get another autoimmune condition.

And so I was really, excuse me, looking at ways to stop that fire and to hopefully prevent me from ever getting another autoimmune condition, which so far I've been able to do.

And so, you know, I really work to heal. My God, I told you I was eating grains and legumes. So I had cibo Candida, you know, I mean, I was doing the you know, medical school, the tofurky, the tofu cheese, the, you know, I'm using all this, you know, tofu, tofu, everything.

And Ezekiel sprouted whole wheat bread because that was healthy. So, I mean, I had to make some dramatic dietary changes from this since that I was a vegetarian and a vegan at times.

And I was eating all these whole grains. Now, I wasn't going on eating Oreos because I grew up with parents that we grew up eating brown rice, we grew up eating tofu, we grew up eating you know, my mother made yogurt when we were little because she knew about the microbiome.

She made homemade wheat bread. We never had sugar cereal as a kid, so I didn't have to make dramatic shifts from Oreos and Eminem's to, you know, real Whole Foods.

But I had to make a shift from whole grains and no meat to meat. So I first started with meat and I thought I was gonna have a bad reaction. And the first time I had meat, I literally woke up the next day like, I need another burger.

So I was like, I never look back. Now I am particular about my meat and I have texture things and I don't like, you

know, you know, So I'm still picky about my meat and of course, eat grass fed, you know, pasture raised and things like that. But but I was still doing grains until I met Dr.

Ann Shippy who suggested that I also give up grains. And even I resisted that for quite some time. And then, you know, did and really saw a huge difference in me and then started doing it with my patients.

And so I mean, I think probably what you're recommending to people is what I recommend. Now, as I've gotten better, you know, I'm not as strict as you.

I do.

Diet, supplements, and travel strategies

You know, I will eat some grains. I mean, I have a child. She eats a lot of white rice. But, you know, or I'll eat like a kito bread that's mostly resistant starch, things like that.

But I find that I can, you know, it's the times where I'm sick with mold. I mean, that's really the only thing that's hit me in the last ten years has been mold three times.

You know, I've got to dial it in is what I tell people. I mean, I coined the phrase the autoimmune spectrum back in 2015 when my first book, The Autoimmune Solution, came out.

And it really is, you know, when you're high up on the spectrum, when you're dealing with something, you've you've got to I mean, I've got to I think most people have to really dial it in and you've got to be super strict about. It.

Then as you're getting well, you know, you can branch out. I mean, I don't sit and eat corn chips every day or corn, and I go for a you know, my breakfast this morning was I can eat eggs.

So I have a huge garden. I had Swiss chard from the garden, some sheep's cheese and egg little omelet on a tortilla. So, I mean, I choose this day, I don't choose a corn, but if we're out at Mexican, that's what my daughter one Charlie would not eat one.

Or sometimes I'll eat one. And. And I can do that now and be okay, you know, whereas others, you know, prefer to just stay, you know, really strict on the no grains and whatnot.

I've found that that in terms of the diet, you know, as long as I'm not something every day now I never eat gluten and and I don't do cows, dairy or even really goat's dairy.

I can only do sheet dairy of like a hard cheese. And that's the only, you know, dairy that I eat. But I don't do any regular dairy and I don't do gluten ever, ever.

On a very similar path. I can do some occasional rice now and definitely do eggs. I haven't touched any of the cheese yet, but that's next. So I don't know.

I don't know. You might well stay away from it. It's so delicious because all of the, you know, Facebook users out there are just filled with things and they don't melt.

And, you know, when. I go take the cases of morphine antibodies that make you crave. Oh, okay. So it's probably a slippery slope. Yeah, probably. It is so nice to just like, okay, as long as I'm gluten free, dairy free, meticulously, if I have a little bit of these other things, it's it's doable.

But still keep the core pretty clean. Yeah. So let's let's talk about travel. Yeah, I mean, travel I opt for in This does not certainly mean that you're going to be scot clean or that it's going to be okay.

But I just opt for new places if we don't generally do Airbnb's unless it's really clear that you can tell that is brand

new place. I mean that that it's you know and because nobody tells you what it is, I guess you could try to ask them or whatever.

But I look for a new place but I tend to go for there's a you can literally Google newest hotels and whatever and there is a website that has an article I'm sure they get money off of you clicking the link and you don't need to do that.

But in most major cities there is an article and it will tell you all of the newest hotels. So even, you know, I was just in New Orleans and, you know, there are two hotels that I have gone to and stayed in and been okay.

So my criteria is really is it new? Not how nice is that? So, I mean, literally, I can be on one. We took a road trip and it was, you know, looked a little schizophrenic of the places that we stayed from, like uber nice.

Do you know, I always like a good residence in, you know, because then you have a kitchen if you can find a new residence in, they give you a kitchen.

They generally have many splits in there. So you're not sharing the air of everybody else. They don't use air fresheners now. So yeah. And then and then they have a refrigerator and a kitchen.

So it just makes depending on what kind of travel you're doing. Certainly with a child, it makes eating continuing to eat healthy, you know, pretty easy.

I mean, I do like to make smoothies when I travel. And so, you know, it's always nice to have a blender. There are also hotels, you know, now, I can't remember which chain it is, but things I'm going to say aloft, I don't know if that's one of them, that now they don't even have carpet.

You know, they just have that. That one. You know, the flooring in it. So I kind of look for that like light, least carpeting, least amount of curtains, you know, just things that if there's a problem, can get moldy.

And then if you're dealing with the place that has that has many splits instead of instead of air conditioning units, then hopefully prevent if there was a leak somewhere else, it getting into your room.

And I didn't mention that about my house, but we did many splits in our house and you know, for the very reason, right. I mean, then I did not have an AC unit with duct work that needed to be cleaned.

And the way that the mold spread around our house was just natural, but mostly from us walking around the house. Right. It wasn't from a big AC system, an air duct system and all that kind of stuff.

So that's something else that we did in our house that well, when last summer, none of them but one worked and all the piping is in the pumice crete walls.

That was a headache but generally thing. Yeah, I won't get into that part of the mass I got left with that I had to get myself out of with these problems with the house.

You're regardless of a leak, but So yeah, many splits are also good. I mean, that's all you can kind of do in travel is look for the newest place again you might be dealing with off gassing of carpeting or flooring or paint or things like that.

But, you know, I personally can deal with that better than I can with mold. I'll take off gassing. I mean, I don't love it, but I'll take that any day over over mold.

And just know that if you go in one I mean, we have a thing in our family. All the bags stay right where they are. I go up, I check out the room, I make sure that the room is okay.

And then we, you know, and then if not, we ask to change rooms. So I forgot my home old exposure in Mexico. But

that's a different story, too. So, you know.

I just had a major situation where I wish I had left the bags there because I was in a really big hotel. But yeah. It took forever. So that's our thing in the third room, right? Is better.

And then if they change rooms, if if we have brought our bags up, I'm like, leave the bags here. Let me go check the other room. So, you know, my husband kind of knows.

He kind of like, looks at me like, is it okay to unpack now? You know, are we okay? And then, of course, when I travel, I do things to just minimize my toxic burden.

You know, we always carry our own unscented. Dr. Bronner's soaps. You know, I mean, we even if I'm going like, to a resident in, I'll I'll bring unscented dishwashing soap.

So I travel with this stuff so that I'm not then getting hit in so many other ways as well. Because as I'm sure you've talked about, I mean, it really is this drip system that, you know, as you're getting this and that and maybe you can tolerate just fine and then you get this hit.

I mean, for me, when I get hit with mold, all bets are off. I mean, it just goes out the window. And I am then, you know, uber sensitive to foods, you know, that I couldn't that I was able to tolerate.

I suddenly can't tolerate smell since all these things it just like the whole system just breaks the day I'm opens for me. But when I'm not being hit with mold, I can tolerate the which is one of the things I found in Santa Fe I could tolerate more since I could tolerate not that I'm advocating for since in your life, but I could tolerate different foods here that I couldn't tolerate, say, in Austin.

And so it you know, it was truly a breath of fresh air. I mean, the the the air is cleaner here than it is in Austin. And so I just found that my whole burden and my whole load was lowered and I can tolerate more things.

And so when you're traveling, you know, you're just typically not eating as well, not sleeping as well. So you want to just do the things that you can do.

Be sure to take your supplements. Be sure to the best of all, you stay on your diet, You know, take unscented products, nontoxic products with you just so that you're, you know, minimizing all of that as much as possible.

And don't be afraid to ask for another room if your room because, you know, you and I have stayed in a hotel before where we're like, something's wrong with this floor.

And then down the hallway we see the the the carpet wet and the big air blower trying to draw the carpet. So, you know, there can be a leak on a certain floor or something happen in a certain room and then two doors down or, you know, a few floors up or down, it could be five.

Yeah. That's so important to not, you know, really regret your stay. Yes. I've lost everything on a trip to Mexico. Yeah. What's that one? The last conference you missed was the perfect one.

Dennis and I, you know, are already looking at. I have them for next year. Like, where am I going to stay? I Typically, if there's another hotel that's newer or smaller, near wherever it is, I do that and then just Uber over or whatever, it's less convenient.

But I you're very interesting. You stay in tolerate stuff way longer than I do. I mean, I'm like or I just don't even I just know that that's a 4000 3000 room hotel and it was built in 1980.

There's no way in the world I'm staying, you know, So we just go to Disney World and there's a brand new the Swan Reserve is a brand new hotel there. You know, we so I mean, I just if you Google places, you know, there, you know, at least until the interest rates have changed recently, there have been a lot of construction in a lot of

cities.

And so there are things that have opened up in the last few years. That's a great tip. One other area I'd love to segway back to our labs. So just like where people listening and they're like, okay, I kind of wonder where I am with lab testing and knowing my progress, yet what they look like when I feel really great and I know I'm clean versus not.

What are your favorite? Yeah, I just because of the if we can pause on this one, the lawsuit I don't want to get in is being the person like, you know, because I have labs and stuff and I don't want anything to be used against me.

If that's okay. Got it. Yeah. I mean, do you have somebody to cover that? Yeah, we talked about different things. I just again, look, you're talking about using using the autoimmune markers and.

Oh, well, okay. Well, but if I don't want to do anything that you don't feel comfortable with. Okay, what is it that you want to know? What's your favorite labs that somebody can like know where they are on the spectrum of autoimmunity or where they're on the spectrum of exposure.

And you can even just say it as far as when I was treating patients or when I write in my books, have nothing to do with you. So the autoimmune panel that I get on myself and that I got on all of my patients, if you're local to Texas, there is an auto immune panel through CPR.

That's the lab that I preferred to use over Questar or Lab for for certain labs and I do find it valuable to not only go to the same lab, you know, the the brand, the company, but also even go to the same, you know, same time of day, same the actual same lab center.

I mean, the more you can do these things because there is variability in lab testing, the better. So that you're always comparing an apple to an apple.

So if you are somebody and I don't know if you're familiar with it, I don't remember the code or I don't think they created it specifically for me, you know.

Yeah, it's the same one that I use and I yeah, my staff knows the code, I don't know. But it's a full breadth of. All autoimmune panel so I mean that's a great way to do it and have it go through your insurance.

I of course have done the cyber lab looking at different, you know, autoimmune autoimmunity in tissues. I mean, that's not what do I want to say? I mean, that's not really sustainable to keep doing that at the rate that I was doing this other lab.

I mean, I just, you know, can go in once a month if I wanted to. I mean, things don't change generally that quickly, so every couple of months. But, you know, paying out of pocket it directs probably isn't you know is what I want to say.

I'm blanking on the word but you know cost effective. Well, just can't do that. So you know but if you are don't know what's going or you're having odd symptoms.

I mean, certainly that's a lab I've run on myself. I've run on other you know, I've run on many, many patients, you know, in terms of checking mold. I mean, there's multiple things that you can do.

And they all have their pros and cons. You know, you can check to see if you have certain mycotoxins in your system through the, you know, urine test, through real time labs.

You know, the upside of that is it tells you if you have certain mycotoxins the downside is there are so many mycotoxins that they're not testing for.

I mean, not they just don't have the capability yet. It could be that you don't detox well, so you're not able to actually

excrete them when you're doing the test so you could get a false negative.

There are people who say that you can get a false positive through eating grains and drinking coffee. So many of my patients or grain free, I mean, virtually all of them, you know, particularly after you write a few books, people have read the book and done the program.

And I had such a long waiting list. They were following all that. By the time they got to me for six months or a year. And so I argued with the lab that I don't believe that because so many of my patients and I imagine yours as well, not drinking coffee and not eating grains.

So I do not believe that. And I had so many patients that had elevated levels. So it correlated then with the environment. Yeah, of course. So yeah, I, I just didn't believe that.

But didn't tell you where you've been exposed. So I mean nowadays the remote working. Yeah, right. Working and living at home, you know, then it, you know, then you got to assume it's the home, but if it's somebody who's going half their time to the office, half their time, you know, to home, how do you know if it's the home or the office?

And, you know, I have things that I would do with patients to help kind of sort that out. But, you know, as with anything, the pros and cons to all of it, Ritchie Shoemaker has a whole host of labs, you know, that can track.

Those are the labs that I was using to track me for my mold exposure.

Testing, sensitivity, and closing remarks

And that has been helpful because they are things that when I've been in a clean environment, have been negative and when I've been in a toxic environment, they did elevate.

So what else would I do? And I'm sure there's that's come along, but because I'm so sensitive, you know, certainly if it was a patient that, you know, I had a patient that was very, very complex and I went over to her house.

I mean, I went over to several of my patients houses, more than several to try to. Since you're such a good canary. Yeah. To try to see if you know, if I could feel it in their homes and tell them where it was or just.

Yes, I it is definitely in your house. And so, you know, when it was so profound on somebody like I told you, I could feel it on them and I would just say, I mean, of course, that takes a lot of convincing for somebody to get rid of all of their stuff just based on me saying I've just broken into a rash.

I'm telling you it's toxic mold. But, you know, some of them did. Some of them wanted, you know, backup stuff. Some of them resisted when other places called me years later, told me I was right. So, you know, so it's it's run the gamut of of things.

I mean, it's got to be a very highly toxic environment for people to be coming in, you know, and need to immediately react. So and that's, of course, what I would explain to them.

But I do have a dear friend who I went to her house and I was like, tier tier two and this wall and that ceiling, I didn't realize, you know, I didn't really remember doing that.

And she told me later, she's like, You were totally right. Those are the places I opened up. And that's exactly where it was. So I have been that sensitive in my life.

I would like to think that I could not sensitive, but. Much less sensitive. I think, you know, getting more time and space and your beautiful home and let your nervous system settle down and you're going to be a lot less sensitive.

Yeah. Yeah. Well, Dr. Myers, I so appreciate your vulnerablity. I am just. Just over overwhelmed that you shared at such a soul and heart level, I think.

Well, I did that because you, Ann. Ann has gone my house. Ann And I typically go through mold at the same time together ironically or whatever. So I just have such a history with you.

I don't think that I would have been this way if there had been any other hostess or host. You were so in my heart, and I you know, I really I know the effort that you put into building this beautiful place, and that's a safety, a place to really thrive and just really love your family.

And just to give you a smooth sailing from here so that you can really enjoy what you've built and the beautiful members of your family. There's so much love there.

Well, thank you. I you know, because of the situation with the lawsuit, I really have not spoken about this. In fact, I've turned down every interview to talk about mold.

But knowing that it's you and the history that we have and you know how many people I hope that this will help, you know, I, I, of course, said yes. And, you know, eventually, once this is all over, I will have you know, I do have articles on my website and everything, but we will have an e-book and just a lot more resources around this for people.

I do try to take, you know, anything that I've been through and that I've learned something from and I certainly have learned even I thought I knew everything.

And I've learned even more from this experience, you know, really, that's all I can do. These are core values to be of service and to give back to other people to help, you know, if if I can prevent anybody from going through what I've been through or to get out of, you know, if they're going through it, to get out of it or to have hope to know that they can get out of it, I mean, that's really why I do it.

And so there will be more resources available on our website as well. But I just need to get through this current situation. So let's let people know where to find you because there is so information there already.

Books, your website, your social. Let's let people know everything. Is just Amy Myers, M. D. website is AmyMyersMD.com Social. Amy Myers, M. D. A M Y M Y E R S M D.com Well thank you so much.

And I can't wait to see you soon. I know we do.