



EPISODE 452

Our Strange
Relationship With
Viruses & How To
Improve Your Immune
System

With Guest Dr. Steven Gundry

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Shawn Stevenson: Welcome to The Model Health Show, this is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today. I'm so excited about this episode, I've got one of my great mentors on the show today. And to talk about... Just to take a meta-perspective of the landscape of what we're dealing with right now in relationship to infectious diseases, and why are we so susceptible at this current time in human history, and I think you're really, really going to be blown away by what you'll learn today.

As it stands, I went and actually looked at the data after our conversation, and it's actually 75 million confirmed cases, and around 1.6 million folks have lost their lives in association with this infectious disease, and yet no one is spending much time talking about the approximately 74 million people, 73 to 74 million people who survived or who are okay, and just asking, "What is it, what happened with them that made them resilient, that made them able to survive something so nefarious? Did they get early access to some kind of special treatment?"

Around 40% of folks, 40% to upwards of 50% of folks are without any symptoms at all. And in our conversation that we've had with Dr. Alan Preston here on The Model Health Show, prestigious, well-renowned epidemiologist and professor, he shared with me that whenever you have this amount of confirmed infections in a population, on average, there's 10 times more people that have it, 15 times more people than that have it. So take that 75 million and then multiply that by 10. That's actually the amount of cases, and folks are largely without symptoms.

Not to say that folks aren't being harmed, absolutely, we can definitely look at that aspect, but we need... That's where the media's attention has put us, just focus on that and not focused on how are other people okay, and the reason that they're okay is because they have an immune system that has done its job, of protecting them and of adapting. We have this entire adaptive immune system.

What was said in the beginning is that there's no innate immunity to this, but we have this incredible, remarkable, highly intelligent adaptive immune system that has enabled us to be here and evolve as humans and make it this far. And humans, the root of our immune system, if people want to dig in and like, "Where did do... How do our immune system evolve?" Our immune system is from a virus, a virus that integrated



itself with our human DNA, our human tissues, and developed an immune system to face off against other viruses.

That's how we are wired up, we are literally part virus ourselves, and we are capable if we're cultivating health and giving our bodies the best chance to be resilient against things that we face. Today, right now, we are experiencing a time where so many people are experiencing pre-existing chronic diseases. The CDC reported 94% of the folks who lost their lives in association with COVID-19 had an average of 2.6 pre-existing chronic diseases, most notably, hypertension, type-2 diabetes and obesity. These things create a condition that makes us susceptible, a pre-inflamed condition, these are all inflammatory-related diseases.

Then we have a virus that comes along that has a tropism or an attraction, targeting our lung tissue, creating inflammations, hyper-inflammatory condition of lung tissue, and all manner of other infectious diseases that target different parts of the human body. If we're already susceptible, we're already pre-inflamed and just barely hanging on getting by with the function of our immune system, because our immune system is battling, trying to solve the problems of dysfunction with our blood sugar, if we're talking about type-2 diabetes. Our immune system is battling, there's a big immune response, and when we're talking about obesity and what's happening with our fat cells.

There's inflammation happening. These are all things making us susceptible. So we need to have these conversations, "How can we get us healthier and more resilient?" This is not being talked about in the media. We have to make the conversation known. Today I'm bringing on one of the foremost experts that has really helped to impress upon culture and bring these conversations forward when talking about the very root of our immune system and how we actually are able to cultivate health and resilience, and to be, not just survive, but to really thrive no matter what conditions we're faced with.

So really, really excited about this. And for myself personally, as well as my family, I know a lot of folks who are just like, "What about supplements? Should we take in a supplement right now?" There are some wonderful supplements, there are definitely things that we should be targeting right now. He's going to mention one of them that has so much evidence, it's bananas, it's absolutely crazy.

But another thing for me is supplements should supplement an already healthy nutrition protocol. Food first. Our bodies, we evolved. Our DNA expects us to get these nutrients in through food because we want to increase our vitamin C intake, right?



There's not just one type of vitamin C. There's many different types of vitamin C. There's different types of magnesium; there's magnesium sulfate, citrate. The list goes on and on. There's different types of vitamin B, and even there's...

Even on the category of B12, there's different types of B12, there's different types of vitamin D, the list goes on and on and on and on. When you're getting a synthetic isolated nutrient or synthetic isolated chemical from a supplement, does it do the thing that you're actually looking for? Food does that. And so even with our supplements, we want to get whole-food-based supplementation, which can be absolutely wonderful.

One of the things that my family uses, we've been using it for years, are the super food concentrates: The green juice formula and the red juice formula. And the red juice is so important for... when we're talking about our immune system, moving throughout our system, circulating. Our bloodstream, our lymphatic system, all of that stuff, this can be really remarkable.

And also overall, managing inflammation and helping to reduce the kind of free radical activity happening in our bodies. One of the highlights in the red juice formula is Acai. Acai has an ORAC value of 103,000, meaning that it has about 10 times more antioxidants than most of the fruits that you see in the produce aisle. Acai is that deal, Acai's got it. It's got that goodness. The Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry found that Acai actually raised participants' antioxidant levels.

It's not just theoretically, "Okay, it's in here in the food," we found it's effectively absorbed through the gastrointestinal tract and used by the body. Researchers at the University of Michigan published data finding that blueberry intake, another ingredient in the red juice formula, whole food-based concentrate can potentially affect genes related to fat-burning. I'm not done yet. Another one of the ingredients, beets.

A study published in the Journal of Applied Physiology showed that drinking beet juice boosts cardiovascular performance and stamina by up to 16% during exercise and training. They even experienced less muscle damage and less fatigue after training. Now, again, these are all highlighting what real foods can do in our system, alright? But we need to provide our bodies the good stuff, so definitely check out the Organifi Red Juice formula.

This is my son, Braden's favorite thing to have, is the red juice formula. Go over to organifi.com/model. That's O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model and you get 20% off their incredible red juice formula. So, pop over there, check them out for 20% off,

organifi.com/model. And now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

iTunes Review: Another five star review titled "New Listener and already a fan" by Mrs. A7712. "Episode 445 was my first episode and I am officially a fan. I love the basic biology lesson and Dr. Lipton was great. Thank you for presenting the scientific facts and trying to inform people on how much power they have. Please keep spreading the good word."

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome, I will definitely do that. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple Podcast. If you've yet to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for The Model Health Show. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Steven Gundry MD, and he's a renowned heart surgeon, medical inventor, and four-time New York Times best-selling author and physician-scientist.

Dr. Gundry practices medicine seven days a week at his various clinics where he's working with patients, and he's also the host of The Dr. Gundry Podcast. I'd like to jump into this conversation and welcome back the amazing Dr. Steven Gundry. Dr. G, so grateful to have you back on the show. How are you doing today?

Dr. Steven Gundry: Shawn, great to be here. Good to see you again.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome, awesome. So you were one of the people who has really impressed upon our culture and taught us, enlightened us about the world of the microbiome. But there's a much broader understanding of it that's finally starting to be discussed, and part of these things I first heard from you, in talking about, it's not just bacteria, there are some other aspects. We have the human virome as well. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah. You know, the human virome probably is... We'll probably eventually learn that it may be more important than the bacterial microbiome. There's even a mycobiome, which are the fungi that live within us in and the molds. But the virome is really fascinating and this is kind of... We're talking about drug companies now coming out with vaccines for COVID-19, but a lot of people don't know that Eli Lilly, which is one of our major drug companies out of Indianapolis, got its start by making what are called bacteriophages. Bacteriophages are viruses that infect bacteria, and they actually got their start long before the days of antibiotics.



It was learned that viruses could be used to attack and kill bacteria or manipulate bacteria. And what's fascinating about the virome is that viruses can easily infect bacteria, but they can transfer genetic information from one bacteria to another bacteria, and completely change almost instantaneously how a bacteria behaves. And what we're going to learn, and I think what we are learning is the...

This microbiome, I call it the holobiome, it's just an incredible ecosystem where the one organism is dependent on what another organism is bringing to the table. There's, to decipher the language that's being... That's happening in this intense rainforest, this ecology within us, you have to have supercomputer power to figure out what one little piece of virus might be doing to one bacteria which then spreads to billions of bacterial colonies within our gut in a matter of hours. So, it's... Stay tuned.

Shawn Stevenson: Right, right. Oh, my goodness, it's so fascinating. So one of the things that we know now, that you can fit dozens, hundreds of virus particles into a single bacteria cell, just the size and scope of it is so remarkable, but just to think about the ability for them to transfer data, that's what viruses are really, really good at, that's what they do in nature. And they're a part of us, it's kind of how we're wired up.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah, yeah, it's... You're right, this is data transfer. I've tried to get people to imagine our microbiome, which includes our virome, as a cloud computer, and that we... Our genes, we got a lousy set of genes. I mean believe it or not, corn has more genes than you and I, which is kind of, it makes us rather humble. We don't even have the most genes of any animal, a sand flea has more genes than you or I. And so it turns out that 99% of all the genes that are within us, you and I, are actually non-human genes. The information processing that these genes are capable of, and the exchange of information is so vast because these bacteria replicate instantaneously.

And so you take a little virus, put a couple of new pieces of information into a bacteria, which is then able to replicate and churn out billions, trillions of copies within a few hours, and then you can completely change the information that then can be sent on back to us. I actually talk a lot about that in the upcoming book, *The Energy Paradox*. We now know that there is trans-kingdom communication between our microbiome and our cells, and the

language of how that's communicated has been discovered.

I like to think, back in World War II, one of the major changes that changed the course of the war was the breaking of the German code, the Enigma code, and when that code was finally broken and deciphered, the Allies finally figured out how Germany was talking to all the troops, to the planes. And it's the same thing, we suspected for actually about 15 years that somehow bacteria and viruses were talking to our mitochondria, were talking to our brain, talking to our heart, but we didn't know the language.

And thanks to some Nobel Prize winning work, that language was discovered. I won't... A lot of the energy paradoxes, we now know that language. So our cloud computer is actually contained inside of us, so we upload... We have so little processing power in our genetic material that we basically uploaded most of our, lack of a better word, thinking, to our cloud, which is an internal cloud of bacteria and viruses to do the processing for us.

Shawn Stevenson: This is mind-blowing. I can't wait for that. Of course, we're going to have you back on to talk more about it.

Dr. Steven Gundry: That's just a teaser.

Shawn Stevenson: That's just a teaser. Teaser trailer. Now, in this conversation about the human genome, I think this is really, really important for us to understand, and I've been talking about this for months now, but when they mapped out... Like you said, our number of genes pale in comparison even to other mammals. And not just other mammals, like you said, fruit flies, right?

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah, I mean the sand flea. So you and I are walking on the beach and we're stepping on these little almost microscopic creatures, they got more genes than you and me.

Shawn Stevenson: That's nuts. Corn, etcetera, etcetera.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah, corn.

Shawn Stevenson: But when the human genome was mapped out, they thought they'd find this vast array, but yet I think it was maybe somewhere in the ballpark of 25,000?

Dr. Steven Gundry: 22, yeah, 21.

Shawn Stevenson: And so, of course, other factors that they discovered was that about 8% of the human genome was viruses, endogenous retroviruses. We're actually part virus ourselves.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yep.

Shawn Stevenson: What the hell? Why are we not talking about this?

Dr. Steven Gundry: Well, again, we haven't discovered what that part of our genome encodes. We used to call it dark, the dark part of our genome, that it was nonsense. And it was nonsense because we didn't know what that language was, and as we're beginning to realize that even what we think is dark genes, that we really don't, we don't know what they do, just because we haven't deciphered the language of what that encodes. Just like we had no idea that bacteria talk to us, it's like, "Oh, come on, these little one-cell creatures are sending us messages?" It's like...

Shawn Stevenson: It's some freaky stuff.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: But it's so fascinating too, and it's this is just where we are right now, and even in my first book, Sleep Smarter, Caltech researchers found that specific cells in the gut were communicating with... So the bacteria is communicating with cells that create our sleep-related hormones and neurotransmitters, but the language wasn't understood yet, but they knew it was happening.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Right.

Shawn Stevenson: Now, we're going to understand more about the language. That's really, really cool. So being that we are ourselves part virus, and there's a symbiotic relationship also that we have with viruses that's overlooked, what we're attempting to do right now, which we try to do with bacteria is kill all the stuff. "Let's kill the small things, we've finally discovered what creates disease in humans." Is our intention a little bit skewed? Is it a little bit off course when we're trying to kill the different viruses and to kill bacteria?

Dr. Steven Gundry:

I think that's a great question. It actually brings to the forefront, there was... Back in the days when bacteria were first discovered, there were two really great opposing gentlemen in France, Bechamp and Pasteur. And so Bechamp was actually an accomplished academician and was really one of the premier bacteriologist and virologist of his day. And Pasteur, most people don't know, Pasteur was not a physician. He...

But Pasteur was actually a great communicator. He was what we'd use now, mediagenic. Pasteur became famous because he figured out that wine was going bad because of bacterial contamination. Now, needless to say, if you're in France and you figure out that a bacteria might be the cause of ruining a wine crop, then you'd probably be a popular guy. In fact, the King of France appointed him as the head guy to oversee all science in terms of bacteriology.

So what Pasteur said was bacteria are the cause of this problem, and we need to eradicate bacteria and that'll solve the problem. And Bechamp said, "No, no, no, no, no. You're all wrong about this. Bacteria and viruses and yeast and molds actually coexist in a community." And the French, the word "terroir" is this, where you find yourself the land, there's a terroir in wine making, of the soil, the amount of water, the viruses and bacteria and fungi on the roots, and the terroir makes the wine.

So Bechamp, throughout his career kept saying, "Bacteria is just a tiny piece of this puzzle, and if the bacteria are in the right mixture with the viruses and the molds, then everything's fine." And Pasteur because he was very mediagenic said, "No, it's the bacteria and you're right, we have to kill the bacteria." And the word "pasteurization" was basically sterilize the milk or whatever, and so that whole science of killing bacteria because they were somehow evil, really continued to really the present day.

But what's kind of funny is they were arch rivals and Bechamp kind of fell from favor, but it is said and it's in several books that on Pasteur's death bed, he called Bechamp to his side, and he said, "You're correct, it is the terroir."

Shawn Stevenson:

Wow.

Dr. Steven Gundry:

Yes, yeah. So the point of all this is, and what we've learned from how we think we know the microbiome so far, is that it is the terroir. I'll give you an example. I see a large number of female patients who tell me that they suffer from



Candida yeast infection, and I... An overgrowth of yeast. And I've yet in 20 years never had to give any of these patients who supposedly have Candida an antifungal drug. All we have do is don't give Candida what it likes to eat, which is sugar and in particular, fruit sugar, and it doesn't have anything to live on and everything else, the balance restores. So actually, I spend my career restoring terroir, that's all I do. Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: This is why I'm so grateful to talk with you, because of that perspective. You know, the body is of course, just like everything in nature, always trying to find balance. But so often in our system, we try to attack the symptom instead of removing the cause. It's remove the things so things can get back into balance.

It's really a simple principle, it's often a lot less expensive to do. So thank you so much for bringing that point up. And also one of the things that I'm concerned about right now is the training that our bacteria get, that our microbiome, that our holobiome is able to receive. Because it's sort of like, I liken it to like a little light workout when you interact with other people for your immune system every day, and suddenly...

And I just get a red flag that goes up when anything that we do goes outside of what our genes expect us to do. And so when we are suddenly separating from other people and isolating, I wonder what that does for the health of our holobiome, for our virome, for our microbiome, that actually keeps us protected. Do you have any insight on that? Because I'm definitely very, very curious about this.

Dr. Steven Gundry: So I like the expression "holobiome", and for folks who are saying, "What the heck is a holobiome?" we have species of bacteria and viruses and molds in any orifice on our skin. We have it in our mouth, we have it in our nose, we have it in our ears. Ladies, you have it in your vagina, your breast ducts. So wherever we exchange with the outside world, we have it. We even have a cloud of viruses and bacteria that are circulating around us, kind of like Pig-Pen in the Peanuts cartoon.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Dr. Steven Gundry: And this is actually a very real thing, and there is, there's some really kind of fun research that suggests the idea of a personal space that we have. You



know, "Don't get too close to me," is your holobiome interacting with the holobiome of that person next to you. And there's a lot of consideration, particularly in cultures unlike America, where the idea of kissing on the cheek or hugging on both cheeks is exchanging that holobiome.

In fact, there's really fun stuff that our oral microbiome decides compatibility with your mate or with whomever you're with at that particular time, because actually deep kissing is universal in all human cultures. And the theory is, and I think it's more than a theory, that our bacteria, our microbiome, our holobiome is deciding whether this mix is a good mix. And now that we know that these guys communicate with our brain, that they're sentient human beings, that maybe... So go out and kiss some people.

Yeah, so it's a fine line. I've urged people to realize that, again, we'll talk about World War II, can you imagine if the British sat in their bunkers for five years, being bombed every night and just waited for the Manhattan Project, the atom bomb, our vaccine, and didn't arm themselves, fortify themselves and go out and meet the enemy head-on, armed? Same thing, you wouldn't send troops into battle unarmed, that would be a slaughter, but you would arm yourself.

What we've neglected with the COVID-19, is we know full well how to arm ourselves against viruses. We know very well how to do that, there're now 17 separate studies showing the higher your vitamin D level, the safer you are from COVID, and if you get COVID, it will be a mild illness. 17 different studies.

One of the sad things about the Black and Brown community is, I'm sorry, you guys in general don't have much vitamin D because you don't have the ability to absorb it very well. And you look at New York City, there was a study a few years ago looking at population of Queens, and only 10% of them had a vitamin D level above 30 and... 10% of the population.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow.

Dr. Steven Gundry: In all of my patients, I'm running their vitamin D levels above 100, and I won't let them out of my sight until I get their vitamin D levels above 100. And why aren't we preaching, "My gosh, folks for five bucks, go get a vitamin D level and keep taking your vitamin D level, keep taking your vitamin D, it'll it will fortify you." The other thing that's important, we know, we've known from

day one, that people with pre-existing conditions are the people who are going to get COVID.

Well, start naming the pre-existing conditions. So it's obesity, it's diabetes, it's pre-diabetes, it's hypertension, it's heart disease. Well, all of those are actually from leaky gut. Hippocrates, 2500 years ago said, "All disease begins in the gut." And if we said, "Wait a minute, if these people are setups for COVID, because they have leaky gut, why don't we go and restore these guys' gut? Why don't we get gut diversity, why don't we change the foods they're eating?"

And again, and this is important for your new book, in World War II, rationing was done in many countries, the United States, Great Britain, Norway, Denmark, and we know the effect of rationing. Rationing was we rationed sugar and flour, and 40% of all the food eaten in the United States in World War II was from home victory gardens. 40% of all the food was grown at home.

You look at the incidence of diabetes, you look at the incidence of heart disease, you look at the incidence of death during World War II, and in those five years, all of these things dramatically plummeted. In fact, there were diabetes clinics in Norway and Denmark that closed because there were no more diabetics to take care of during the war.

And so if we just took some steps to arm ourselves, then... You're right, we're surrounded by viruses 24 hours a day, we're surrounded by bacteria 24 hours a day, and they're not necessarily our enemy, they're looking for chinks in the armor. And if we don't give them the chinks, they're not going to get a toehold. If they do get a toehold, then our immune system, if we fortify it, it was designed to handle what comes at us.

Shawn Stevenson:

Yeah, it's even how we evolved, our immune system itself is rooted from viruses facing off against other viruses, and suddenly we're incapable. I want to talk more about our directive and some of the things we can do, some of the other things that I'm concerned about with Dr. G, right after this quick break. So sit tight, we'll be right back.

When I was in high school and college our big, sports-performance, game-day meal was Mostaccioli. Mostaccioli consciousness, Mostaccioli performance,

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and wondering why we're over on the sidelines yawning, and waiting for the next play to cycle back in again. Of course, you get hyped up, you get the adrenaline going, you do your performance, but what if there was something better? Not just for a game-day, but for practice days as well, because how you practice is how you perform. And so if you're dedicated to true sports performance your nutrition really does matter. And now we have things that have clinical evidence, peer-reviewed, controlled trials that show the efficacy of things that have been utilized for centuries.

In a study published in "Medicine in Science and Sports and Exercise" tested 30 healthy athletes for six weeks to record the effects of cordyceps medicinal mushroom on their performance. The group that added cordyceps to their daily regimen had twice the oxygen uptake of the control group. This oxygen is essential in supplying nutrients to your muscles, preventing fatigue, and preventing the buildup of lactic acid. Another study done by the same group also showed a 9% increase in aerobic activity from utilizing cordyceps. For myself, personally, my pre-workout go-to is Shroom TECH Sport from Onnit, and it's because it was the subject of a double-blind, placebo-controlled, 12-week clinical trial performed by researchers at Florida State University.

They found that utilizing Shroom TECH Sport as a pre-workout showed a direct increase in bench press reps by 12%. They also found an increase in combined bench press and back squat reps by 7% for the supersets, and also were found to parallel the earlier study, with a cardio performance increase by 8.8%, almost 9% that was seen in the earlier clinical trial. If you're not utilizing Shroom TECH Sport definitely check it out. Go to Onnit.com/model, that's O-N-N-I-T.com/model for 10% off. It's a world-class pre-workout, and pre-life supplement to use. Onnit.com/model, now back to the show.

Alright, we're back and we're talking with New York Times best-selling author, physician, Dr. Steven Gundry. And before the break, we were talking about this very strange approach that we have right now, where we are sort of missing out on the most important things that actually fortify us and protect us, just innately, from pathogens.

One of the strangest things that is not really being considered is the fact that we all are carrying around pathogenic, what we call these "opportunistic organisms" all the time, that can potentially make us sick, and some even kill us. But it's when we're compromised, it's when our immune system is



compromised that these things can, like you said, get a foothold on us. So why are we not talking about taking care of our immune system? Why are we not talking about fortifying our health?

I want to pass this to you, because it's really clear that we never have talked about it. That overarching in our society and the way that our system is structured, there hasn't been a focus on this in the first place. So why, all of a sudden, would we be doing it now? I personally was... I was disappointed. Why is the messaging so focused on this holy trinity of protection, which is avoidance, and we're not talking about getting our citizens healthier?

But I do believe we have a great opportunity right now, since everything is fluxed up, to get our citizens healthier. So can we talk a little bit about that? Because even in your practice, you evolved over time to focus on wellness and not just on disease symptom treatment.

Dr. Steven Gundry:

Yeah, and again, in the first part of all this, we talked about Pasteur. And one of his, I think sad legacies, is that we became convinced that pathogens were disease-causing organisms that had to be eradicated. And don't get me wrong, I don't particularly like malaria. But I think that really started our entire focus in medicine and allopathic medicine, that we should go after eradicating pathogens as a cause of disease, and I think that really permeated almost everything we did in medicine, rather than looking at the organism as a whole.

Going back to Hippocrates. Hippocrates used to teach that there's... Within all of us is, translated from Greek, a green life force energy that every organism has, that wants, for lack of a better word, perfect health. And if you have green life force energy, then you will withstand whatever comes at you, you will protect yourself.

He was convinced that there were external forces that were preventing green life force energy from showing itself, and that a physician's job was to identify those external forces that were preventing the expression of green life force energy, and remove those external forces, or teach the patient to remove them and then the patient would heal himself.

And what's fascinating is Hippocrates was absolutely right. So what I've done in the last 20 years is I just do detective work and say, "Okay, what are these



external forces, many of which are food, that are, many of which are the products we've made to keep ourselves comfortable, and remove as much as we can?" We can even talk about natural light. Change these things.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah, and so I want to give you a great example. Recently, I have a lot of snowbirds in my practice that go away for the summer and then come back in the winter, and I have an 85-year-old woman who I recently saw who is a snowbird, and she came back this fall to Palm Springs and she's married to a an 86-year-old gentleman. She's in my practice. He thinks that what she and I do is just the silliest thing and wants nothing to do with it.

Then one of the things we did among other things, I always run everybody's vitamin D very high, I've never seen vitamin D toxicity. We do a lot of other things with food, as you know, and he just pooh-poohed it, and yeah you know, he's 85 and what the heck. So they both caught COVID-19 at the end of March. And so I saw her a few weeks ago and I said, "Well, wow. What was that like?" And she said, "Well, for me, it wasn't much of anything."

She said, "I felt like I had a bad cold for 48 hours and that was it." She said, "My husband wound up in intensive care for 56 days, nearly didn't make it. He just got released from the hospital three weeks ago." So he was in the hospital for literally six months. So she leans over to me, and she says, "Guess what he's taking now? A lot of vitamin D." And he says, "You know, I should've listened to you."

And just yesterday, before coming here, I we have a Hispanic woman in her 50s, the entire family caught COVID, except her, she's my only patient, and her husband actually died from COVID, a 55-year-old gentleman, Hispanic gentleman. And so, this is decimating a lot of our communities.

I think it's because a lot of our communities are, number one, aren't aware that food is one of the greatest ways that we can protect ourselves, or learn to cooperate with the viruses and bacteria and molds that are always going to be present with us. And it's this balance that can be achieved.

Shawn Stevenson: You know what's so fascinating for me and one of the things I keep trying to impress upon culture right now is that, right now, somewhere around 70

million confirmed cases and of people who are okay, who survived, and the question is, how do they do it? The vast majority of them didn't even have any symptom... No, I'm sorry, we'll say somewhere close to half. How do they do that without some kind of medical intervention? Their immune system...

Dr. Steven Gundry: Right.

Shawn Stevenson: Did what it was designed to do, and our immune system is literally made from food. It's made, from our natural killer cells to our T-cells, the list goes on and on, our lymphatic system, everything about us is made from the food that we eat. This should definitely be a top priority. But I'm just going to ask you, why is it not a part of this conversation? Why is the task force not up there saying, "Okay guys, make sure that you wash your hands, but also we really need to hone in on getting our food together as a society."?

Dr. Steven Gundry: It's bad for business. I had recently on my podcast, David Kessler, who is was the former head of the FDA. He's been dean of Yale Medical School, dean of UCSF Medical School, he's now on president-elect Biden's COVID Taskforce. When he was head of the FDA, the food nutritional label was made on the back of packages.

And as he tells the story when, you know, "Oh, there's this much fat in, and this much sugar and this much protein," and when they were working on the sugar label, he wanted to make sure that everyone knew that carbohydrates were sugar and that all carbohydrates should be labeled as sugar. And so this was sent to the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture called the President and said, "You can't let this maniac do this."

The President calls David Kessler and said, "Get over here." And Big Agriculture is there, Big Food's there, and they go, "What are you doing? You can't tell people how much sugar is in these products." And he said, "Well, what do you mean? That's what's in it." And he said, "No one would buy this. And this is what we sell. This is what the Department of Agriculture does. Fix it."

And so he tells this great story and I'll tell it to anyone who will listen. He said, "Let's take a bagel." And he says, "So you look at that, there's zero fat in the bagel, there's a couple of grams of protein in the bagel, and it says 33 grams of carbohydrates, zero grams of sugar." And you go, "Oh, that's a health food." And he says, "No."



He said, "It turns out that those finely processed starch molecules in wheat are so highly processed that it is more sugar than table sugar. And so if you do the calculations correctly, there are eight teaspoons of sugar in that healthy bagel that will raise your blood sugar faster than if you swallowed eight teaspoons of table sugar. And he said, "And you won't see it on the label because we're not allowed to tell you."

Shawn Stevenson: Wow. That's really messed up.

Dr. Steven Gundry: It's really messed up. I give a lecture to the diabetics, and during the Obama administration, when Michelle Obama was planting victory gardens at the White House and was educating kids, particularly in the Black community, about the importance of fresh fruit and fresh vegetables. At the same time, the Department of Agriculture signed a deal with Domino's Pizza that they would pay \$100 million in free advertising for Domino's Pizza, if Domino's Pizza would add twice the amount of cheese to their pizzas than they were previously.

And they actually made a big fanfare of the fact that the Department of Agriculture was supporting our farmers, our dairy farmers, at the same time Michelle Obama was supporting healthy eating. And so that's the tug, that's the tear. And this is... People listening to you, people have to be aware that nobody from up is going to tell us the right way to eat. This has to be a grassroots movement and it has to start with all of us.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Thank you so much for sharing that. One of the things that I... I definitely am I'm very big on the Jerry Maguire, "Show me the money," and tracing the thing back. I just don't want to operate on a theory. And so of course, the theory would be that the major crops that our government provides subsidies for, hundreds of billions of dollars, are making us sick. That's the theory.

But I went and traced it, and I came across an incredible study, and they tracked the pathway of these massive factory farm crops, the wheat and the corn, and all these things, that largely show up through the drive-through window and in processed foods, and they tracked the consumption. The folks who had the greatest consumption of these government subsidized crops were 40% more likely to be obese. We know this.



Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And these are the very foods that our government is funding for us to eat. And then it circles back around to us getting caught in the system of medicine, and now we're paying for pills. But the funny thing is, even when I say "our government", we are paying for it.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Sure.

Shawn Stevenson: That's the most messed up part. And I think that if we really get this, we can demand better. But I just think... We just don't know that this is happening, and so I'm so grateful for the work that you're doing. I would like to talk about something else that just keeps popping up in my mind as we're you're talking, which is, yesterday I looked out the window and I saw the mailman pull up to my neighbor's mailbox.

He already had gloves on. He sanitized his gloves, his hands with the gloves, then he reached for the mail, put in the mailbox. He pulled up to our mailbox, sanitized his hands and his gloves, reached for the mail, put in our mailbox, and I'm sure he kept doing that all the way down the street.

And my question is, we know that many of these products are, they're designed to kill small things, it's what they're meant to do. Antibacterial, antiviral, whatever the case may be. And now we're at a place where even when I went to the DMV, once you get up from your chair, literally somebody comes over and starts spraying down the chair, wiping everything down. Could these products be creating a problem for our health as well, that we're so, we're not just using, now I believe we're over-using.

To the degree that when kids are in school, if they get to go to school, they have so many of these crazy, synthetic, dangerous products that, obviously they're going to be inhaling, obviously they're going to be interacting, putting on their skin. Should we be a little bit more aware that this is happening?

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah, the idea that these disinfectants are going to protect us is, particularly with COVID-19, is a bit naïve. COVID-19 is really an airborne virus, and it really does not survive well on surfaces for very long. And what's fascinating about COVID-19, and there's some really cool studies out of China that are just now being published about transmission in restaurants. And it actually has to do



with airflow, where the fans or ventilation or open windows are in restaurants, and they've tracked through really good contact tracing, who was getting it.

So for instance, if we're in this room, if someone across the room is facing me and I happen to have asymptomatic COVID, and then the window behind me is open, then that person facing me has a pretty good chance of catching it. Whereas, if that person is opposite and facing the other way, he's not going to get it. And same thing with the tangential people, they're not going to get it. So it's the air movement that's actually critical.

So all the little handwashing things out in the mailbox, that's not going to protect us. But you're right, we learned with triclosan, which used to be in all of our toothpaste, it used to be in all of our antibacterial cleansers, that this thing is a major estrogen disruptor.

And talk about promoting obesity by sanitizing our skin and sanitizing our teeth and our mouthwash, little did we know that we were swallowing an estrogen-like substance. And it's like, "I don't want to do that." And who knows what the rest of these products are going to have? We just don't know. That's not what we need to do. We need to fortify ourselves.

We need to become one with the earth, to be silly. If we have a great terroir, there's really not much that's going to happen to us. Yeah, we might catch COVID. But like you say, the vast majority of people who catch it are just going to have a mild interaction with this virus. We have mild interactions with viruses probably every day that we're not aware of, and our immune system takes care of it. May I bring up one other point about them?

Shawn Stevenson: Please do.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Okay. So we hear about cytokine storms. So our immune system... I like to use the example of, 95% of us are born with a preformed antibody to peanut, the peanut lectin. Lectins are one of my favorite subject. So 95% of us are born with an antibody that if we see a peanut lectin, we should hate it.

When I was growing up, there were no such things as peanut allergies. Kids ate peanuts in schools, nobody carried EpiPens to school. Now of course, we have an epidemic of peanut allergies, and kids literally are carrying EpiPens to

school. We've always had antibodies to peanuts, so why is it now that those antibodies are going crazy and they never did before?

And that's because our microbiome, number one, educates our immune system. It tells the immune system, "Hey, we got you covered. We're the first line of defense. We're going to see these guys, whatever they are, long before you. We're going to eat them or we're going to detoxify them. And if they get past us, just chill out. It's okay, they're not as bad actors as you think."

And immune system actually learns from our microbiome, and there's actually really cool microscopic pictures of filamentous bacteria going through the walls of our intestinal cells and making ET contact with... I mean they're in our human cells, teaching human cells. It's like, "Whoa." So the immune system learns.

Now, contrast that now that we have a decimated microbiome 'cause we've killed them all with all the antibiotics in our food and that we take. Not only that, we now have... Most of us have leaky gut because of the things we eat. And now, our immune system is on high alert. Our borders are constantly under attack. We're on threat level five. And so if we see a potentially not very interesting foreign antigen, like say a COVID-19, before our immune system would go, "Yeah, that's a pretty interesting guy. Yeah, let's go eat it and we'll be okay."

Now, our immune system drops a nuclear bomb, and we have this cytokine storm calling our immune system onto high alert. And it's no wonder that these cytokine storms are happening to our people with pre-existing diseases. And so, it's no wonder if you don't have these pre-existing diseases and you've got yourself in good immunologic shape and you got a healthy microbiome, then it's just a, "Oh yeah. It's another interesting virus."

Shawn Stevenson:

This is beyond fascinating, and such a needed conversation, and I know folks are wondering what they can do. Obviously, there's been a lot of framing of fear, worry, uncertainty, and incapability to even take care of oneself. Just hide out and wait for a solution to come along. And of course, we've talked about, of course, you want to be intelligent, exercise caution, but most importantly, we have to be a little bit more empowered in getting ourselves healthier and more resilient.

So if you could... You've already mentioned one, which is the vitamin D piece, which is so important, especially as you mentioned for folks with more melanin, it's like built-in sunscreen. And so we evolved in a space where we got a lot more sun exposure, and so your body builds up a resistance so you need a little bit more.

So if we can of course, get some sun exposure, but really important right now, I think would be to supplement with vitamin D. So if you could talk about where we should target there. And maybe one other thing, maybe two, if you can, if you feel called to, things that we can do right now proactively to make ourselves more resilient?

Dr. Steven Gundry:

Let me give you something else that we learned from World War II. Now, I've already talked about when rationing was instituted, how much healthier everyone got. So certainly, that's number one. But one of the striking sad findings, and it was actually really important, was the concentration camp survivors. Obviously, a large number of people died in concentration camps, but the survivors who were literally starved to death for the most part.

One of the shocking things among the survivors was that these people never were ill, never got the flu, never got a cold, never got cancer. And you would have thought that in their profound weakened condition that they'd be a setup for catching a death of a cold, getting pneumonia, but they didn't. And that was actually, a researcher said, "That doesn't make any sense. Their immune system ought to be shot, it ought to... They should be a setup. What's the deal?"

Well, it turns out that fasting is actually one of the best ways to make your immune system strong, because we're designed, and I talk a lot about this in my books, we're designed in crisis, if you will, that our green life force energy will empower every system to protect you, because if you don't make it through this hard time, you're not going to be around to reproduce. And at the end of the game, that's what we got to keep around to do.

So it was actually these concentration camp survivors that were the impetus, sadly, to find out why simple fasting actually gets your immune system revved up to protect you. So what I ask people to do is, folks, just start skipping breakfast. If you wanted to do one thing to change your ability to fight infection, skip breakfast. And everybody goes, "But, but, but, but, but

breakfast is the most important meal of the day." Well, I can assure you that our ancestors didn't crawl out of the cave and say, "What's for breakfast?"

There wasn't any breakfast. There was no refrigerator, there wasn't a pantry shelf, there was nothing. We had to find "break fast". And you look at hunter gatherers, like the Hadzas, they don't eat breakfast, they head out and they may eat breakfast at lunch. But we're designed not to eat breakfast, breakfast is a cultural phenomenon.

And quite honestly, Big Food taught us that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Remember, no one ever ate a bowl of cereal until 1906. Never existed. The Brits never had a bowl of cereal until 1941 when America arrived and brought it, didn't exist as a food.

Shawn Stevenson: It's power of marketing.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Power of marketing. If you say an untruth long enough and loud enough, it will become true.

Shawn Stevenson: That's fascinating. Thank you so much. I was not expecting that one, but it's so powerful, so true. And all the just revitalization that takes place, the autophagy, the HGH production, all of those things by extending out that fasting window a little bit.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yep.

Shawn Stevenson: That's a good one. Thank you so much, Dr. G. This has been incredible, I'm so grateful for your perspective and your voice and your experience right now. You shared before the show, you're basically seeing patients and working seven days a week right now, and it's just, it's phenomenal. It's incredibly inspiring. If you could, could you let everybody know, number one, you have a fantastic podcast, one of my favorites, and also where they can pick up your books, just get more information from you, period.

Dr. Steven Gundry: Yeah, so we do have The Dr. Gundry Podcast, and you can get it wherever your podcasts come from. We just got picked up by PodcastOne, so we're excited about that. You can visit me at drgundry.com. You can visit my supplement company, Gundry MD. I've got five New York Times Bestsellers, the next one will be out March 16th, The Energy Paradox, which is when your get up and go



has got up and gone.

Shawn Stevenson: So good.

Dr. Steven Gundry: And yeah, so wherever you want to find books, so you'll find me.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome. Dr. Gundry, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. Again, Dr. Gundry is just an absolute gem, and I'm so grateful for him and the work that he's doing. Some big takeaways from today is really looking at our vitamin D levels. This is so important, and more and more evidence comes out, it's just like, how much evidence do we actually need to know how important this is?

We know we evolved, humans need sunlight to thrive. And even so, during different times of the year, you know, it's not as accessible, and also just our proclivity to getting outdoors has gone down as a society massively. So it's important. So there's also food sources of vitamin D, but supplementation might be a good idea, of course, based on Dr. Gundry's work.

And another thing is that green life force energy, getting things in balance. Balance creates resilience, and that's what we really want to target today. Avoiding the things that create dysfunction, and from there, adding in things that support balance. And the formula is pretty profound, it's also pretty simple. And so, again, I hope you got a lot of value out of this episode.

If you did, please share it out with the people that you care about. On social media, of course you can could tag me, I'm @shawnmodel. You can tag Dr. Gundry as well. We've got some more epic shows coming your way. We're not stopping. Can't stop, won't stop. We've got so much good stuff coming for you this year, so make sure you're ready. Stay posted, stay ready, take care, have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon.

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Thanks for tuning in.