Introduction and guest background

And within seven days, his 20-year history of angina melted away, never came back. Within 30 days his cholesterol, always above the well into the upper 200s to 300s, fell below 200 without changing any of his bad habits.

Hi, welcome back to the podcast. I'm Dr. Jen with Healthy by Dr Jen. Today we're gonna be talking about a lot of different things from iodine to thyroid to health in general.

And we have Dr David Brownstein here. He's an MD, his board certified family medicine physician. You've probably heard of him from his famous book, Iodine, Why You Need It, why you can't live without it.

including overcoming thyroid diseases. He's the medical director for the Center for Holistic Medicine in West Bloomfield, Michigan. And he's a graduate of the University of Michigan and Wayne State University School of Medicine.

Is a member of The American Academy of Family Physicians, and he serves on the board for The International College of Integrated Medicine, where we're at today, their conference.

and He is a father of two beautiful physicians, Haley and Jessica and a retired soccer coach. So, welcome, Dr. Brownstein. So excited to have you here.

Thank you for having me. Yes. I'm happy to be here Yeah, so you've been a trailblazer for integrative medicine. What made you break out of the mold? I didn't start off that way.

I went to med school to model myself after my family doctor. I had a lot of doctor visits and decided I was always interested in science and wanted to just be a conventional family doctor.

We didn't do anything alternative in our household.

Dr. Brownstein's shift to holistic medicine

Um, we never took a vitamin and we've never thought about the food we ate, never though about anything like that. So I geared my undergraduate training at the University of Michigan, the winningest college football team in the history of college I had to put that in there.

I'm looking at your little buckeye guy over here. Yes, yes, it's always a thing. And went to med school in Detroit. and I began practicing conventional medicine as I was taught, I thought it was everything.

My, and then about six months into it, lose some sleep for the first time in my life, and I didn't know why. After a couple of nights of not sleeping, anxiety came.

I did not know what was happening. And I remember vividly getting up, getting ready to go to work and telling my wife, I don't want to be a doctor anymore.

We met at 18. I had no plan B. I always wanted to be a physician. And we had $100,000 in student loans. She was ready to have our first child any moment at that time.

Good timing for you. She said, what's wrong? And I said I am prescribing far too many drugs that aren't really underlying cause of my patient's problems.

They're not getting better. And, I have to prescribe more drugs to treat the problems than the first drugs. I'm not helping them and I can't do this for the next 30 or 40 years.

She says, What are you going to do about it? I don't know. And I was floundering. And that day I went to work and I saw a patient who was bothering me to meet his chiropractor.

Now, at that point in my career, I never referred to chirepractors. I used to tell people don't go see them even though I didn't know what they did or what their philosophy was.

And I called the chiropractor just out of, I think, lack of sleep and anxiety, set up a dinner meeting for a few days ahead and went to that dinner with thoughts, this is a waste of my time and I still wasn't sleeping.

And he was a really nice guy and he knew functional biochemistry and started talking about it. He started using nutrition in his patients and the benefits he would see.

And I took biochemistry at the University of Michigan, got an A. I did bio chemistry in medical school, I got another A, thought I knew bio-chemistry.

All I know was how to memorize pathways and spit them back out. Yes. And didn't know how they clinically utilize them. Dr. Radke, a chiropractor, was utilizing them, and so he brought me a book at that meeting, Healing with Nutrition, by Jonathan Wright, And took the book home and read it.

My first phone call the next morning was to my father, who was 25 year history of heart disease. bypass surgeries, angioplasties. He was having continual angina for 20 years.

It was going to die at any moment. Certainly looked like he was gonna die any at moment He's on 12 medications for cholesterol, heart disease, hypertension, and just looked awful.

We were waiting for the phone call that he died, really. So I called my dad in the office and I said, hey, I want to draw a couple of blood tests on you.

And I drew two blood tests on him based on what I read in that book until late at night and what Dr. Radtke had talked about. And the blood tests were thyroid levels and testosterone level.

And his thyroid level were in the lower part of the reference range and his testosterone levels were below detectable limits. Nobody bothered to check them.

I put them on two things, natural thyroid hormone and natural testosterone, which both have a long history of when they're imbalance causing heart disease and and correcting the imbalance, treating heart disease.

And within seven days, his 20-year history of angina melted away, never came back. Within 30 days his cholesterol, always above the well into the upper 200s to 300s, fell below 200 without changing any of his bad habits.

His angia was gone. He looked better, he acted better. No longer did we think he was going to die at any moment.

Thyroid, iodine, and the role of testing

I said to Alison, now I know what I want to do in medicine. went to practice and said, I'm leaving, there's gonna be a partner, and I was negotiating a buy-in.

Wow. And they said what are you gonna do? And I said I would do holistic medicine. They said What is that? I don't know. But I have to figure it out. Why don' you do it here?

Now I need my own office where the people answering the phones and the nurses and filing clerks are all on board

with the same ideas that I starting to gather in my head.

And that's how it started. I started evaluating every patient for hormonal imbalances and it led to my book on thyroid disorders, my books on iodine. Got a big practice now.

My two doctor daughters are working with me and having the best time of my life. Oh, that's so amazing. And you humbled yourself. You humbled to that meeting, to reading books, and to being more open.

It's really hard for us once we get out of medical school to be like, wow, everything I just paid all this money and these loans and this time is wrong.

It was a humbling experience, let me tell you, and Dr. Radkinak became best friends. Chiropractors send me patients, I refer to chiropractors. I understand their philosophy now.

They should be part of any health team for a patient. And it took my anxiety away because I started to realize there's a better mousetrap here to treat patients.

Oh, that's great. It's was good thing. So your thyroid and iodine books, it's made you pretty famous, like just because you were just speaking truth and you weren't afraid to share it.

Can you explain a little bit those that aren't aware of like your views on iodide and thyroid about it? After my dad, every patient got a full hormonal evaluation, including a whole thyroid evaluation.

In med school, I was taught to just check a TSH level and that was it. Right. Now they get a Full Thyroid Panel and I know how to palpate a thyroid and they teach other doctors how appropriate palpitate thyroids.

Because doctors don't know about palpatate thyroid anymore because they never really taught it Well, they don' touch patients. No, we don''t touch patient.

Um, so I started diagnosing all these people with thyroid problems the first 10 years of my practice and I was prescribing natural thyroid hormone as part of a holistic treatment regimen and they were getting better and i was happy and, I thought I, was doing good in medicine and but it always bothered me.

Why did so many people seem to need thyroid hormones to feel good? I don't think we were designed by our maker, just because we're aging, we should have to take a little thyroid hormone to feel better.

So I would look at the biochemistry of the thyroid gland and the physiology of thyroid glands and what makes it run and which nutrients are needed and where cofactors must be there to appropriately make thyroid hormones and utilize it.

And I will check the levels and try various things like magnesium and vitamin C and B vitamins. When I correct those things, nothing worked as well as thyroid hormone.

But when he started the thyroid, the other thing he's come across is iodine. And iodini is essential for the thyroid gland. It's essential to all the glands of the body.

The breast, ovaries, uterus, pancreas, thyroid. I was aware of the data that iodine levels were falling in the United States. I also was also aware that I live in middle of a coiter belt of United State, which surrounds the Great Lakes.

It's Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and that's state down south, it starts with a lower case O. But also Erie, Pennsylvania, we're on a little bit of…

Pennsylvania is right there too. That's where I grew up and I had Hashimoto's. And Hashimoto's is an iodine deficiency syndrome, period. And if you draw a line around the center of the country down, that's where the iodide-deficient area is just rampant.

In Michigan, we have one of lowest iodines areas of world in our soil, and yet there was no testing for iodides back then, or no one knew how to do the testing or interpret it.

And I would try iodine on and off over the first 10 years of my practice, but it wasn't working for me like thyroid was working. No one got worse with it, But I wasn t seeing people improve.

And then I would get frustrated with iodine. Iodine's a funny element. It's like a Goldilocks thing. Yes, iodide is hard. Yeah, it's got these different isotope states and iodined and iodide isn't reduced or oxidized.

But I'd try it, I tried little amounts, medium amounts and large amounts. And it didn't hurt anybody, but it doesn't help them and I get frustrating with it.

So about 10 years into my holistic practice, I read a letter to an editor of one of my holistic journals from Dr. Guy Abraham in California, who was an endocrinologist.

It was, I'm sorry, he was a gynecologist who developed an iodine test. So I called him up. He became interested in my practice because of the location of it.

And we formed a friendship. I flew to California, met him and we talked. Then I started flying to california every two to three months and practicing full time and spending 12 to 14 hours in his lab when I was there for days at a time.

We started studying iodine on my patients. We were measuring levels and, you know, 97 plus percent of patients were low in iodine. Most were significantly low on iodide.

Dr. Abraham taught me that I was using the wrong kind of iodime, which is why it wasn't working. Okay. And in the human body, there's receptors for both iodines, the oxidized form, and iodides, to reduce form.

To get the best whole body effect for iodin, we need to use both forms, but I wasn' t using it first. Got it. Once I started using that, that changed everything.

I found that now I'm 25 years later, for the next 25 I've been putting everybody on iodine. My thyroid hormone use has gone down. two-thirds. The people I had on thyroid hormone, their dose has gone down in half at least from what they were on.

And I'm seeing this wonderful effects with iodine. It's been my premise that iodide deficiency is the driving factor behind one in seven women with breast cancer in the United States, one in three men with prostate cancer, thyroid cancer being the fastest growing cancer.

Epidemic increases of ovarian, uterine, pancreatic cancer… All these can be related to iodine deficiency. And iodide levels have fallen over 70% across the US over the last 50 years.

It's a catastrophe that's still going on. it's transformed my practice. It's the single best thing I do for patients is identify and rectify iodine deficiency.

Wow. So why are we all iodide deficient?

Iodine deficiency, halides, and disease links

So we're more iodine-deficient than our predecessors were, our grandparents and great-grandparents and grandparents. And the soil is the same iodide deficiency, or worse, because of over-farming and poor farming techniques.

But what's happened is iodines is part of the halide family in the periodic table. If you recall the Periodic Table from a long time ago, Group 17 of halides are a group of elements that have shared similar properties.

And in the human body, they're competitive inhibitors to one another. In the order of their size in a periodic table is fluoride, chloride, bromide and iodine.

Two of those halides are essential. We can't live without them. That's iodide in chloride. And two of them are non-essential toxic items that competitively inhibit iodine out of the body.

And that's bromide, particularly bromine and fluoride. Now, the work I did with Dr. Abraham, we found huge amounts of bromite in patients, and particularly the ones who had hormone-sensitive cancers like thyroid, breast, ovarian, uterine, pancreatic.

They had double the amount of bromide that a patient who didn't have cancer had. I wrote about that in my book. And so our exposure to toxic halides, fluoride and bromide, from fluoridated water and drugs, a lot of drugs have fluorides as part of their makeup.

Bromides are a fire retardant. It's in food, it's a drink, its in water, in consumer items. We're probably sitting on bromides in these cushions. Cause they're flame retardants.

Probably in our clothing. And it is in curtains, mattresses, and it Brominated vegetable oils and it's in medications. It's all over the place That was the biggest thing we found in our testing with bromide and and just so people know so it is competing with iodine so It is like pushing it out of the way and for thyroid we need T the difference between T4 the inactive thyroid hormone and T3 is is an iodide like we Need iodines for the thyroid hormones So you can't make thyroid hormone, you cannot make adrenal hormone.

You can make ovarian hormones. Can't any hormone insulin without iodine. And what's happened is we have an iodide deficiency problem in our country. We've always had it.

But it's been exasperated and exsasparated by our overexposure to these toxic allergens. It's made us worse. That's why we can get a hold of this cancer thing that has just skyrocketed across our county.

I see women with fibrocystic breast disease, their fibrosystic breasts go away with iodine. Some cancers settle down with Iodine, should be part of any anti-cancer regimen.

Nobody, you know, still nobody talks about it. So everyone should take iodines, but the right forms. Once you get their levels checked and take it if they're low, we've tested over 8,000 patients in my office.

Over 97% are low on iodide. I've talked to my practitioner friends, many of them here today, around the country. They're seeing the same things I'm seeing.

We're over-brominated, over fluoridated, and under-iodinated. That's good. Well, back to testing, then. You know, you've mentioned the testing. I mean, that is controversial.

How do you test for it? What's your favorite way of testing for iodine? So, the accepted measure for Iodine is urinary excretion testing The good thing about iodines is near over 97% of orally dosed iodine comes out in the urine.

We don't have stores of iodide. And we're not like camels that have humps that store iodides and waiting for iodined deficiency. So you got to take it in on a daily basis.

You could do a spot iodine testing where you're just peeing a cup and see what the iodines levels are. You can do 24 hour urine testing, where measure a little longer time period.

And you can get a really good idea of the load of iodide in the body. But I used to do twenty four hour urines in everybody, but they're all low. So I just stopped doing that.

I do spot urine, which is a lot cheaper and easier. Your patients like you better because they are happy not

collecting 24 hours of urine. Is blood testing helpful at all for iodine?

No. Blood testing is not helpful. It's not the accepted measure. And for people who don't know how to utilize iodide, it's very confusing. You can also do the serum-solide-iodide ratio.

Dr. Abraham and I did that. But that takes a lot of testing energy and a lots of mental energy to interpret the results. So it was very helpful, but that's really not done.

We were just doing that for research purposes. Now, what about, I've had people come to me and they're like, you just rub the iodine that you use to clean stuff off.

You rub that on your skin and that will tell you if you're deficient or not. Or you can absorb it through there. What do you think about that? So at saturation, the body holds about two grams of iodines.

So this two-grams of Iodine is spread out through your muscles. The muscles and fat hold the most. Skin holds 20% of the bodies iodide. So when you're rubbing iodine on the skin and waiting for the yellow brownish color to go away and thinking, the quicker it goes away, it's more absorbing into the scan.

That's what people say. But there's been, there was one study, I never found that clinically reliable. And there is a study that showed 80% of the iodide rubbed on to skin sublimates off into a gaseous phase.

So it is not a useful test. Yeah, I know. I'm always like, no, like so. And that's not a good way to absorb it. You need to take an or what's the best form?

The best way is orally. By far, the way's oraly. It's absorbed very well. I write in my book that Hashimoto's and Graves' disease is an iodine deficiency syndrome.

It's corrected with iodines. We have hundreds and hundreds of patients. One of them is here today, my daughter, Jessie, who her mother diagnosed the Hashimoto's disease at 11 years old because her father was too busy looking at patients and not paying attention to his child.

But once the mother diagnoses, the nondractor mother diagnose Hashimaoto disease, We put her on iodine and raised the dose.

COVID treatment controversy and FTC warning

And I have serial tests over here over the years showing her osmotic is going down to zero. I've treated Graves' disease the same way, fibrocystic breast disease, breast cancer, ovarian, uterine, pancreatic problems, all that stuff.

Wow, that's amazing. Now, it's interesting, though, because there are some in the health space that put Hashimoto's patients on no-iodine diet. And they said iodine is, like, obviously, I can argue if they're even seeing patients, right?

There are practitioners who have been after me about this for years. Yes, okay. Let's talk about it. One naturopathic practitioner who's well-known out there.

What I would say to him and to any of them are, A, they don't know about iodine. B, over the last 50 years, have iodin levels gone up or gone down across the United States, according to every national health and nutrition examination survey that's been done.

They have gone. Yes. Now the latest 2021 was just released recently. It's gone now over 70%. They were over 50% in 2010. And has Hashimoto's and Graves' disease gone up or down over the same time period that iodine has gone down?

They've gone dramatically. That's an inverse correlation. The inverse correlations rules out iodines as the cause of the Hashimoto's & Grave's epidemic we're seeing.

It rules it out. So maybe something else, but it's not iodide. Yeah. As Ricky would say to Lucy back in my day, explain that. And there's no explaining of that because that just rules iodides out as a cause.

And I can tell you from my clinical experience, I have hundreds and hundreds of patients. Iodine treats Hashimoto's. It's a fabulous treatment for Graves' disease.

And got a lady right now. Just texted her before I went on the air with you. She's doing great with iodine, you know, lowering her TSI antibodies and all her Grave's symptoms are gone.

Yes, take it off her list. That's exciting. What about ionized salt then? So people listening, they're like, well, I'll just have salt with iodine in it.

So iodized was introduced in the 1920s because of the goiter epidemic that was affecting the United States, particularly in Midwest, around the Great Lakes.

And through work in, what was that doctor's name? He was in Ohio. I can't think of his name, but he did work putting different amounts of iodine in animal feed because the animals were having thyroid problems as well.

And he found out the smallest amount of Iodine that corrected the thyroid problem that the animal was having so they could grow to the right size and procreate correctly.

and they estimated that same amount into humans and that's how we got iodized salt. Iodized has I think 75 micrograms of iodine per gram of salt and it's enough iodide to prevent goiter or swelling of the thyroid in most people but it is not enough for the ovaries, uterus, breast, prostate, pancreas, skin, muscles, and particularly with our overexposure to these toxic halides.

So it was better back then because we didn't have those toxic-halide exposures like we have now. But now it's not nearly enough and we're suffering the consequences of it.

And we can't get enough in our food, right? Or can we? We polluted the oceans, the plants and the ocean animals have the same sodium iodine symporter that we have.

And that sympporter can get overwhelmed with, by competitive inhibition with toxic halides, fluoride and bromide. So we shouldn't just eat seaweed. Seaweed, I've tested seaweed.

The seaweed iodine content varies batch to batch. Some of it has decent iodines, some doesn't, and some has high bromine. It's a mess. So if you're iodined deficient, we're going to correct iodide.

Iodine should be taken. Yeah, that's great. Well, what do you see for holistic medicine in the 21st century? What is your vision and your hope for those living?

My hope is that we don't go through another episode of COVID like we did. Because of the internet, because people are more in tune and they're more interested in their health, they are going to take a more active role in our health.

And they aren't going put up with nonsense. drugs that don't treat underlying causes of their problem. And they're gonna search for safe and effective natural ways that support the human biochemistry and support to human physiology and build the body up.

That's my hope. COVID really opened people's eyes to, hey, they were lying to us and I'm not gonna take any more lies. Yeah. that's how it should be. You think they are gonna leave you alone now?

Cause you got some letters from where? I was one of the first to get those warning letters from the FTC during COVID. I got it, I think, in March of 2020 because I Was blogging and posting about treating patients with COVID and not sending them to the hospital.

They came to me, they couldn't breathe.

Rapid-fire health advice and closing remarks

We were treating them with oral dose, high oral doses of vitamin A, C, D and iodine. And then IVs of hydrogen peroxide, vitamin C and ozone butt shots.

People couldn't breathe, were breathing and I was posting the case histories and then I got that letter telling me the justice department's coming if you don't take it all down.

Wow. I'll hear from the US justice Department and it was a mess. We took at over a million whatever on those social media things. And you just took it all down.

We had a First Amendment attorney who said, They're going to bankrupt you if you fight them. Wow. And he said, take it all down, see if it goes away. They left you alone.

Yeah, there was more than that. Nice visit to the office a couple of times. But eventually it fizzled out because there were no patient complaints. Right.

You were onto something because it was working and then went to shut it down. We continue to do it. So sorry. And we never change what we do. Right, you just couldn't share it and that's why we're all here at a conference to share and learn from each other to help people feel healthier.

That's wild. Well, I'm sorry you had to go through that. Dr. Brownstein, thank you so much. I am going to ask you some rapid fire questions. Shoot. Okay.

What is your favorite biohack that actually works? Well, iodine process. The favorite biohead. Iodine is number one, but let's do number two. Number two is salt.

People need adequate amounts of salt in their diet. Salt helps so many things from muscle cramps to palpitations to arrhythmias. So adequate amount of sal.

Every cell in the body needs salt and at least a teaspoon of unrefined salt a day. It's just, you know, I guess that would be one of those biohacks. The other bio hack is just maintain hydration.

Well, people are dehydrated. Yeah, salt with water. It's so funny because, you know, people just talk to us about health stuff, and they might not know what kind of doctor we're on, or they may not we are a doctor.

And when people are like, oh, I was diagnosed with high blood pressure, so I'm going to cut salt out. I am like well, that's not the root cause. Almost everyone's deficient in salt and high blood pressure comes down with salt.

One of the rays, you raise blood-pressure, take the salt away, the adrenal glands get stressed. They release renin, aldosterone, angiotensin and it all raises blood pressures.

And we have drugs to treat elevated renine, Aldosteron, and angio-tensine to chemically lower it down. But really the underlying cause of that was dehydration and salt deficiency.

It's a big mess, right? Big mess. What is one toxin that you would eliminate from the world if you could eliminate one toxic today? There was one toxins I would eliminated.

Bromine's number two, but it's mercury. Mercury, which was in all the flu vaccines and the childhood vaccines, and

Bobby Kennedy just got rid of it for the vaccines which 50 years, 100 years too late or whatever it was, and vaccines up and out.

And mercury's still in some drugs that we prescribe. So that should just be eliminated from any consumer item and any drug, you know, all those heavy metals, mercury, lead, cadmium, arsenic, nickel, it's all over the place.

I diagnose metal toxicity all the time with my patients. You should get it out and then what is one word you would like to leave our audience with? Don't put up with Lies.

And just if you think someone's lying, do some research and, you know, research those drugs before you take them. Research those supplements before take.

Yeah, that's good. Find a doctor who wants to be a partner here and work with you. Talk to you about things, talk to about biochemistry. Yeah. Oh, I love it.

Thank you so much for your time today. And where can everyone find you at and work with you and your beautiful daughters? So we're in West Bloomfield, Michigan.

We have a website. My personal website is drbrownstein.com, drBrownsteen. com. Now, big question. Do you welcome Ohio State fans to your practice or do you refuse to see them?

I don't refuse them, but I'll make sure they know we win every four of every five years that we beat them in football. And we got to let them win once in a while or they get too upset.

Just don' wear your Buckeye jersey to the office. I have a couple of Ohio state former football players as patients. Oh, there you go. We do talk about it at first, But then we said we both settle down and get down to business.

That's great. Well, thank you so much. Thank you for having me.