

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 679

Improve Your Adrenals & Thyroid Health to Improve Your Metabolism

With Guest Dr. Izabella Wentz

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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 to tuning in with me today. Our thyroid gland is a master regulator of our metabolism, but it does not operate in isolation. It's along this very powerful information axis, called the HPA axis, the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis. And what's happening along this information superhighway has a tremendous influence on what's happening with our metabolic health. Now, our special guest today, many years ago, she was on the show, and she helped us to unpack what's happening with so much thyroid dysfunction in our world today, in particular autoimmune-related thyroid conditions like Hashimoto's thyroiditis. And she opened our eyes to the increased advent of things like molecular mimicry. So, what is that? Molecular mimicry is this really profound understanding of how consuming certain food products, we'll call them food-like products today, create disruption to the lining of our gastrointestinal tract.

And in our gut, when we're consuming certain foods that basically start to pull apart this really intelligent dynamic system and start to kind of, in a way, punch holes in our gut lining. And now the common labeling is intestinal permeability, but it's also referred to as leaky gut. But this phenomenon taking place allows food compounds to get into our bloodstream, to get into places in our bodies where they're simply not supposed to be. And when that happens, when we have things getting into places they're not supposed to be, it's going to incite an immune response, a heavy immune response to go and attack said substance. And so, we get a compound, maybe we're consuming something that has been demonized recently. Gluten! Everybody's heard of the ravishes of gluten recently. Gluten is arriving like Thanos to Earth. It's just taking over and it's causing us, breaking up relationships, making people break up. It's putting them on blind date shows and it sucks and it's just... Gluten is getting blamed for everything out here. Now there is some truth to problems with gluten.

Although humans have been utilizing gluten-containing foods for thousands of years, but what we're really exposed to today are these very hybridized, in particular, if we're talking about wheat gluten, we're talking about this genetically modified dwarf wheat. It's not the amber waves of grain, like whatever beautiful scenario we might have in our minds. It's really created in a way in utilizing strains and utilizing compounds in the soil to essentially create this genetically modified strain of wheat that can't survive without human intervention. It's very, very distorted. It lacks resilience, and it's increased its concentration of certain anti-nutrients. And with something like gluten and the concentration and strange form that is showing up in modern day wheat, we know that it incites the activity of something called zonulin in our bodies. And zonulin is the compound that causes intestinal permeability, causes the gut lining to open up. And this is happening with a hundred percent of people who are consuming it.

Now, it might not be at all noticeable, and our bodies quickly adapt. The gates can close, the drawbridge opens, the drawbridge close. For some people, they're highly sensitive.

And this is seeing the skyrocketing rates of celiac conditions, but also there are gluten-related sensitivities, and your body might show up symptoms differently than what would be labeled as celiac. It could be skin issues. It could be thyroid issues. And this is getting into the lane of molecular mimicry because once that gluten or whatever compound is causing the intestinal permeability is consumed, maybe you're having it along with a little bit of some shicken. Not chicken, but shicken. That's what my oldest son, Jorden, used to call chicken for years. And I didn't correct him. I was like, "This is too cute. I'm just keeping it." But then I got to a place where he's going to say this out with his friends. He'd be like, "Shicken? What are you talking about, Jorden?" So, I corrected him eventually, but a little bit of shicken and it's going to come... Chicken. It's going to come along with an amino acid sequence. And so, your immune system is on alert because this chicken in its longer form, it's not broken down into its amino acids, it's now into places in our body that it's not supposed to be. Immune system's going to attack it. Now, here's the thing about our immune system. We have an innate immune system, and we also have an adaptive immune system.

We have these memory cells. We have B cells and T cells and cytokines and macrophages. We have certain immune cells that their job is to remember its interactions, remember its invaders, remember its enemies so it's more efficient in taking them out. So, you never notice again that something caused you a problem. And so, when that sequence comes in from a, quote, "natural food" is coming into our bodies and it sees that sequence somewhere else in your body, maybe that sequence is a strain BBAACC. BBAACC came in, took it out when it was in the form of that chicken, but now your immune system sees this BBAACC sequence hanging out on your thyroid gland. Enemy. Molecular mimicry. It's now targeting your own tissues because it has that same sequence that it remembered was an invader in the system. This is one of the hallmarks of autoimmunity. Now this is a very rudimentary isolation of this conversation. Again, we'll put our special guest's first appearance on the show for you in the show notes. But this phenomenon of molecular mimicry where our immune system is just like wondering, "Why is my body attacking itself? Why would it do that?" We're not designed to do that. We would not have survived as a species if our body was attacking itself. Something is happening.

Because most people don't realize this, autoimmune conditions have absolutely skyrocketed. We're talking about well over a hundred million Americans, now experiencing some form of an autoimmune disease. It's not normal. It's not okay. And it has a lot to do with what we're putting in our mouths. And so, with that said, opening the door on that conversation is incredibly important, helping to heal that interaction, heal the gut, heal the function of the thyroid. But our special guest today is now enlightening us to another aspect of that

information superhighway that we've got to address. Because even the experience of eating foods that damage us, that is an experience of stress. Stress comes in many forms, many fashions, but we don't often acknowledge it because it doesn't have calories. It doesn't fit into the diet phenomenon of like me getting healthier, changing my body. But stress and its influence on this particular organ and organ system that we're going to be talking about today can absolutely, if we're doing so much right, eating a great diet, our movement practices, sleeping, with all those things we're just trying to check all these boxes, but we don't have stress properly managed and modulated in our bodies.

In particular, the health of this organ and organ system. I'm talking about our adrenals; I'm talking about our adrenal glands. If they're not functioning properly, no matter what we do, it's going to create an inability for us to lose weight. Or if we're underweight and we can't do anything to get to a healthy body weight, it's going to depend on who we are, our genetic disposition, what we're dealing with, but it can really, really screw up our metabolic health and so much more. And so, we need to bring this situation to light today and also talk about solutions. And that's what my special guest is most qualified to do. And so very, very excited about this.

Now, during this episode, we're going to mention a couple of key nutrients that are clinically proven to help our body's stress response system to function in a more healthful fashion, to become more resilient. Now, one of the most overlooked aspects of our stress exposures is just like when our bodies are exposed to chronic or even acute continuous stressors, our adrenals are just squirting out ample amounts, robust amounts of vitamin C. Because vitamin C has all of these antioxidants immune system modulating aspects to it.

And so, when we're under stress, your body's doing what it has to do, your adrenals are doing what it has to do because it believes it has to do this to protect you. And what if you're doing this over and over and over again, you're not managing stress and you become depleted in vitamin C. And this is a growing issue today. Vitamin C is so available in our society in some ways, but in other ways, it's not because most people are unaware that the average vitamin C supplement on store shelves today is coming from genetically modified corn syrup. It's coming from the bad stuff. This is where most vitamin C, those little packages, little energies, it's coming from GMO corn, corn starch, corn syrup. It's not good. So, with that said, we want to upgrade our vitamin C sources. As a matter of fact, let's look at some of the data around vitamin C and stress. According to data published in the Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences, both emotional and physical stress can affect a person's vitamin C status is as how recent. It can increase our requirement for vitamin C to maintain normal blood levels.

And when stress depletes vitamin C levels in the body, it reduces the body's resistance to infections and diseases, and increases, and here's the most important part, this lack of vitamin

C then increases the likelihood of further stress. The stress was the first domino, and now it's just causing more stress. So, it becomes this vicious circle. When vitamin C intake is increased, the negative effects of excessive stress hormones are reduced and the body's ability to cope with the stress response improves. The only vitamin C supplement that I recommend is a real whole food-based concentrate of the most vitamin C dense foods ever discovered. And it's organic. And it's actually clinically proven to be absorbable and utilized by our bodies. A randomized placebo-controlled study published in the Journal of Cardiology looked at people who were giving their body a direct stressor. So, we're talking about people smoking. And they had them to consume whole food concentrates of vitamin C in the form of camu camu berry, the most vitamin C dense food ever discovered. Had them to consume that daily over the course of a one-week study period versus the control group who were given an ordinary vitamin C supplement.

That's, again, largely coming from GMO corn products. All right, so that ascorbic acid out there on the streets is where it's primarily coming from. Now here's what the researchers found. Number one, the camu camu berry group had significantly lowered oxidative stress and lowered inflammatory biomarkers. What's more? There were no changes in those parameters in the group receiving the ordinary vitamin C supplement. The Essential C Complex from Paleo Valley is all organic. There's no synthetic ingredients, no fillers. It's based on camu camu berry, amla berry and acerola cherry, the top three vitamin C dense superfoods, but also all of these vast arrays of other micronutrients as well that help with its absorption and utilization by ourselves. It also has a 60-day, 100% money back guarantee. So, if you aren't absolutely thrilled with it, you can receive a full refund, no questions asked.

Go to paleovalley.com/model right now and you'll automatically receive 15% off of your entire order at checkout. Again, that's paleovalley.com/model. That's P-A-L-E-O-V-A-L-L-E-Y.com/model. 15% off everything store wide. I love Paleo Valley. They do so many amazing things, but this is my vitamin C supplement of choice, I've been utilizing for years, especially when you're traveling, when you're under extra stress than normal, this is when you need to really hit up a high-quality vitamin C source to support your adrenal health, to support your immune health, and so much more. Check them out, paleovalley.com/model. And now let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled “Model Health Show” by Vvenom1956. “Thank you, Shawn, for all the things on your show. I just started listening a few months ago and I haven't been disappointed yet. All your content and guests have been fantastic. Thank you for helping to change lives, including my own.”

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple podcasts. Thank you for making me a part of your world, I truly do appreciate that. And on that

note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Dr. Izabella Wentz is an Integrative Pharmacist dedicated to finding the root causes of chronic health conditions. Her passion stems from her own diagnosis with Hashimoto's thyroiditis in 2009, following a decade of debilitating symptoms. As an accomplished author, Dr. Wentz has written several bestselling books, including the New York Times bestseller, Hashimoto's Thyroiditis: Lifestyle Interventions for Finding and Treating the Root Cause. Now she's back on the Model Health Show to share her insights about our all-important adrenal health to make us more resilient to stress, healthier, happier, and more functional overall. Let's dive in this conversation with the amazing Dr. Izabella Wentz. This is our... We've had many conversations. This is our first time sitting down together and having a conversation. So, it's so good to see you.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: So good to be here. Thank you so much for having me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course, of course. So, I want to start off by talking about two of the most important glands for our metabolism and health overall are our thyroid and our adrenals. Let's kick things off by talking about what our thyroid is and what are its roles?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Sure. So, the thyroid gland is a tiny little gland that sits at the bottom of our neck, and it is responsible for regulating our metabolism. It does a lot of things for us. So, whether that's producing our energy or for helping us burn fat, or for helping us warm up in a cold environment, this is what the thyroid does. And we don't realize this, but it affects every cell in the body. And without a thyroid and without thyroid hormone, we really wouldn't be able to function as well as we do.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Holy moly. We again, we have this conventional thinking today where it's very systems oriented. And so, we tend to think of the thyroid just kind of in isolation. You just said something so profound. It affects every cell in our bodies. And you also mentioned this is like, would you say this is a master gland for our metabolism?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Absolutely. It sets the pace for the whole body. And typically, people will struggle with cold intolerance, or they say that, "I'm just having trouble losing weight and I'm doing all the same things that I used to be doing and I'm gaining weight, or I feel really sluggish." So, they might have brain fog, they might have fatigue, they might have muscle wasting and hair loss. And the symptoms seem to be all over the place. And you're like, "Well, do I go to the hair doctor? Do I go to this kind of doctor?" And a lot of these symptoms can be traced back to the thyroid gland. If it's not functioning properly, it's going to impact the whole body.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. And you actually got into this field, at this level that you're at because of some revelations you had about your own thyroid gland. Can you talk about this? And this is starting back when you were in college.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: So, in full disclosure, I was never interested in the thyroid gland when I was in pharmacy school. I was like, "Oh, the thyroid gland, there's like one drug for it. If it's sluggish, you just take this drug. That's the end of it. Let's focus on conditions that have more interesting drugs." But at the same time, I was struggling with some symptoms that started in my undergrad. And they were, fatigue, I had to sleep for 11-12 hours a night. Then I progressed into irritable bowel syndrome. Then I started having anxiety and panic attacks. When I finished graduate school, I ended up with like, allergies and then carpal tunnel and then acid reflux and then hair loss. And it was just like all these symptoms progressively happening. I started gaining weight, I found myself to not be as sharp as I once was. So, I was used to being like the nerdy kid in class. And I was like, the one that always knew the answer and did well on tests and so on and so forth. And then I found myself at work meetings, just having to constantly take notes and forgetting what everybody was saying. And I thought I had early onset dementia because I was forgetful. And I used to have this amazing memory. And I was going to doctors was getting all kinds of tests done. And there was nothing wrong with me. There was nothing wrong with me.

Finally, I just kept pushing and I found a doctor who tested my thyroid antibodies, and they were in the 2000 range. Thyroid antibodies are going to be a marker that your immune system has recognized a thyroid gland as a foreign invader and starts to launch an attack against the thyroid gland. And this is how hypothyroidism, or an under-active thyroid starts for most people. This attack, these antibodies can be present for about 10 years before the conventional medical tests will discover that there's something going on with the thyroid. And so that was me, I was in limbo for 10 years with all these crazy symptoms. Finally got the diagnosis of Hashimoto's, and I was like, "Yes, I get to take thyroid meds. Exciting. I'm a pharmacist. I finally get cool meds." Right? But the meds helped a little bit. I went from sleeping like 12 hours a night to 11 hours a night. And then I only needed one jacket instead of two, which was an improvement, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Progress.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Mm-hmm. Progress. And then I was like, "But I still have carpal tunnel, I still have fatigue, I still have anxiety issues, I still have irritable bowel syndrome, my hair is still falling out. Is there anything else that I can do to help reverse my condition? What caused my condition in the first place?" So, I was in my early 20s, I was like, "Why am I getting sick?" And then I wanted to figure out if there was anything I could do beyond take thyroid medications and if there was anything I can do to potentially reverse my condition. And that's how I became

a thyroid and functional medicine expert/human guinea pig was really in a way to help myself heal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh man, this is... And again, to go so long and just developing progressively more and more symptoms and being told, "There's nothing wrong with you. We can't find anything." I would imagine that some of these well-intentioned folks that you were going to, would even maybe allude to, it might be all in your head.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Oh, I got offered all kinds of fun things. I got offered Provigil, so I got offered stimulants for my fatigue. I got offered antidepressants for my depression. I got offered anti-anxiety medications, and all of these things where I'm like, "Well, I'm not really an anxious person, but sometimes I have these panic attacks and they come out of nowhere, and this isn't me. This is something new that's happening within my body and is it all connected somehow?" But none of them were really connecting the dots. And then even when I got my diagnosis, the endocrinologist said, "Your hair loss isn't caused by your thyroid." And then I went to a hair loss specialist that said, "This is your thyroid." And I went to a cardiologist 'cause I had some heart issues. And then I went to a gastroenterologist for my acid reflux, and for my IBS, and then a pain specialist for my carpal tunnel. And I was like 25, and I was on all these medications, and I was having side effects from the medications. And it just was like this vicious cycle. And I'm grateful that I had been working with clients with complex health conditions because I realized that sometimes and oftentimes medications were not the answer. Right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. You're reminding me of that game Operation.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Did you ever play that? So, I'm picturing you there with all these different parts and kind of being outsourced to all these different people and not really getting an answer to the questions that you're asking. And the biggest part of that, of course, is the struggle and the discomfort and the not... Like, you realize that that wasn't you, and it's so profound. But this coincidentally was going on and kicking off when you started into college and going on this track with becoming a pharmacist, which is obviously going to be a tremendous workload. And then progressively, as you're going through school symptoms getting worse and worse and worse. So, this is leading to the conversation of the stress relationship in all of this. And of course, if we're thinking about a gland in regard to stress, we're thinking about the adrenals. So, are the adrenals involved in this equation? And as a matter of fact, let's talk about a connection between our thyroid and our adrenal glands.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Sure. There's a lot to unpack there. And so, I would start with saying that most people with thyroid issues and any kind of chronic health issues, usually have some

degree of adrenal dysfunction. And what does that mean? So, our adrenals are our stress glands. That's one way that they've been described. They help us produce certain types of stress hormones that are required for us to survive, and as well as to thrive. If we don't have any adrenal hormones, if we don't produce any adrenal hormones like cortisol, people oftentimes think this is... "Too much cortisol is bad. It makes you fat. It causes you to have belly fat and makes you irritable." That's all true. But if we didn't have any cortisol at all, we would not be alive. And I typically see people with thyroid issues, with chronic health issues like chronic fatigue syndrome. They will have adrenal dysfunction and they're not able to produce enough of the right stress hormones throughout the day to help themselves feel well. So, they don't produce enough stress hormones in the morning, and they end up with excessive fatigue in the morning. They have trouble waking up, they have brain fog, they have trouble getting out of bed. They might produce too much cortisol later in the day, and that causes them to have anxiety, blood sugar spikes. Then they might have too much cortisol in the evenings and then they can't sleep. So, there's a big whole connection there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Clinically, we would call these folks tired and wired. Where their cortisol... Cortisol really is kind of like this get up and go.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: As you mentioned, we kind of put in this pithy box of like, it's this bad thing? But cortisol is critical to life itself. But just being able to get up and get out of bed and it being too low, but then having it elevated in the evening, and cortisol can kind of be like an antithesis with melatonin. Like if your cortisol's too high, it's just going to be punching melatonin in the face, and we want to make sure that cortisol having a good rhythm. But what you're already unpacking and what you shared so wonderfully in the book is how all of this is deeply connected to stress and our lifestyle obviously. But can you talk specifically about the connection between cortisol and the thyroid or, and/or adrenals and the thyroid?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Sure. So typically, whenever I see a person with a thyroid condition, I would say 9 out of 10 times they have some degree of adrenal dysfunction or cortisol dysfunction. So, in some cases they may have too much cortisol. In other cases, they're on a cortisol roller coaster where they don't have the healthy levels of cortisol in the morning, and it just drops too... And it's too low in the morning and then it gets too high throughout the day. And then other people have flatline levels of cortisol where they're not just producing enough of it. The interesting thing that I typically see is a person will start on thyroid hormones for their hypothyroidism, and initially they feel better. But then that can lead them to becoming symptomatic again and worsening their adrenal dysfunction. So, cortisol and thyroid hormone have a bit of a feedback loop. So, when we have not enough thyroid hormone on board, we don't break down our cortisol or as quickly the body kind of compensates and says, "Okay, let's

keep some of more of this cortisol on board." When people start on thyroid medications, their cortisol clearance increases. And so, their body was compensating and then they get on these thyroid hormones, and they can end up with exacerbating their adrenal dysfunction. And this is one type of pattern with the connection between cortisol and thyroid hormones.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Again, unfortunately, we think about our body and these different parts, and we outsource these different parts to different experts whenever we have a problem. And they tend to just focus on that one thing. Right? This is just a thyroid issue. But in this information superhighway that you talk about in the book, this HPA axis, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, along that axis exists your thyroid. So that feedback loop, that particular word that you said, that feedback connection between those two glands, they're intimately connected. And so, what the adrenal glands are creating and producing, is that going to impact what the thyroid is creating and producing, like creating thyroid hormone, for example. Is that going to be dependent on our adrenals?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Absolutely. There's also something that happens with the type of thyroid hormone that's produced. So, we have something called T4, and that's one type of thyroid hormone. Typically, that's what used as replacement medication. Levothyroxine, Synthroid, those are all examples of T4 thyroid hormone. This thyroid hormone has some effects in the body, but it needs to be converted into T3, which is the more active thyroid hormone. And on paper, this always happens perfectly. In the body, doesn't always happen so well. One of the things that could interfere with proper T3 hormone utilization and or production could be cortisol fluctuation. So, when we are under a lot of stress, we end up producing too much of something called reverse T3, which gets into our T3 receptors and just blocks them. And so, our active thyroid hormone isn't able to interact with these receptors.

So essentially T3, I think of it as like the go hormone. It says, "Grow hair, have vitality, have lots of energy, have a great time, and have a great metabolism." And when we have reverse T3, it kind of does the opposite. So, if T3 was like the gas, reverse T3 is like the brakes. And it's like, "Slow down, be more fatigued, be more sluggish, get some rest, do not focus on growing your hair." And so, this is a big connection with stress and with some of the cortisol dysregulation issues where people will end up with the excess levels of reverse T3.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's so fascinating. So, we've got T4 and that conversion process to the more active thyroid hormone to do the stuff that we want to have energy to feel our best, all the things. And also, metabolism...

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That process, that conversion process is influenced by what the adrenals are doing. So obviously if you want healthy thyroid function, we want to focus on healthy adrenal function as well. And that's what you're focused on in this new book and really bringing all this science out for people in a way that makes sense. So, let's talk about it. In the book you actually outline in detail adrenal dysfunction. So, can you talk about, first of all, what exactly is that and how does it develop and how does someone know if they have it?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Sure. Should we start with some of the symptoms?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Okay. So, some of the symptoms that people might have are trouble waking up in the morning. So, they just can't get out of bed, and they might be sluggish. That's one pattern. Another person might just jump out of bed startled. Right? And another person, they will have irritability and mood swings throughout the day. Sometimes that 3:00 PM crash where you either like want to take a nap or you like want to yell at somebody. That can be a sign of adrenal dysfunction. Then things like pain all over in their body, libido issues, fatigue, irritability, anxiety, trouble sleeping, which I know you and I are both passionate about getting our adequate sleep. This can be very much connected to adrenal dysfunction. People tend to say they feel tired throughout the day and then they end up being moody throughout the day. They end up being tired but wired at bedtime, where it's time to tune in for the night, they start getting that second wind of energy and they can't fall asleep.

Other manifestations might be things like, excess weight gain and people just can't regulate their healthy weight levels. And some people, and most of these people don't complain as much or maybe aren't seen as much, but I think this is very relevant as some people just can't put on the weight. So, they might be like, "I'm exercising, but I can't put on muscle." Muscle wasting, just feeling like you're wasting away. You're not thriving, that would be a way to describe the adrenal dysfunction and just in a state of overwhelm at all times.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. So, this speaks to a lot of people's experience, which is, they're really trying hard to lose weight and they're counting their calories. They're in a even a caloric deficit.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? Because that's kind of the superficial scientific thing. When I was in my nutritional science classes in college, it's just like, "Expend more calories than you take in. It's simple. Then you'll lose weight."

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Basic math, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Basic math. Your body's a calculator, right?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But in reality, your thyroid is deeply... And this association this connection with the adrenals, deeply influential over your, quote, "metabolic rate" and how your body is processing and expending that energy. And so, you can be in a place where you're cutting your... And I've seen this, I've seen people come into my office and they're eating 900 calories a day, and the scale's not budging and they're just suffering. They're broken and they're just like, "I don't know what's wrong with me." Right? And of course, you've seen this many times, but helping people to understand what's going on internally and helping to heal and support these glands is a big part of this mission.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: And it's challenging 'cause I'll see some women that are like overly exercising and they're restricting their calories and that sends a message to the body. And that message is, "Hey girlfriend, we're in a stressful time, but don't you worry, I'm going to hold onto your calories so you're not going to starve. I see that food isn't available right now, and I see you're doing all this running, you must be running from some intruders." 'Cause our genes haven't really adapted to dieting and the stress of our day-to-day lives, and our stress response is more adapted to, "Hey, we're being chased by a tiger right now. What are we going to do?" Or "Hey, we're in a famine, can we conserve some of our calories so we don't have to look for food right now?"

And so, it's really adaptive physiology at its finest. Our body's always trying to help us out. Trying to help us survive. And if we're sending these messages to the body, like, "Hey, food is not available," or, "We're under a lot of stress," the body's going to try to help us out. It's going to help to... It'd be like, "You don't have to look for food, honey. We're going to hold on to all of your calories for you." And so that's what happens, unfortunately, the metabolic rates slow down. And I will have some women where I will say, "Hey, how about you really focus on sending yourself safety signals and eating nourishing foods and not exercising so much, maybe switching up the type of exercise that you're doing." And they're like, "I'm exercising less and I'm eating more, but I'm actually losing weight because the body knows that it's safe and it's getting the signals that food is plentiful, that we're not being chased by a bear. And so, it's okay to like thrive and focus on metabolism."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh man. Again, it just makes so much sense. But I think we have to widen our perspective to be able... Especially if you're somebody who's conventionally trained, like both you and I were, and looking at things through this very, again, pithy box, this kind of

tunnel vision on how metabolism works. And it really starts to open up when we realize that our genes, even though we think we're so fancy, we're just talking about these super fancy baby carriages today. Like you can get like a Lamborghini buggy for your newborn, to push your kid around. And we've got these wonderful, social media and all this stuff. We seem very evolved, but our genes are still very, very similar if not exactly the same as our ancestors 10,000, 20,000, 100,000 years ago.

Our genes haven't changed that much. Evolution takes a long time. And the biggest portion of the human story, dieting, you just said something that just like hit an alarm in my mind, dieting didn't exist. It wasn't a thing. You get food, you get it in your body, and you try to survive. That's how we're hardwired. We live in a totally different environment today where our genes are expecting certain things from us to perform a certain way or they're going to make adaptations which might manifest as, quote, "diseases" just for us to survive. One of those adaptations could be, again, reducing our metabolic rate to keep us safe in the case of a famine or in a sense of a danger. "You're constantly running on that treadmill. What are you running from?" Right? Is there...

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Must be a bear.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Must be a bear or saber tooth tiger, that was the thing everybody always uses that. By the way, they're tinkering... I'm just going to say this, they're tinkering with fossils right now. I'm just going to put this out there. They're tinkering with fossils and getting DNA from some of these extinct species. So, this thing is happening. We've all seen the movie of how it all ends. But the reality is, again, we have so much intelligence, that's the point I want to get to. There's so much intelligence going on in our bodies and we need to go with our bodies. Pay attention to, "What are the conditions that my cells are screaming for, for me to get the results that I want." And so, what brings about adrenal dysfunction? Like, what is the thing that causes that to manifest?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Well, it's stress, right? So, when I ask people that I work with, "What was going on in your life before you get sick?" There's always some sort of a stressor. And I would say majority of people, it's something like they were going through a divorce. Maybe they had unfortunately a death in the family. Perhaps they went through a bankruptcy or some other kind of accident. Something either terrible happened or something like going to graduate school, moving to a new city, starting a business, or having a baby, even joyful things that really change our life in a big way, these can be stressors that become... That essentially get our body stuck in that survival mode. And normally our stress response is supposed to be acute. So we see that saber tooth tiger or the bear or the lion, whatever it is, we see it and our body puts out cortisol and cortisol prioritizes survival. So, when we have lots of cortisol on board, what our bodies starts to do is it starts to break itself down the longer we need cortisol to fuel that

cortisol response. And it's really, really helpful when you're trying to run away from something, right?

And eventually, hopefully, you got away from the tiger and now you can get some rest and perhaps sleep it off, eat some food, whatever, shake it off, there's various methods of dealing with acute stressors. And then after that, if the stressor is gone, then we come back to our healthy adrenal function, healthy amounts of stress hormones where we have a little bit more in the morning to get us out of bed, and then it's like a smooth ride down a slide until we're ready to ease into our nighttime routine and sleep really, really well. Now, the thing that sets it off is chronic stress, so this could be... We don't have tigers chasing us, most of us don't want these days, but this could be...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Maybe Tiger King.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Tiger King. Oh my gosh. That could be anything from our inflammation within the body because of the foods we eat or the chronic infections or hidden sources of inflammation, like toxins we may be exposed to, this could be not eating blood sugar balanced, so eating too many high carb foods, not enough protein, not enough fat, this can put us, stress out our adrenals. It could be psychological stress, so if you're currently dealing with... And I always say, cutting out toxic people works sometimes even better than cutting out toxic foods. But if you have a source of toxicity in your life right now, that could be incredibly stressful.

I had one reader that read one of my books and then wrote a review, and said, "I didn't have to do anything she said, I just quit my job, which was highly toxic and then I feel better and I'm in remission now," and I'm like, "Yay, if you could identify that current stressor, get rid of it or do something about it, then you can make yourself much healthier." There's past stressors too, traumatic stress that it happened 20, 30, 40, 60 years ago, but still stay with us, and that can really, really mess with our ability to handle stress and with our overall adrenal stress response, and then there's one that sends people into adrenal dysfunction, like the fastest way to get in is sleep deprivation. So, if you're not sleeping enough, if you're having perhaps too much coffee or whatever is interfering with your sleep, that's actually one of the fastest ways to get in.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. Express pass into adrenal fatigue. That is something else. Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back.

Neuroplasticity, the ability of the human brain to grow and adapt and evolve, really to unlock our superhuman capacity is driven by our experiences, our practices, our activities, but also our nutrition. Fascinating new research published in the journal, Neuron, found that magnesium, this key electrolyte is able to restore critical brain plasticity and improve overall cognitive function. Again, neuroplasticity is the ability of our brain to change and adapt. Now,

this is one key electrolyte, but it works in tandem with other electrolytes like sodium. Sodium is critical for maintaining proper hydration of the human brain. If you didn't know this, the human brain is primarily made of water, we're talking somewhere in the ballpark of 75%, upwards of 80% water. It's so important because just a small decrease in our body's optimal hydration level. What's noted in the data, just a 2% decrease in our baseline hydration level can lead to dramatic cognitive decline, helping to sustain, maintain proper hydration levels in the brain, sodium is critical in that. And also, researchers at McGill University found that sodium functions as a, quote, "off-on switch" for specific neurotransmitters that support our cognitive function and protect our brains from numerous degenerative diseases.

Right now, the number one electrolyte company in the world is delivering a gift for new and returning customers. With each purchase of LMNT, that's L-M-N-T, the number one electrolyte in the market. No binders, no fillers, no artificial ingredients, no crazy sugar, and sweeteners. My friend's son was just over at our house, and my son, my oldest son Jordan was training them, taking his teammates through some workouts, and we opened the freezer and there's a bottle of Gatorade! There's a bottle of Gatorade in our freezer. My wife is like, "Who's is this?" 'Cause we know we don't roll like that; we don't mess with the Gators. Alright? We don't mess with the Gatorades. And we knew who it was. It was one of his friends and he came and he's like, "Well, at least this is the no sugar kind," and then I go through some of the ingredients with him and I find those curve balls of like here's where they're sneaking in these artificial ingredients and things that the human body has no association with, but he's taken a step in the right direction by being in our environment, so you know what I did? I put the LMNT in his hand, make sure that he's got the good stuff, the very best stuff.

And also, this is backed by peer-reviewed data and a huge body of evidence. We're talking about the folks at LMNT. That's L-M-N-T. Go to drinklmnt.com/model, and you're going to get a special gift pack with every purchase, whether you're a new or previous customer for LMNT. So again, this is a brand-new opportunity, free gift pack with every purchase over at LMNT. Go to drinklmnt.com/model. And now, back to the show.

Now, this is all very relevant. There's a tremendous amount of science in all of these things today, and I'm looking at, for example, psycho-neuro-endocrinology and how our thoughts affect our hormones, but I think the average person doesn't give credibility to this idea that my thoughts and my stress are causing my autoimmune condition, or my thoughts and my stress is causing me to have this inability to lose weight. And I think this is also driven by a medical paradigm that oftentimes doesn't even acknowledge that adrenal fatigue is a pain. So, can you talk a little bit about that?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: So, is adrenal fatigue of thing? Right? And this goes back to the history. There was a wonderful naturopathic doctor that coined the term adrenal fatigue many years

ago, Dr. James Wilson, and his theory at the time, so he identified these symptoms, he was brilliant to connect all these symptoms together and connected them to the stress response. And his theory at the time was that adrenal fatigue was actually something going on with our adrenals. Now, there is a condition known as Addison's disease, where we have an autoimmune attack on adrenal glands and it's a very rare condition. I believe John F. Kennedy had this condition, as did my dog. And this is something that is medically recognized, and this is where somebody needs to be on replacement hydrocortisone-cortisone for most of their life and replace those steroids, otherwise they would not survive. Very real condition. Recognized by conventional medicine, very rare.

Now, there's an argument in conventional medicine, and even some of the functional medicine folks are saying that "Well, adrenal fatigue doesn't exist because the adrenals don't actually get tired, they're not sleepy, they're not under attack, there's nothing wrong with them," but they will say, "But HPA axis dysfunction is a thing." And I kind of scratch my head 'cause I'm like, "Okay, so we have this convenient term, but we don't want to use it because it's not 100% accurate," right? But the term does describe the symptoms. The mechanism of action behind it is, yes, you have all of the same symptoms, and yes your adrenals are not sleepy, tired, fatigued, they're not under attack, but there's a communication breakdown between the brain and the adrenals, so for whatever reason, there's a disconnect where the adrenals could produce the stress hormones at the right amounts in the right time, but they don't do it.

And so, it's just that feedback loop. And I kind of chuckle because there's so much research on HPA axis dysfunction, which is what I mean when I talk about adrenal dysfunction and adrenal fatigue. But yet, people will get caught up in the nomenclature, and it's kind of like, "Leaky gut doesn't exist, but intestinal permeability does." And I'm like, "Do you have a medical dictionary when you translate the terms." Because essentially... This is a very real phenomenon. There's a lot of research behind it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I've been thinking a lot about this in recent years, just about our lexicon, our language as a species, and we put so much value on language, and we tend to feel that we have some type of superiority if we have a grasp on language and what things are called. But all of this stuff is just a socially accepted construct, so we've got obesity, oh he's got fat. We're placing labels on things, but we know what we're talking about, and we can get into the... As you mentioned, this kind of battle over... It's like semantics, the meaning behind things, and we're saying the same thing, like we just said, leaky gut, that was totally just continuously kicked down as like that's not a thing. And now we have intestinal permeability and now it sounds more official. We know what we're talking about here. So, let's all get on the same page. And so, what I'm really hearing is instead of us thinking about in terms of adrenal fatigue, adrenal-driven fatigue, or adrenal-based fatigue, where it's kind of the causative agent is

dysfunction with the adrenals, and I want to go back to when you were talking about really some traumatic experiences.

So, we can have a huge incident take place and kind of shift the function of what's happening with our HPA axis, name we were talking about the adrenals, and/or we can have micro-stresses building up like sleep deprivation over a certain amount of time, and/or just our overall stress load. What you said earlier is one of the favorite things, you said already, when you talked about toxic food and toxic people. What if you got both, you're just stacking conditions against yourself, and so these micro-stresses is contributing to this overall stress load and an eventual breakdown, because when I hear adrenal fatigue, it does sound like the adrenals are not working hard, or they're not doing what they're supposed to do, they're under-working. But what you're saying is adrenal fatigue could actually be an exacerbated or hyperactive experience with our dreams.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Yeah, so what happens initially, when we're under a lot of stress, our adrenals are going to produce a lot of cortisol. And cortisol is, what I like to think of it, is like our goal hormone. It's like drinking eight cups of coffee, and it's like putting a bunch of rockstars in a hotel room and just letting them go on forever, or just one toddler in this room or 10 minutes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's just one toddler versus eight rockstars.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Exactly, exactly. So, it can make a mess very quickly, and if you don't check your cortisol levels, you're going to lead to a lot of breakdowns of your body. It's something that instead of building our body up, it's going to break our body down and puts us in a bit of a catabolic state. And so, our body recognized this, and our body is always trying to adapt and always trying to help us survive, and so where we're under prolonged stress, the body starts to say, "You know, do we really need to produce that much cortisol at all times? Let's try to shut down some of this cortisol production because it's affecting other systems." And so, the early stages of adrenal dysfunction in some people, this might be 10 minutes for other people, this might be 10 years where they're more in a high-alert state and they're more like angry and irritable, and they're just ready to go, everybody around them is super slow, not smart enough, and they're just go.

And then as time goes on, this might turn to like that 3:00 PM crash or trouble sleeping in the evenings, but their cortisol production is going to be a little bit suppressed. Where if you were to do a test, they might have normal levels of cortisol, but they're just on a bit of a roller coaster throughout the day, so they might not have healthy levels of cortisol in the morning, it might be too low, and then later in the day, it might swing up too high and they'll get a bit anxious and then perhaps then it'll drop and then they'll have again, a raise, rise in cortisol in the

evenings. And I call this like a rollercoaster, you can kind of picture what it looks like. And then as time goes on, all of those peaks start to drop down, and this is what I see, in people with autoimmunity, with Hashimoto's, like 80% of them, they just have flat-lined adrenals, so they're just having trouble waking up in the morning, they can barely get by and they go to bed and then they sleep and they don't feel refreshed in the morning. And these are the people where things like intermittent fasting isn't going to work for them, it's going to make them feel worse, doing things like cold plunges is going to make them feel worse.

They just don't have enough stress response to build a healthy stress response, so everything is overwhelming to them. So, you ask them to... I don't know, let's say if you had a child or a partner with it, you'd be like, "Can you take out the trash?" "No, I can't do it. That's just too much for me." And it's just day-to-day life becomes too much 'cause they just don't have enough of that, so cortisol, which is enough of it helps us be vibrant and present and helps us survive.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that's what this new project is all about. And the wonderful program included in the Adrenal Transformation Protocol, your new book. So, we're going to talk a little bit about some of these solutions as some things that people can do today to start feeling a little bit better, just walking in the direction. But definitely pick up a copy for an incredible program to walk you through everything, but I wanted to ask you this because autoimmune conditions, adrenal issues specifically, thyroid issues, disproportionately affect women. Why do you think that is?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: I do have a theory on this, and I think women are very tuned into the environment, so we're the ones that end up getting pregnant and we end up carrying the babies, and that is something that is a really important job for us, and it takes a lot of energy and resources. Anybody that's had a baby knows that. And I feel like it is a protective mechanism for women, so if you are in a famine, if you are going to be in a war, probably not the best time to be pregnant. So probably not the best time to have a really nice hair and be very outgoing and have lots of libido, and so part of what we're doing when we're sending these stress signals to ourselves, it's a message that we need to slow down and conserve energy. And pregnancy is a big energy expenditure. So that's my theory about it. And I do feel like for women, we have a big ability to tune into these things, and for a lot of women, they will say... Let's say my husband, for example, he's not really afraid to walk around in the evenings. He doesn't go to bars, but if he were to come home late at night from a bar or something like that, he would feel totally comfortable doing that, in most situations, I would not. And there's just these little messages of stress that women... I feel like we need to be more on alert compared to most men, I won't say every man and every woman but...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I think the majority of people will agree with this because also just the awareness, emotional intelligence, the concern about others, there is a little bit more even genetic predisposition towards caring and really looking out for our kids and all these things, obviously, we are an evolved species and we can trump these preconceived things that are just kind of programmed in us and be more... If we're a man, for example, attentive and caring and all the things with our children, but the way that we evolved obviously, there was a little bit more of a separation as far as like we're going out and doing the thing, hunting and all the things. And so today, obviously, we can evolve, and we can integrate more of the stuff intentionally, but I do feel that there is just a natural proclivity towards caring more. And I think that caring can sometimes function as a double-edged sword, because I'm speaking from my experience in working with countless people in my own practice, that often times the majority of the time, it was women who would be so concerned about everybody else, and they would keep on putting themselves down the line further and further and further, sometimes last. And so, I think that that might be a contributing factor as well.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Absolutely, and I talk a little bit about the sandwich generation too in my book, where we have, with everything that's been going on in the last few years, it's typically women that are leaving their jobs to take care of their children. So, a lot of that gets put on women as well as taking care of elderly relatives or elderly parents, and middle-aged women are typically the ones that you have. Sometimes you have young children that you need to care for, and then you have your older parents that you need to care for, and perhaps other social commitments that you might have, and you end up putting yourself last and it's tricky, you have work and your work wants things, your children need things, your elderly parents might need things, and it's like you only have so much time in your day.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So, these are, again, stacking those kinds of micro stressors.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. Now, I think this ties in nicely to this particular part of your book that jumped out. This has not really been discussed in particular in a science book, in a health and wellness book, to this degree. You talk about the importance of helping your body to feel safe in order to heal, and how to send, quote, "safety" signals to your body. What exactly do you mean by safety signals?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: So, we talked about all these stressors that we're bombarded with on a daily basis, whether that's like watching the news, or whether that's... yeah, we don't recommend that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Just that in and of itself.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Whether caring for others, or work stressors, or past traumas, or just ongoing inflammation exposure to things in our life and thinking about what messages that sends to our body and to our ancient genes. And it's saying, "Okay, we need to conserve energy, we don't have enough energy, there's just too much, let's slow down metabolism." Now, I, for a while, I thought about, when I was trained in functional medicine, what do you do when somebody has adrenal dysfunction, you can put them on replacement hormones. So, they're not making enough cortisol. Let's give them cortisol, right? But that doesn't necessarily solve the issue if they're still under a lot of stress. And you can suppress their own production of internally produced hormones that way. You can kind of suppress the feedback loop that way. And so, it's not a long-term solution. And the solution is really to rebalance that stress response. And so, what if rather than having all these messages to the body that say, you're not safe, what if we found a way to tell our body that it's safe in a language that our body could understand. And this is what I call safety signals.

And these are targeted interventions. I have 14 different ones in the book that focus on making your body feel safe. So, it could get into that parasympathetic, that rest and digest and heal state. And we can get into more of an anabolic state versus that catabolic, "Let's break everything down because we're stressed out." "Let's like, let's clean house. Let's focus on rebuilding and healing." And I have a lot of different ones that we do. And it's amazing because it works really, really well in just two to three weeks versus using some of the hormones or some of the extreme lifestyle changes that I used to recommend, it would take three months to two years to get better. But a safety signal. So, one danger signal might be if you are starving. So, if you're not getting enough calories, if you're nutrient deficient, if you're eating foods that are inflammatory to you, your caveman genes are going to think, "Oh, my goodness, we're just eating grass all day. We're humans, we don't eat grass, there must not be enough food available. And we're so depleted, we need to conserve energy. We need to slow down our metabolism." And so, what we do is we actually focus on nourishing the body.

And we utilize anti-inflammatory nutrient dense foods that focus on getting plenty of macronutrients. So, we're doing protein and fat, we're eating blood sugar balanced. And we're also getting a lot of micronutrients. So that lets the body know that we have lots of food, we do not have to conserve energy. We can ramp up our metabolism because we have everything that we need. And it's, I don't know, maybe it sounds woo-woo, but it actually works. And it works in just like two to three weeks where people are like, "Wow, I'm healing." Another thing is getting rest. So, getting enough rest is going to be helpful, your body can heal, you could go into those... It you could heal your body with deep sleep, and you can heal your body with your brain with REM sleep, when you get enough of that, then you're going to start healing really, really effectively.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Now, there's going to be arguments coming up psychologically, for people. We'll argue within our minds, and we'll immediately be like, "That sounds nice. But that's part of my problem. I don't have time; I can't get enough rest." But you're saying that we're lacking on essential safety signal, like when you're sleep deprived, every cell in your body is going to be more on high alert and put you into this hyper stress state. And so, this is going to take a reframing of priorities, I would imagine. So just a couple of these. So, you mentioned nutrient dense foods, sending those safety signals, which might be counterintuitive, again, if we're trying to lose weight. And you're saying, hey, you actually need to eat more of this, but specifically nutrient dense foods, really putting more of an emphasis on rest. Now, would this be in contrast to exercising your face off. If you're if you're trying to lose weight, and you've got you're dedicating two hours a day to working out and you're sleeping for six, what would you do? Would you shift one of those hours to sleep rather than having those two dedicated to exercise?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: I would shift that time to sleep more. And then I would also consider the type of exercise that you're doing. So, if you're in a catabolic state, you want to consider what types of exercises are going to be anabolic and build up your metabolism and build up your body, versus what exercises are going to be catabolic. So, if you're doing like a lot of like biking and aerobic exercise running, that's actually going to help to break down your body further. And so, you need to build up your body more. So doing things like weight training can be beneficial. Doing things like yoga for relaxation, those are usually the types of exercises that I recommend for people that are in that catabolic state and that have low metabolism, because building more muscle is going to help speed up our metabolism, along with getting more protein on board. And it's it sounds counterintuitive, but it actually works, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Because people are like, the math is this and this, but it's like, but there's all these other factors and parentheses and powers that you need to consider. It's more like trigonometry than really straightforward math.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, because it's so counterculture, I love that you have so many stories sprinkled throughout the book and people's testimonials. And, of course, I've seen this time and time again myself. But, if we look at the track that our society has been going on, just look at the results, you like we're doing the things and we get into this culture of shame and blaming ourselves, and beating ourselves down, trying to hate our bodies into change and submission, and wondering why, and again, it's just being honest, like has the way we've been doing things, is it actually working? And what you're saying is something so simple and essential, which is we have to put our biology, our metabolism, our psychology, our mind and

body in a safe state. And so, we've got the nutritive component... And by the way, if people love to cycle and to, to run and do marathons, that kind of stuff. It's just getting your body well first. It's not saying that these things are off limits forever. But if we're going to get well, and you're hitting a wall, and you're not getting the results that you want, if we can make a shift right now, and find joy in other things, like, again, even walking is super restorative, right?

But to have somebody who loves to run, and to tell them, like, "I'm going to need you to reel it in a little bit and do some things differently." Again, we're bumping up against that psychological belief for taking something away. When I think, humans, we really don't like, number one being told what to do. And number two, change. We want change, but we don't want to change that much. And so, I love this, and I'm bringing this up, because you're giving things that aren't oftentimes just earth shattering, like you got to turn your life upside down, to get these safety signals going. So can we talk, you said there's 14 in the book, what are a couple more, let's talk about a little bit more of the safety signals.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Sure. So, you mentioned sleep and how hard it is for some people to sleep. And I developed this program initially for myself when I found myself with flat lined adrenals after having my son, and he was eight months old, and he wasn't sleeping. So, one of the recommendations, and we know that sleep deprivation can get us into adrenal dysfunction very quickly. And one of the recommendations I used to give to people is sleep for 10 to 12 hours a night for 30 days straight, that'll be part of your healing protocol. And that works really, really well. Once I had my son, I realized, like, maybe that's not super realistic for everybody to sleep 10 to 12 hours a night. And I was like, "Boy, if I just had that." So, I had to find alternative sources of energy and safety that were not sleep. So, I, obviously, I've talked about things for sleep deprived parents, but what they need to do. But I also talk about what nutrients we need to replenish when we are under a lot of stress, and when we're sleep deprived, and when we're focused on healing ourselves.

And there are things like the B vitamins, vitamin C, as well as magnesium and electrolytes, that are just foundational things. When we're under a lot of stress, when we're sleep deprived, we're going to need more of those. And oftentimes, we're not going to be able to get that from our daily diet and from just plain water. So, we need to really up our intake to help ourselves heal. There are studies done with utilizing electrolytes, with athletes, and doing endurance events, how it helps them recover. And so, we kind of think of it that way. But when you have adrenal dysfunction, and when you're fatigued and brain fogged and sluggish and having weight struggles and feeling overwhelmed with everything, everything feels like a marathon, right? And so, you can use some of these same things to your advantage. So, I focus a lot on replenishing some of the known nutrients that are going to be lost in a stress response, as well as utilizing adaptogens, and then mitochondrial support to really help build up resilience.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, it's so profound, I don't think we think about when our bodies are doing these processes responding to a stress or a threat, there's energy being utilized, there are certain nutrients that are being utilized to run these processes. One of the things... And this is just in the last few years that this has become a little bit more well-known and better understood, like your adrenals are just dumping out vitamin C like crazy, when under stress. We think of vitamin C just in that lane of immune function, but it's one of those things that helps to modulate stress and it helps your body with that. And so, if you're just purging that from your system, you need to replenish it intentionally. And humans are unique in that we don't make vitamin C ourselves, we have to get it through nutritional sources. And I think that that evolution kind of kept that, because a lot of other animals make it because it's so readily available in real foods in real whole nutrient dense foods. But then again, look at what our diet is predominantly today. And so, we've got nutritional protocols to help us to send these safety signals, is there anything else that you could share with us?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: I love focusing on the circadian rhythm. So, people talk about... I used to tell people just sleep more. Just make more time for sleep. And some people are like, "I try, but it doesn't happen for me. I lay in bed, and I toss and turn, I have all this energy, or I wake up numerous times throughout the night. And it's just I can't. I have trouble with sleep. And I just have trouble getting going in the morning without coffee, and I need that wine to wind down." So, one of the things that I focus on is really getting aligned with the circadian rhythm, where a lot of us I feel like... And it's so foundational, but a lot of us don't take the time to step outside and get enough sunshine in our eyes. And just getting that sunshine helps our body to know that it's daytime, and that we should turn off our melatonin production. And the reverse is also true, where we get too much light into our eyes in the evenings, if we're watching Netflix, if we're playing on our phones, whatever we're doing, that can be a problem in helping us get better sleep.

And so that that is a big part of it is utilizing the circadian rhythm, and focusing on when is the best time to eat these kinds of foods? When is the best time to build your energy in the morning? What kind of foods should you focus on in the evenings? And then what are the things you can do throughout your day, such as if you live in Southern California, you could step outside most mornings and get sunshine. If you live in Chicago, you might need a light therapy box. Something like that to help you get some of those messages and those safety signals to your brain that it's time to be awake.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is so simple. This is the thing.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Of course.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's just like, getting sunlight in the early part of the day is a safety signal. I think is this because like, again, we evolved doing that, and then suddenly, we're not doing it on a regular basis for a huge percentage of us.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: I kind of think of what would the caveman do? And so, if you were not getting the sunshine in your eyes first thing in the morning, probably a reason for that. So probably, maybe you're scared to go outside, or there's something going on, or you're sick, or you need to stay back in your cave, right? And same with our caves, our caves weren't equipped with the things that man caves have these days with like these big screen TVs and everything else super fun. So, we end up having... We were used to sleeping in complete darkness. And that's setting up... And I know you're the genius of that talking about setting up your sleep environment so well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And just to even reframe the other thing that you just mentioned with having all of these screens and bright lights in the evening. That's the opposite really of a safety signal. And again, we're kind of stacking conditions against ourselves. So, man, there's so much in your book, and there's so many different things. Again, what you're really doing is helping people to gently stack conditions in their favor, just adding little things in, rather than focusing on taking away, and you've got to do all of these things. Can you talk a little bit about your program, specifically for restoring adrenal health and what people can look forward to?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Oh, absolutely. And one of the components is actually adding in pleasurable activities to your day and to your lifestyle. So, a lot of people like that. I know I used to have other recommendations, which were like, quit caffeine and quit this and quit that. And people went through a bit of withdrawal with that. But this program is all about really taking care of yourself in a way that's approachable and sustainable and building on little healthy habits. The incredible thing is we've had over 3000 people go through the program, and 93% of people have less brain fog within three weeks. And then we're looking at 80% above stats for fatigue, trouble waking up in the morning, libido issues, pain in the body, weight loss resistance, and sleep issues, anxiety, kind of like mood swings. Irritability, all these things within 80% of people will say that they have improvement within like three, four weeks of that. And I did this for myself initially when I was like, "Oh my gosh, I can't use all of my fancy hormones because I'm nursing a child and I can't sleep because I'm taking care of him at night."

And so, I had to come up with these alternative safety signals. And I just really, really hope that people know that you're not meant to feel like fatigued and brain fog, and you're not meant to feel like a percentage of who you're capable of being, like you can really feel energetic and vital and fit and powerful in just like three to four weeks, and calm. So amazing thing that happens when people support their adrenals, everybody else becomes like less irritable to

them and less irritating to them, and the world it's just a little bit easier. And you don't feel so overwhelmed, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, we could use a lot more of that today. Can you let everybody know where they can pick up your new book and where they can just follow you and stay up to date?

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Sure. My new book, The Adrenal Transformation Protocol, this is available at Amazon and Barnes and Noble, wherever fine books are sold. If you go to my website, thyroidpharmacist.com/abc, I can give you a little bit of a guide on some of the fundamentals, the ABCs of adrenal dysfunction, what kind of supports to use for that. And definitely find me on Instagram under Izabella Wentz.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. This is so awesome. Thank you so much for taking the time and putting this information together for everybody. It's so important. And as I mentioned earlier, we're in a very interesting time where we are unknowingly stacking conditions against ourselves. And what you're doing is just shining a bright light on some of the simple things we can do to start stacking conditions in our favor. And it takes an immense amount of work, of course, to put something like this together, and the audacity to have 3000 people go through the program already and to get that feedback so you can refine things to help the most people. It's just amazing. So, thank you for doing what you're doing.

DR. IZABELLA WENTZ: Thank you so much for having me and thank you for doing what you do.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Dr. Izabella Wentz, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. Please share this out with the people that you care about. You can send this directly from the podcast app that you're listening on, or of course, take a screenshot of the episode. Tag me I'm @shawnmodel on Instagram. You can also tag Dr. Izabella Wentz as well. And share this information out. And again, today we're living in a time where we are experiencing an abnormal amount of chronic stressors. So, things that aren't necessarily a big deal breaker, but just adding these things on top of one another. And essentially getting to that place where we have the straw that breaks the camel's back and having these things set in, we're just like, seemingly comes out of nowhere. But it's really creating a condition to where we're more resilient, where we are properly, healthfully modulating, managing processing stress, and stacking conditions in our favor, because the stress isn't going away anytime soon, but our ability to manage stress, our ability to be healthy, despite our circumstances, is more present and available than ever as well. I appreciate you so much for tuning into the show today. We've got some epic masterclasses coming very, very soon. So, make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com, that's where you can find all of the show notes, you can find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much. And take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.