Uncover The Link: Diabetes, Inflammation, And Hair Loss Transcript

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Introduction and Guest Background

Hello, everyone. Welcome to the reversing Type 2 Diabetes Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Beverly Yates, and it's my distinct privilege to interview Julie Olson, who is an expert in here and all that it takes to have a wonderful head of hair and to keep it as we get older.

Sometimes this can shift. There's all sorts of factors. And she's absolutely an expert who has lots of wonderful things to share with us and to tell us what the interactions are between hair and our blood sugar levels, you know, our glycemic control and for diabetes in general.

So, Julie, welcome to the summit. Oh, thank you. Thank you for having me, Beverly. I'm happy to be here. Yeah. You know, I'm really delighted to bring this topic forward because, you know, people do care about their appearance.

And sometimes when we find that we're losing our hair, all of a sudden we there's lots of reasons for it. And they're often based in health. And it's good to know what are the signs, what do they really mean?

So before we jump into that, would you please share with us just a brief overview of your background? Oh, I am a triple certified nutritionist, functional medicine nutritionist.

I'm also certified in functional medicine, and I've been doing this for about 13 years now. And like you said, I do specialize in and female hair loss, you know, root cause approach.

So absolutely root causes are so important. Okay, so let's dive in. Let's take it from the top here. What is it about diabetes that can cause hair loss?

Well, there's a lot of reasons. But the biggest one, the biggest link is the inflammation, a low grade inflammation. And it's interesting because when people get diabetes, they don't associate hair loss or hair thinning with diabetes.

How Diabetes Contributes to Hair Loss

But it is very common and it's a it's a sign, some of the signs that you might be losing more hair than you should is if you're losing more than 100 or 125.

Here is a day consistently, day after day, or if you notice a lot coming out in your brush or during washing or even, of course, bald patches. But that there are other reasons associated with diabetes that your hair can fall out.

But as far as inflammation is concerned, I know you're an expert in this whole inflammation realm, Dr. Beverly, but let me tell you how it's associated with hair loss and diabetes, whether it's type one or Type 2 diabetes, This this chronic inflammation impairs the normal hair cycle.

So it disrupts growth. Hair has three defined hair growth cycles that include the growing phase resting and shedding. And this diabetes related inflammation can cause a cycle to accelerate or stall and it also can damage those hair follicles.

So of course it's going to affect the hair growth. And when those follicles are inflamed, they may not produce hair as efficiently, which can lead to excessive shedding that you really notice.

it makes sense then. So, you know, sometimes people find that they have more hair loss and then sometimes it corrects itself. So what I'm hearing you say is that if it does not correct itself and if it's continuing, it's getting worse and worse.

This is something to pay attention to because it's signaling there's a change in the health. Right. Right. And then it's also contributed as far as diabetes is concerned, too poor blood circulation, which, you know, affects your eyes and your feet and everything else.

But it's really far reaching for your overall health, including hair loss, because you need that steady supply of blood with nutrients to your scalp to remain healthy with that that growth cycle.

And when it's impaired by high blood sugar levels or blood sugar levels that aren't maintained properly, your hair follicles receive less oxygen and those vital nutrients they need to thrive and people don't realize that our scalp hair follicles are the newly discovered microbiome, so they require the same amount of nutrients but also energy in the form of mitochondria and ATP.

They required an enormous amount of energy for our for our hair to grow. And that's unfortunate because our hair is not a vital organ. So when we're already impaired with diabetes or other health issues, those nutrients and that energy is going to go to our vital organs first.

So this is really important and it's really important to pay attention to it because hair loss is has a time issue on it. If you just let it go, you can get to the point where you have scarring of the hair follicle and then reversing that growth is nearly impossible.

So if you're noticing it, you want to also address nutrition, nutritional deficiencies, stress is a huge one that can also impair and impair the hair follicles and just actually destroy the cells around them.

So you can't have them grow.

Blood Sugar, Circulation, and Hair Follicle Health

And I know that I know this whole summit, you're talking a lot about different lifestyle, things that will help with with diabetes, but that includes your hair health, including sleep and hormonal balance is huge with with hair loss.

A lot of times people with diabetes, they, you know, of course, get this insulin resistance and that can lead to thyroid disorders, especially hypothyroidism and Hashimoto's that's associated with hair loss.

So it's it's multifaceted and it again, it's it's a sign a symptom that is not brought up very much. And also, you know, right now we're experiencing another, you know, COVID outbreak per se.

And it's associated with that as well because your body's immune system, you know, is attacking the follicles and you have that chronic inflammation and the cytokine storm and everything else that can be is associated with diabetes and hair loss.

Yeah, it sounds like it's an unfortunate overlap of these things. Right. Different sources from inflammation and sometimes they're having much more of an impact on the scalp and damaging the hair follicles.

And then there goes the hair. The hair is being lost and lost in an accelerated rate. A accelerated rate, rather. So what I'm hearing you say is that this is not necessarily a normal or typical thing associated with aging.

It is specific to what goes on with diabetes. Yes, it can be It definitely can be. And it's again, you know, you pay attention. It's a sign. It can be a good sign.

I mean, for me, if it wasn't for my hair loss, I probably wouldn't have paid attention to my health. Well, because it was an opportunity for me to sit back and finally slow down and address my health.

And, you know, of course, as I started digging into it, I was a hot mess. But you can avoid that if it if you pay attention to these signs and symptoms that are associated with hair loss and, of course, managing your blood sugar, which is vital for this diabetes.

All right. So can you listen to the signs that diabetes may indeed be a root cause issue or a hidden factor maybe that's affecting hair loss? a sign? besides the inflammation and poor circulation and stress and sure Is there anything else that the person might experience that would be something that they could easily observe and they might go, Oh, you know.

Well, yeah, just if they just notice that it's it's coming out here, there and everywhere, it's on their pillow, it's clogging the drain. It's just more than usual then that's definitely, definitely something to pay attention to. That's a good sign.

Okay. Okay. So what's the biggest link between diabetes and hair loss? Is it inflammation or is there something else going on? Well, it's it's a cascade.

The chronic low grade inflammation is definitely the biggest link, but it is a cascade effect because that causes more stress on your body. Right. And more stress on your body is going to make it difficult for you to absorb those nutrients and is going to be more difficult for you to get circulation to your scalp.

And when you're stressed, you don't tend to exercise or sleep as much as you should. So it's a whole vicious cycle and then your hormones are beginning to get off.

You're not going to be regulated. Totally makes sense. You know, these things are all intertwined. Intertwined together. Okay. What are some other factors that, you know, contribute to hair loss when someone has diabetes?

Nutrition and Blood Sugar Support for Hair Growth

Well, when they're not managing their blood sugar, per se, by not getting enough of that healthy protein that that the fiber and the complex carbohydrates and every meal.

So they're on this blood sugar rollercoaster. And that makes it very difficult to modulate that inflammation and of course, maintain, you know, with diabetes, Of course, that's that's the forefront of how I mean, Beverly, when you say your diet has a has a big role here and not only managing your diabetes, but your your health and your hair health. So.

Yeah, yeah, they all go together, right? Right. So can improving blood sugar management, right, blood sugar control, being able to really, really get it in the healthy zone, will that lead to a noticeable reduction in hair loss?

Yes. Yes, absolutely. You should notice a difference because everything else will fall into place to your hormones will be in better balance. Your stress will be in better balance, you'll be getting better circulation.

You'll get that that that inflammation modulated. And yes, you should notice a difference. You shouldn't notice a bunch of hair coming out. Right. Right.

You know, you're giving your body a fair chance to be able to make the hair and have the hair mature and successfully grow from the scalp rather than be coming out much shorter than normal or just not even making it that way.

It's just leaving the follicle really early. Okay. Okay. What tips you have, share with us in particular for nutritional needs in order to balance the blood sugar, because obviously these things are all related.

Right? I like to keep a simple PFC. Good quality protein is the P, you know, good quality animal protein that has those amino acids, essential amino acids that are really vital for hair growth and hair health.

And then F for stands for healthy fats that's needed for the hair follicle. And also our our cell membranes are made of those healthy fats and it helps balance our blood sugar.

And then those complex carbohydrates, such as vegetables that have that fiber. And you can just think of a plate good quarter size with protein, half your plate with with vegetables.

And then, you know, the healthy fat can be alternated with, you know, some other complex carbohydrates maybe. And gluten free grains per se, if if if that's something you do.

But just keep it simple. Every time you eat that protein, think of the size of the palm of your hand for animal protein, chicken, turkey, what have you Size upon your hand is 20 grams.

You want at least 60 grams or more a day. And it's going to make your your mood's better, your sleep better, your energy better. It's going to manage your blood sugar and your inflammation.

All right. So good to know. So in your experience, Julie, have you found that people who come to seek your help and get your advice are just fulfilled with misinformation?

Like what's the top three myths that you are constantly myth busting about when it comes to hair and hair loss? Oh gosh, about that. It's a that's a lack of biotin.

Let's start with that. Now. Biotin is in every hair product imaginable, right? But that really is a myth because we're not lacking biotin. And this society is rare.

Myths About Hair Loss and Biotin

It's very rare for people to be low in Britain and you can actually get too much biotin In fact, there's very few hair supplements that I recommend because most of them have way too much part.

Okay. And if there's too much biotin, is that interfere with the hair or just a waste of biotin? Well, it can jack up other systems in your body when you have too much biotin. Okay.

So while the systems are impacted, because I have noticed that when there are supplements that over the counter, sometimes shampoos, whatever, they've got biotin in them, but sometimes it's like such a high amount.

So I'm sure people will be going, Hey, yeah, I've noticed. Biotin tell us more. Like what does it mess up with? Mess up in our system? If it's too much.

It can mess up your cellular metabolism. And it it's it's just an imbalance. I mean, people don't realize that even water soluble vitamins as I buy it, it's a B vitamins.

I mean you do urinate it out. But still, that can have an affect on your health. Most people know that the fat soluble vitamins you know, 80 K, you can't get too much you really have to monitor that.

But it's it's just the same. And even if you get too much magnesium and some other nutrients, it's it's not you know, if you drink too much water, you can die.

I mean, you know, you can live in the hospital if you have too much magnesium and biotin isn't any different. Yeah. Yeah. We need things in balance. And often, often they're not in balance.

What's, what's a level of biotin that's too high. Can you give. People has four grams at any time. 10,000. 10,000 is too much. Okay. What is the recommended amount of biotin.

If it makes sense for someone to use it. Two or 3000. Wow. That's a big difference. Mm. Factor of ten. Okay. More is not always better. I think that's the message here. Right. Right.

So the second myth about hair loss is that you have to use these expensive serums and shampoos and products and that's that's that's a myth, you know, I mean, sure, they can help with the texture.

Your hair. And sure, if you have high hairstyles that are pulling on your hair, that can cause hair loss. If you're using harsh products that can cause hair loss.

Yeah, you need some good clean shampoos, but that's not the end all. Be all is start. Our hair grows from inside out. Yeah, I've often thought of hair because of the process by which it grows as being a reflection to some degree of potentially gut health, along with our blood sugar stability and our overall hormonal situation.

And if we're out of balance with our blood sugar, with our hormones or our gut health, our hair is absolutely going to reflect some of that. Oh, absolutely. You hit it on the nail.

And like we talked about in my summit, there's over 50 causes of hair loss, but I put them into four functional causes, inflammatory, hormonal stress induced and digestive, digestive, nutritional.

It makes sense then. And so for blood sugar and gut microbiome and, you know, having a functional gut and having the microbiome happy so it's producing a healthy level of blood sugar instead of an unhealthy level of blood sugar and now you've got the scalp microbiome and your skin.

We begin to see how much we are a reflection of all of these different communities that are living on this same organism called us, you know that a way to think about it?

Yeah, Right now, if you have too much bad bacteria, if you have dysbiosis, it's going to crowd out the good bacteria. We have parasites as their nutritional pirates.

If you've got H. Pylori that that you can't digest or absorb your food very well. I have some before and after pictures of people with hair loss and then got their H.

Pylori under control and their hair grew back. Even things like gluten. There are some studies on gluten, gluten into it before picture and after of this this this teenage boy and he he actually lost all his hair and then he went on a gluten free diet for a year and it grew back.

That's a medical study that's stopped.

Gut Health, Environmental Triggers, and Hair Recovery

I mean, it just goes on and on. And there's also been some remarkable studies. Beverly, I've just mentioned this real quick with the fecal microbial transplant.

And there are four subjects. And the reason I bring this up is to just point out the value of gut health. Now, these four subjects were sick. They had all different issues and they all had alopecia.

Two of them had alopecia universalis. Okay, that's they lost hair over their entire body. And there were two men and there was an older male and then a woman who had Crohn's.

Anyway, they all took the fecal microbial transplant. Guess what happened? Their hair came. Back. Their hair all came back like, Yeah. Wow. Wow. Microbiome.

You know, what's in your gut matter? Microbiome is that is the key here. And that's what's going to, you know, manage your inflammation and that that all starts there.

I mean, if your your microbiome is inflamed, it's it affects your whole body, including hair growth. Where can people find you? If they're interested in connecting?

They can go to my website, which they can find through Julie Olson with an O, JulieOlson.com That'll get you there. Great, great. I like your website. It's well laid out and very clear.

So you were talking about these amazing factors that go on for our hair and being able to have our hair be healthy or to lose it. Right. So we left off the conversation talking about the idea of the fecal transplant making a difference for some people, especially if they had very clear gastrointestinal disease.

But what about for other folks where they're kind of trying to figure out how to hang on to their hair and they're wondering, you know, if stress is a factor for them or is it they're kinds of hair products, you know, what actually might be a factor?

What are your thoughts about those things? I think all those would probably be a factor not to make it complicated, but but look around at what you're doing.

And even your environment. I mean, if you have mold, that can be a trigger for hair loss. If you have a stressful job or relationship, that's going to affect your health and your hair, you know, environmental toxins, even EMFs.

Too much EMFs. I mean, the list is pretty much even mass cell activation. That's a big one, my cell activation syndrome. And that has to do with histamine response, right?

Like if somebody is really sneezy or if they find they live on Benadryl, things like that, that mast cell Activation syndrome emesis might be something to look into and could certainly that kind of inflammation affect their hair?

Is that what you're saying? Absolutely. 100%. Okay. All right, cool. That's really great to know. I think that there's so many factors in today's world.

There's both how we feel, our stress levels, our internal world, as well as our external world, environmental factors, stuff in the water, the air, various bodily care products that we may have, things we may not even know about. Maybe if the lining of a hat.

I do know some people will wear hats to have a silk lining and they usually find that that is much nicer to their hair, the same way they think with a hair bonnet.

Again, silk could be helpful. What are your. Thoughts that I'm glad you brought that up. That's a really good tip. Also, a silk pillowcase is because it retains about 43% of a moisture.

So it helps not only with your skin health, but your hair health. It feels so good. Beverly Perfect. Perfect. How silk is so nice for the skin. It's very friendly for humans, that's for sure.

Any other tips you have to share with our audience? Oh, well, I just know it's not your fault. And the good thing is you're here, you're listening to this summit.

You're getting the information and information is power. And and don't lose hope. There is hope and you can get past this. So thank you for being here.

All right. Absolutely. Thank you for being a guest here at the summit. Okay, friends, please share these interviews, including this wonderful episode with Julie Olson about hair and preventing hair loss, things like that, with the people that you know in your life who care about these topics or whose mind might just need to be exposed to some new and different information.

I think the more we work on health, the better off we will all be. Thank you for your time and attention and energy.