THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 898

The Shocking Truth About Allergies & What You Should NEVER Do in Your Bedroom

With Guest Dr. Tania Elliot

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Today we have a board certified allergist to help us to understand why our allergies everywhere, the types of allergies, the prevalence, what is going on that's causing so many different symptoms, so many people to have allergies and also the severity. Today we're gonna uncover what allergies actually are, and I think that it's going to blow your mind, and I'm telling you, once we start to dive into the different environments where we can find some really creepy things going on that affect our bodies. Number one, you need to know. Number two, it might trip you out a little bit, but number three, and most importantly, it's going to help us to be empowered and to make smarter decisions. So we're gonna be going inside of the average restaurant and what you're ordering, we're gonna be talking about what's going on in your bedroom. We're gonna be talking about what's going on when you travel in hotel bedrooms. All right, this and so much more on this amazing episode.

Now, before we get to our special guest, our world is toxic enough. Your coffee shouldn't be. Being the coffee is one of the most popular beverages in the world. It's also one of the most pesticide laden crops in the world. There are a variety of pesticides used in growing coffee and just to take one of them, just to look at one of them, you'll find a documented obesogen. That's right, an obesity causing agent coming along with the average cup of coffee. Chlorpyrifos is one of the most widely used pesticides. In a recent study cited in the peer-reviewed journal nature communication stated "chlorpyrifos suppresses diet induced thermogenesis and the activation of brown adipose tissue suggesting its use may contribute to the obesity epidemic."

Another recent study published in the journal Chemos Sphere uncovered that the exposure to Chlorpyrifos can promote obesity and insulin resistance through influencing the gut and the gut microbiome. Now again, this is just one of the hundreds or even thousands of different pesticides derived from hundreds of different synthetic chemicals that are registered for use by the EPA that are largely used on commodity crops like coffee. It is insane at this point. So organic coffee is a must in having coffee combined with the balancing effects of medicinal mushrooms, puts the potential benefits in a league of its own. The coffee that I have most often that I've been utilizing for years is absolutely certified organic, yes, but it's also combined with organic medicinal mushrooms like Chaga and like lion's mane.

If we're talking about cognitive health and being neuroprotective, there are a few things that are as remarkable as lion's mane. According to researchers at the University of Malaya, it is neuroprotective and it could even support neurogenesis in our brains, the creation of new brain cells. Truly, truly remarkable. It's the Think Blend from four Sigmatic. Head over to four sigmatic.com/model, and you're going to get hooked up with up to 30% off plus their amazing 60 day money back guarantee. If you don't absolutely love the Think Blend or any of the coffees or mushroom elixirs, or their incredible Rishi Hot chocolate, if you don't absolutely love it, you're going to get a full refund.

And actually just today my oldest son Jordan, he's been doing like some instant coffee, you know, like something as import whatever. And he goes to like a little coffee shop occasionally. You know, he's really about that life when it comes to training. So he has a little, little coffee ritual in the morning. Today was the first day that he did what he saw as papa doing alright, taking the coffee grounds and doing the the drip coffee. And he used a four Sigmatic think blend. And I saw him today, he's like, Hey, I did the. I did the drip today. I was like, how was it? He was like, it was glorious. All right. Our souls connected.

I knew what he meant, and it's just like upgrading things tremendously. Again, head over to four sigmatic.com/model. It's always nice to share four Sigmatic with a friend or family member. I make coffee for my wife pretty much every day as well. Again, up to 30% off. Incredible money back guarantee. They got some other cool bonuses there as well to check out. But again, head over to four sigmatic.com/model. That's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I c.com/model. Now let's get to a special YouTube comment of the week.

YOUTUBE REVIEW: Another YouTube review by UrbanFitLabBAAzer3253. Man, man, man, you are the guy I was looking for. Now my target is to finish all your podcasts. Keep posting mate. Much love from Bahrain.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That is phenomenal. Thank you so much for sharing your voice over on YouTube, and that's the power of this technology. We can connect from all over the world, our world, family, and wow, that just does my spirit good. Thank you so much for sharing your voice over on YouTube. If you have to do so, pop over to Apple Podcast or to the YouTube

channel or Spotify. You can leave comments for the episodes as well. Share your voice. It really does mean a lot. And without further ado, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day.

Dr. Tania Elliot is a double board certified internal medicine physician and allergist. With nearly two decades of experience in medicine, she's dedicated to delivering personalized care and understanding each patient's unique needs. Today she has one of the fastest growing social media accounts with hundreds of millions of views where she simplifies complex medical topics into clear. Actionable advice and her goal is to help people to get to the root cause of their symptoms and empower people to make informed decisions for better health. Let's dive into this conversation with the amazing Dr. Tania Elliot. Alright, Dr. Tania Elliot, thank you for coming to hang out with us.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Thanks for having me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I've got so many questions for you and I know that you're traveling right now. You're on the road travel here from New York this morning.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: That's right. This morning. Missed my first flight by four minutes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: But, I got on the next one. Yeah. I'm bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, so yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The only time I've ever missed a flight of the prob, I guess maybe a hundred or 200 whatever flights was in New York.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Well, I don't understand. I have TSA pre-check. I have like this whole system and the line was crazy. I'm like, it's a random Friday where, like, where are all you people going? And so it just missed four minutes. I missed it by four minutes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. The person at the desk to check in, they were like, you're gonna miss, you're gonna miss it. They're not very positive about, you know.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: No, not at all. Like, wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If we hurry up, then you know it's gonna be okay.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Stop talking and get me through here. Stop telling me I'm gonna miss it. That's 30 seconds. I, I just lost, so.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well listen, we've got a ton of stuff to talk about and I wanna start off with your superhero origin story. All right.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I wanna know how you got interested in health and wellness in the first place, and what made you eventually focus on allergies as one of your specialties?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Okay, so when I was younger, it was really my family that was, they're not from this country, and they were. Like, oh, we've got a smart one in the family. She's gonna be a doctor. And I'm like, all right. That's it. I had my doctor's kit, I was four years old, my little plastic doctor's kit, and I was walking around. I was gonna be a doctor. I was on that path. And I really liked the sciences and math and it's, it was interesting when I grew up in the eighties, um, it was like, are you a science person or you like a English person? You kind of like had to pick that path. You couldn't kind of be both. I actually am more creative than I thought I was. But anyway, so I was kind of on the path to like become a doctor and it was really so that I could help my family and my grandmother's 103 years old, so it was really like, you know, English was not my mother's first language. How can I help them navigate so that my family can be healthy? That was really like the driving force for me becoming a doctor.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's awesome.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And of course, you know, going to school, doing all the things, what drove you or inspired you to focus on, you have double board certified internal medicine, but as an allergist, what prompted that?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah, and you know what's interesting? I didn't, first of all, when I signed up to be a doctor, I didn't realize it was like. Four years of college, then four years of medical school, then three years of residency, then two years of fellowship. I'm like, wait a second. I'm 30 years old. I haven't even seen my first patient like, what's going on? Had no idea. I was the first one in my family to go to college, you know? So there was a lot to learn. I started off doing basic science research like in the laboratory with my little coat on and stuff like working with bacteria and microscopes and all that sort of stuff. And I really liked molecular biology and I was a biology major in college, and then I started doing more molecular biology research even throughout medical school.

And so allergy is not just allergy, it's allergy and immunology. And so immunology is how the immune system works. You get to learn about all these pathways and your cytokines and cells and things like that. So I really liked that, like basic science component to immunology. So that was one aspect of it. The other aspect of it is like you get, you see some really weird stuff with allergies, right? And it's like people are like, I need to get to the bottom of this. And I felt like I could be a detective with them. And so you really had to listen and you really had to work with them to be like, okay. What did you eat in the last 24 hours?

Where were you? Who were you with? Like what were your environmental conditions? You know, for lots of other medical diagnoses and medical specialties, you don't really like have to think that hard, right? Your GI doctor's like, oh, let's do a colonoscopy, you know? But for allergy you really have to do detective work. And so that's what I became really passionate about. It's like, let's work together to try to figure out. What your body's reacting to and what's going on. So it was, it's a very fun specialty.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And taking that approach of being a detective is like that quality in medicine is so valuable regardless of the specialty, but the fact that you already had that mindset kind of speaks to where you are today and how you're impacting so many people.

And so with that said, I love that you mentioned the connection because they can't really be separated with allergies and the immune system. Right? So much of what we see manifesting as an allergic response, our immune system is regulating all of this stuff.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so, but we tend to like compartmentalize this mentally. And so thank you for bringing that up because we're gonna dive deep into this. I want to ask you about something that is, it's epidemic proportions today, and I know that you're seeing this firsthand. There's an explosion of allergies, like what is going on? Why are so many more people? Number one, the prevalence is higher. And also the array of things that people are allergic to their symptoms. Can you talk about the current state of affairs and what's behind all of this?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yep, and I'll say one other thing for like the reason behind why I became an allergist. It really is like the root cause medicine, right? And it's like why people go into functional medicine or integrative medicine, people wanna get to the root cause. Your immune system is everywhere, right? Like your largest immune organ is your skin. Your immune system is in your guts. You have to like be thinking about the person holistically when you're making a diagnosis. So when we talk about allergies, what is an allergy? It's the body's abnormal response to something that's normally occurring in the environment.

And we've seen a rise in allergies. We've also seen a rise in autoimmune issues. So what's autoimmune? It's when your immune system starts to react abnormally to things that are normally occurring in your body. So it is this aberrant or abnormal immune reaction. And so like what could be causing that? What's the root cause of that? A lot of it has to do with our gut and our gut microbiome. Because we're essentially made up of a bunch of bacteria, and so when that is skewed and that is off, we get immune dysregulation and so we see an increase in autoimmunity, we see an increase in inflammation, and we see an increase in allergy.

There are a couple of other things specific to allergic diseases and why we're seeing an increase in allergic diseases. One, increased use of antibiotics. So like, you know, everyone's taking a Z-pack that's an antibiotic, so it kills off the bacterial infection. It also kills off the good bacteria in your gut, right? That's why we say don't take antibiotics unnecessarily because it skews your immune system. And in fact, babies that are put on antibiotic in their first year of life are more likely to develop allergies. The second piece as it relates to our microbiome is when babies are born through C-section, they miss the very first exposure to the good bacteria in the vaginal canal.

And so now it's like you're bypassing that it, so babies are born and those babies born by C-section are more likely to develop allergies. The other thing that we see is this like hyper hygienic world and like part of it is if you follow me on social media, you may become a little bit of a germophobe, and I apologize for that because the truth is we actually want to introduce bacteria and foreign bodies to a baby early on. And so babies who actually grow up on a farm, or if they grow up and they're, have multiple siblings, they tend to have less allergies because they're getting exposed to more stuff. Your immune system needs to be exposed to things, both good bacteria, bad bacteria, early on in order for it to develop properly. We also see that people who have pets in their first year of life exposed to pets in their first year of life have fewer allergies.

So it's like, let the kids roll around in the dirt a little bit. So like in the nineties and early two thousands when we were like, oh my gosh, hand sanitizer everywhere, sanitize everything, put your baby in a bubble. That actually made it worse from an allergy perspective. I'll say one other thing. I know I'm talking a lot. But your immune system cells that trigger allergies, they're called your TH2 cells, those cells are actually meant to fight off parasites. So in developing countries, those TH2 cells are busy fighting off parasitic infections, so you don't see allergies in developing countries. In the U.S., those TH2 cells are sitting there twiddling their thumbs being like, we got nothing to do. And so that's when they start to react to normal things that are occurring in the environment.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. That's fascinating. You know, that's again, we don't usually make that connection or even think about it, especially in the quote developed world about

parasites and what our immune system is doing in response to all this stuff. And just to go back and recap a little bit, so you talked about our overuse of antibiotics, which this is the thing. Many practitioners are now aware and talking about this and not as ready to hand out antibiotics, thankfully. But it was decades. Decades, and decades of everybody and their mother and their brother and their child getting antibiotics.

I know I had multiple rounds of antibiotics as a kid, and sometimes it would be for stuff that was not bacteria related, right? So it might have a viral infection, but getting prescribed antibiotics, so we overuse them. And you also mentioned the inoculation. Right. There are more people having c-sections than ever before, and this isn't always, I'm grateful that we have that sophistication to be able to do that safely, but at the same time, that's not always the case of why a c-section is being done. You know, there's scheduled C-sections, right? Just because I want to have my baby on a particular day, or, you know, whether it, it might even be the physician and their, their schedule. Like we've gotta just, you know, it's, it's getting late in the day. Right. There's a ton of different reasons for that, and I see you shaking your head. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah, a hundred percent. And so working moms people of higher socioeconomic status, the data shows that they are more likely to have a C-section. And guess what? Their children are more likely to have allergies. So it really is a thing. So c-sections are great when they're medically necessary, right? Yes. Not they shouldn't be scheduled. They should not be scheduled because you're bypassing that first exposure to bacteria through the vaginal canal. That is the baby's first opportunity to learn what good bacteria is, what it looks like. And there's some research to say that if you are born through C-section, you should actually be slathered with some. Fluids and what have you and that type of bacteria to formulate the right type of microbiome so that your immune system forms the right way. And as I mentioned before, having antibiotics in the first year of life again, that kills off the good bacteria in your gut. It messes up your microbiome. You're more likely to develop allergies. And then also pregnant moms, if they're taking antibiotics, that also can impact the baby. And have them develop allergies.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. And then the final one that you mentioned was the kind of hyper cleanliness paradigm, which we just swung the pendulum so much. So like everything should be sterile. And the reality is we need these inputs. It's like training for our immune system. Right. And you mention all those. Normal exposures that we would get. That now we are further and further away from those things. You know, kids are not going outside as much. You know, we're on our devices and you know, our families are so fractured, you know, people aren't spending as much time around other humans 'cause right now, here in this room with my team and you we're all sharing file sharing, micro, microbiome data. Microbial data's getting shared.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, and we need each other. There's this loneliness epidemic, you know, we're more isolated and so now it's starting to make sense why allergies are going up, but we don't think about these things. In addition to that, what are some other things going on in our environment that could be leading to more issues with allergies? Because a lot of people, and I wanna ask you about this, a lot of people have food related allergies. Does this have anything to do with what we might be eating?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yes. And as it relates to food allergies, there was a decision made in the 1990s that we shouldn't introduce peanut to children until after the age of two. At the time what we knew about our immune systems were like, let's avoid things that may cause allergies or let's avoid things that would make allergies more prevalent. So there was a decision made. And also because peanuts could be a choking hazard don't introduce peanut until children are over the age of two. What happened? We took something that's normally occurring in the environment that you're normally exposed to, we removed it and then introduced it after the immune system was already formed, right? And so the body's like, wait a second. That's something foreign. I've never seen that. Before that peanut protein before, and all of a sudden we've got 10 x 20 x increase in peanut allergy in the United States.

If you look at places like Israel, where there's something called Bomba, which is like a peanut based product that's using teething rings, the incidence of peanut allergy is 0.2% because

they're introduced to it early on. Here it's almost 10%. Another reason for this is because peanut was present, right? Big brothers and sisters were eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, right? So peanut was around in the environment. Babies weren't exposed to it through their GI tract. This is the most tolerant immune organ or GI tract. They were introduced through the skin. And when you're introduced to something through the skin, the body's like, oh no.

That's that weird thing that got into contact with my skin. So then when you eat it, your body's like, oh, no. I'm gonna develop an allergic reaction to it, an immune response to it. And so the other thing I caution people against is don't put food products on your baby's skin. Oatmeal baths, wheat based baths, almond based, all of those types of things. Don't put food products on baby skin. They need to be exposed through it, through the GI tract first and say, okay, this is something that I'm supposed to be eating that I can tolerate. When you introduce or you have exposure through your skin first, the body's like, oh no. Again, this is something that I was exposed to on my skin. This must be something foreign.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Now what about, is there anything, you mentioned the microbiome being really, um, at the heart of this when it comes to our immune system and allergies and uh, just kind of intelligent force. What if we're putting certain foods into our gut? That could that be disruptive and, and leading to more allergies. So what I'm specifically asking about is like, we have this epidemic of ultra processed foods, right? Can that be one of the contributing factors?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Ultra processed foods, post food harvesting, all of the manipulations and changes that we're making to our food. There's not hard evidence to say, yes, this triggers allergies, but like, let's use common sense. How could it not? And what we do have to go on is something that we know about shellfish allergy in adults. So shellfish allergy is more common in people over the age of 30. And the thinking behind this is that people who take antacids or drink alcohol, their pH in their stomach. Gets messed up. And then when they eat the shellfish, the way that shellfish is broken down, all of a sudden the proteins start looking different. And when the proteins start looking different, so drawing the parallels to ultra processed foods or post food harvesting, when the foods start looking different, then their

natural form, that's when the body's like, oh, I don't recognize this. This is something foreign. And then boom, you develop an allergic reaction to it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So what is a histamine reaction?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So histamine is a chemical that gets released by your allergy cells, which is responsible for itching, swelling, redness, and congestion. So we've got like two main types of immune system cells, TH one cells that fight off of viruses and bacteria, and then TH2 cells that are meant to fight off parasites. But in the developed world where we don't have parasites, they're the ones that. Cause allergies. Those TH2 cells release histamine in order to try to fight and calm down the infection when quite frankly, it's the opposite. And it results in this immune reaction, itching, redness, swelling, congestion.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So there's an array, obviously, of allergic reactions that the body can have. Is the skin like the primary way that our body would express an allergy?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah, and the way an allergy works is you actually develop antibodies. To these things that are normally occurring in the environment. So you, let's say you ingest this thing. Now you have an antibody that antibody binds to that TH2 cell and boom, histamine and a whole bunch of other cytokines and things get released and you get the itching, swelling, redness, congestion. 90% of the time you're gonna have skin symptoms and it occurs within minutes to a few hours of ingestion or exposure to what you're allergic to.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's fascinating. Our skin is telling us some information.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So much. So much.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow, wow, wow. Gotta put some respect on our skin. So with this being said, of course we dabbled in a couple of things. Basically the environment has changed dramatically and it's happened in just a few short decades. Is there anything else that jumps out to you or that you've seen in your practice, in your research that's contributing to the epidemics of allergies?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Well, as it relates to environmental allergies, global warming. And we've got above average temperatures. We've got above average rainfall, shorter winters. That means way more pollen. And so you've got all this pollen in the air. So what's happening is that people who don't even. Normally have allergies are reacting to the sheer amount of pollen in the air. So when adults, like it's very rare to get an allergy over the age of 50 to something in the environment, but when older adults are like, oh, I, I'm reacting, all of a sudden I'm sneezing, it's because this sheer amount of pollen in the air. The other issue is that pollen can bind to pollutants in the air, like diesel exhaust and sulfur dioxide and nitric oxide, and now you've got super pollen and it's going to be incredibly irritating to anyone who breathes this in. So they might not have those allergy antibodies circulating in their blood, but they're gonna have a local allergic reaction because it's nasty what they're, what they're breathing in. And so automatically your respiratory tract is gonna try to sneeze that out and get rid of it because it's toxic to them.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's what I was gonna ask you about specifically was pollutants.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You knows a hundred percent the EPA is regulating. I think it's like. 80,000 different newly invented chemicals and like there's like thousands more each year and there's a bunch that are unregulated as well.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: It's not just outdoor pollutants too Indoor. It's indoor pollutants. We spend 90% of our lives indoors, which is crazy. Like people, please, let's get outside. Open up your windows, even if you have allergies, open up your windows. There's something called an indoor microbiome. We talk about our gut microbiome. We talk about our skin microbiome. The, I wish there was some kind of black light or something that could show all the bacteria, toxins, volatile organic compounds that are circulating in our indoor air, and that's offgassing from furniture.

Like if you have like wood composite furniture, the crap you buy from Ikea, all this sort of stuff off gassing directly into your air. None of this stuff is regulated. In California, at least

they will state on the tag like this may be a toxic substance. Make sure you keep your furniture outside for a couple of days before you bring it inside, like literally. And who's reading that? Think about mattresses that are treated with chemical flame retardants. You buy a mattress, you're sleeping on something that is treated with chemical flame retardants. That's stuff off gases into the air. You are breathing that in overnight. We're not thinking about this stuff because we can't see it yet. We've got allergies, asthma, we've respiratory issues, migraines, eye issues. It's all related.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Holy moly. Indoor microbiome.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Indoor mic. You heard it here first.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You heard it here first. I love this. I love this. Got a quick break coming up. We'll be right back.

In this episode. You heard Dr. Tania Elliot talk about the hidden harms of conventional mattresses that are off gassing all of these toxic chemicals into our bedrooms while we sleep. And you're probably like. Well, what do I do? What do I sleep on? Well, the good news is that more and more companies are making changes in how they're producing their mattresses, and one company is truly leading the charge. It's the mattress that I've been sleeping on for quite some time now. It's made from non-toxic and certified organic materials, and this mattress has actually been utilized in a clinical trial. It's been found to extend our deep sleep and rem sleep cycles by up to 20%. This is the phenomenal mattresses from Essentia. Go to myessentia.com/model to unlock a special discount on Essentia. Mattresses is exclusive for the Model Health Show community. Go to myessentia.com/model. That's M-Y-E-S-S-E-N-T-I a.com/model, myessentia.com/model.

And keep in mind that all mattresses truly are not created equal. Essentia mattresses are now championed by pro athletes in every sport and over 20% of NHL players in National Hockey League are sleeping on essentia mattresses. Again, it's science backed to accelerate recovery to improve and support. We're not just talking about the time on the mattress, but the quality of our sleep minutes and Essentia is truly in a league of its own. Head over to

myessentia.com/model to unlock a special discount on Essentia mattresses. Take advantage exclusive for the Model Health Show Community. Head over their ASAP and check them out. And now back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Obviously, again, all bacteria. You know, you mentioned the importance of having a healthy microbiome, but with any microbiome, there's gonna be good guys, there's gonna be some not so good guys, and we don't want the not so good guys to take over the system, of course, but there's gonna be some exposures. We don't wanna be hyper cleanliness, right? We don't wanna go too far where we're just trying to antibacterial everything. But there are certain things that can harm us, and a lot of people don't think about them. And I wanna talk about going out to a restaurant. All right. What are three things that you would never order when you go out to a restaurant?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Okay, so one is never get like a lemon wedge or something in your drink. If you think about it, the outside of a lemon, right? People, the people in the back, the cooks and stuff, they're not washing the outside of the lemon skin, right? It falls on the floor. Pick it up, put it on there, chop up the lemon, use it as a wedge on the side of your drink, right? So you're not thinking about that. It's fine if you wanna like squeeze some lemon into your drink, but don't let that outside of the lemon skin or orange or you know, any kind of fruit with a thick skin. Get inside your beverage. So that's one thing. The second thing is condiments.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wait before you go to the second thing, we'll put up a little image of as well. And I'm gonna, can you talk about. The bacteria that can be.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: On it. Okay.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So there can be all kinds of bacteria on that. I'm talking like fecal matter type of stuff, right? So e coli and nasty things that you would never want in your drink because again, nobody's singing about washing the outsides of fruit that's got thick skin and that goes pineapple. You get the pina colada with a little pineapple wedge, right? No one's washing the outside of those fruits. Yeah, so that's one thing to consider.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And on your social media, you actually shared, by the way, everybody's gotta follow you. What's your Instagram handle?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Dr. Tania Elliot.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's so good, so good. Our guest who was in right before you came in, she follows you and she was like, your video that you just posted about traveling, which we'll talk about. So inspiring and I love how you make everything so concise. But you shared there was a really crazy study and we'll put it up for everybody just showing all the different bacteria that's on a common lemon wedge that people might put into their drinks. And so you're like, you're showing this stuff and this is stuff you never think about. Like you wanna be a little healthy, add a little zest to the water. The lemon little lime, but we don't think about what can be coming along with that little, little stowaways.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Right. Those little stowaways are the bad bacteria that you do not wanna be ingesting. The other is condiments, so like those individual condiments that are sitting in the table. I'm sorry, but you don't know what was put in there or what the last person was doing. Maybe they stuck their finger inside the ketchup to try to get it out. They're banging it against the table. It's getting refilled with God knows what.

So if you're at the bottom of the barrel there, that stuff's probably been there for ages. So I don't use any condiments that are been sitting on the table. The third is truffle oil. And this is something that actually disappointed me because like when truffle fries came out, I was like, oh, the truffle fries. I felt so fancy. I was paying a couple extra bucks for 'em. I didn't realize that this is a synthetic made product. So we're like, we think about like synthetic fragrances, right? And how that results in hormone disruption, um, cardiovascular issues, right? So we're like clean beauty, you know, don't use synthetic fragrances, all this sort of stuff.

But we're okay with synthetic products in our food. So like there's nothing real about that truffle oil flavoring. It's actually made from formaldehyde. That's the stuff we use in embalming fluid. You know, like when someone passes, this is like, what? But it has this aroma and this smell. The other thing, like anything that says natural flavors, we have no idea like

what that, where that stuff's coming from. But anyway, as it relates to truffle oil, completely synthetic, absolutely not. Real truffles, they don't actually maintain or keep that aroma. They smell nothing like it, and they couldn't maintain that aroma because of its, there's structure in oil, so that's something you steer clear of.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is awesome. Again, for so many of us, we don't. We don't you, what you've done is like, you've been really great at highlighting things that we take for granted. We see these things are just kind of like in the background of our lives and another one of those areas for us to consider. You already kind of opened the door on this is our bedroom.

Right. You mentioned a little bit about the mattresses, the synthetic ingredients themselves that make the mattresses, by the way, but also the flame retardants off-gassing and all this stuff. This is supposed to be our place of recovery and our safe space, but the modern bedroom is anything. But what are some things that you personally would not bring into your bedroom or use in your bedroom, especially when it's relating to sleep? A lot of people, for example, are sleeping with their phones. Let's talk about some things that we should probably avoid if we want to get good sleep at night.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah, and I'll tell you like the backstory, like how I ended up doing all this stuff is because as an allergist we're always talking about avoidance of our environmental triggers. So I started doing this stuff for people who had dust mite or indoor mold allergy or other types of indoor allergies. And then I realized like, wait a minute. There are pieces of this that are applicable to everyone because we're talking about toxins as well. We're not just talking about things that people are allergic to. We're literally talking about things that are either toxic or dangerous. And so that's how I sort of expanded into beyond just allergic conditions into like, these are things that you shouldn't be exposed to. I'd like to start talking about like if you do have indoor allergies and the things to avoid.

Number one is you don't wanna have any carpets, so I don't have any carpets in my bedroom. You also don't wanna have any curtains or drapes, and the reason is that dust mites can live in your carpeting. They can live in curtains and drapes, and then you're breathing that in as you sleep. You also wanna have protective covers for your mattress, pillow, and box spring, and

ideally all natural fibers wherever you can. You don't wanna have something that's a synthetic fiber, right? That's like made of memory foam, for example, which is like, has polyurethane in it, right? And then you're sleeping on something that has polyurethane. That's the same stuff that we use in paint varnish. Like why would you want that to be in your mattress?

So those are some things as it relates to your phone, people will sleep with their phone underneath their pillow, especially if they have to like wake up early in the morning. They wanna hear their alarm clock, right? You're not supposed to do that. Your phone can combust and literally go on fire and somebody in Asia actually died because they had their phone underneath. It wasn't breathable and the phone combusted. The other reason why you don't wanna sleep with your phone anywhere near you is everyone wakes up in the middle of the night. What's the first thing you do? You roll over, you check your phone, right? Automatically, you're having this exposure to blue light that's gonna keep you awake. And then people are like, oh, I can't fall back asleep. Well, it's probably 'cause you're reaching for your phone. That blue light is then stimulating your awake hormones and you can't fall back asleep. No surprise.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. You mentioned earlier about the benefits of having pets in our household, but what about pets in your bed?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Don't put pets on your bed. Just think about it, those pets, right? Unless you're giving them baths and showers every single day and you're wiping down their paws every single time they come inside. They're full of fecal matter. They're full of other types of bacteria and viruses that are unhealthy for us. So their saliva, it might be bacteria that's okay for a pet. It's not good bacteria for you to be exposed to think about their bums unless you're wiping their butts with toilet paper like they're sitting on your pillow. You've got all their fecal matter now sitting on your pillow. So we don't wanna have pets on the bed, especially like now as we're getting into the warmer months. There could be ticks, there could be fleas, all kinds of stuff, things on their dander like, no thanks. Don't keep your pets on the bed. Get, get them a nice little bed for themselves.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ooh, this is, so, some people gonna feel some type of way about this. And this is the thing, like with the work that you're doing, you're just sharing what you know as a practitioner. And you know, some of this stuff is a little controversial because again, we just do certain things. We don't think about the bigger picture, you know, and that's some real stuff right there.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: But I'm not saying do everything like, you know, my page is really like, here's the array of things, and my job is to make you aware, right? You pick and choose. The stuff that makes sense for you and your life and doesn't, right? It's all about trade offs, right? However, you can't make those decisions if you're unaware, right? If you didn't know about the truffle oil thing, right. Then you would be like, oh no, this is something good or healthy for me to eat.

Or, you know, this is a luxury for me versus a synthetic ingredient made out of formaldehyde. So like my job is to make you aware of all the things that could potentially harm your health, and then you pick and choose the stuff that works for your life and your lifestyle and the stuff that doesn't. I don't adhere to all my advice. Like people probably think I'm a crazy person. It's like, you know, how does she live her life? But I don't adhere to everything. I adhere to lots of stuff, but not everything. I'm human.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yes. Since, since we're in the bedroom. What about when you travel, right? So right now you're probably staying at a hotel. Is there anything that we should know as far as like our hotel bedroom?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Never sleep on a hotel pillowcase and I, for me in particular, I have sensitive skin and they use commercial grade detergent and you, it's like nasty. That stuff is so rough. Those sheets and stuff are rough. And then they use commercial grade detergent. Every time I used to go to a hotel, I would get a rash, all on my face. So I bring my own pillowcase when I travel. The other thing to consider is that they may change the sheets after each guest comes, but they're not changing the top sheet. They're no, they're not changing. My gosh, what the heck is it called? The bedspread. They're not changing the bedspread.

Right? And they're not changing, like, you know, the little throw blankets and throw pillows, those things are sitting there.

A lot of hotels also have dark colored carpets for a reason because it covers up stains. So like you wanna re be really careful with carpets. I try to look for hotels that have hardwood floors. I'm also very cautious about using things like the hot water pot. Right. Have you seen that? Like those instant kettles? There have been stories of people like putting their underwear in there to try to like wash their underwear and stuff like that. I'm not kidding. These are like real stories. Also any of the hotel toiletries, right? You don't know what those hotel toiletries may have been filled with by other guests. It's not like the uh, cleaning staff is coming in and looking and making sure that the product is what it says it is. So you just really wanna be careful about that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Can you share that example of one thing that happened with your patient?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: This is the worst story. This happened to me when I was in residency. I had a patient come in and literally half of their hair was gone. And it was a patient that I'd been seeing as a primary care doctor and she was in tears and she said she went to a hotel and she washed her hair with the shampoo and there must have been Nair in there. And when she went to wipe, you know, wash her hair, wash her hair off, off came her hair, and it was like this horrible story. And it's like, first of all, the worst thing ever that someone would do. But like, yeah, that's not regulated. And people also put bodily fluids in there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Holy moly. Alright, let's..

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Bring your own toiletries.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And your own pillowcase.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: And your own pillowcase.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now let's, let's lighten the mood. Now let's lift up the mood because..

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: It's like, who's never gonna wanna travel with her?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh my gosh. But we need to know, like, I never thought about this. I always see the little pump bottles in the showers and I don't use them. I bring my own soap. But you know, like I'm thinking about, you know, like my son for example, he might use that stuff I never asked. And so just to be aware of that is valuable. And now what are some things that we can do proactively to support our sleep when we're in, we'll say hotel bedroom. Is there anything that you bring along to really help to create a sleep sanctuary?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So I have this little hack where I bring electrical tape with me. Because I don't know if this happens to you, but there's all these little blinking lights from everywhere in the room, right? So I bring electrical tape and I literally cover up all the light sources, like it'll be the alarm clock, the annoying telephone, the television. There's always like some beeping light there or something that's like the smoke alarm or something. I don't cover the actual smoke alarm sensor, but the light. I will cover, one of my followers actually said, oh, use a hair clip and actually clip like the curtains, like the size of the curtains, because there's always a little bit of light that's seeping through, even if they're blackout curtains.

So I really like that one as well. But you wanna sleep in pitch black. And the reason why that's so important is because that's what increases your body's natural production of melatonin. So I'm not a big fan of taking melatonin supplements, but let's do things to increase our body's natural sleep hormone or natural melatonin. Also sleeping in pitch black, and a lot of people don't realize this, it also downregulates your hunger hormones. So it's like, Hey, time to sleep. Upregulate, melatonin, downregulate, hunger hormones.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I love that. And just with that one simple thing, you know, creating. It's a little bit different. A lot of people experience when they go to a hotel, they actually sleep better because they tend to have blackout curtains. Right? But you know, and then at home they've got all this "light pollution" coming into their bedroom. So. You know, being more mindful of that. And so what about using an eye mask?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Using an eye mask too, and I do both because sometimes in the middle of the night I take off my eye mask or it's bothering me. So I like to have pitch black as much as possible. Right. I wanna stack the deck to be in pitch black.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. In my first book I talked about this, but. There was a interesting study done at Cornell University and they took a test subject and put them into an otherwise dark room, and they put a light behind their knee the size of about a quarter, and that was enough to disrupt their sleep cycle. And because our skin has photoreceptors, you know, all of our, it's not just our eyes, you know? And so with that light coming in, like our body is trying to see like, what time is it? Because if we think about prior to electricity, you know, this, the invention of light bulb. How would our bodies know? Right? It's not just our eyes. Like we open our eyes and we see that the sun is rising, like our skin, like our, our bodies will start to pick this data up and then form the rest of our system, you know? So just keeping this stuff in mind. And so you mentioned not being a fan of taking melatonin. Are there any sleep supportive supplements that you do recommend?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So sometimes I will use magnesium glycinate or magnesium bisg glycinate. And then it helps to promote calmness and sleep. Also, a lot of women are deficient in this, especially right around their period, so they may find like they start to get headaches like the week before their period. A trigger for this is that our magnesium stores are depleted, and so that often happens to me, so I will use a magnesium supplement.

I also like tart cherry. So I'll make myself like a little sleep mocktail, magnesium glycinate, a little bit of tart cherry. Sometimes I'll add a little bit of kava, which is almost like the body's, natural, anti-anxiety medicine, so to speak. So it's way better than popping something like an Ativan. But it has similar properties, so it's also very relaxing. So I'll make myself a sleep mocktail and also just avoiding alcohol before bed.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. Yeah. And what about the air quality? I. In the bedroom, you mentioned like again, off gassing furniture, pet dander, dust, all this stuff.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Air quality in the bedroom is incredibly important. You're staying in one place and you're staying in that one place for let's say eight to 10 hours, and we're often not thinking about this. One thing that is important is the humidity level. And you wanna make sure your humidity level in your bedroom is anywhere from 20 to 50%. If it's higher than that, then you're at increased risk of a huge dust mite problem and a huge indoor mold problem.

So you have a sweet spot of humidity. I tell patients, just get a humidity gauge and it comes like a temperature and humidity gauge. It's like $6 on Amazon, and you wanna make sure that the humidity level is less than 50%. Oftentimes, especially if people have nasal congestion or they are like dry skin or something, they will put a humidifier in the bedroom and they don't understand why they're still feeling congested, and it's because they're actually making their symptoms worse because the humidity levels are too high and they're probably breathing in volatile organic compounds off gas by mold.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Do you use the air purifier?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yes. And you wanna make sure that it is the appropriate size for the room? You also wanna make sure you know what you're purifying. So if you've got allergies, you wanna make sure that it has a HEPA filter, an allergen filter. If you're concerned about the off gases and the toxins, then you wanna make sure it's an activated carbon filter, because that's the only thing that's gonna draw those toxins outta the air.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If somebody's wanting to, you know, they've been struggling with allergies and it's quote allergy season. Are there any things that people can do just besides like, you know, taking different medications or, you know, supplements, things like that? Well, actually, supplements might be okay. Are there any things that people can do that can help their body to adjust more gracefully as they're going into allergy season?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: There are few things that you can do. So the first line of treatment for allergies is avoidance of your triggers. So if you suffer from outdoor allergies, you wanna make sure you're not tracking those outdoor allergens. Into your home. So it actually starts with your entryway. When you come in, you wanna take off your shoes and not track any

pollen on the bottom of your shoes and fecal matter, like it's gross. Don't wear your shoes in the house. But anyway, you wanna prevent yourself from like bringing that into your home. You also wanna take off your clothes right away, put 'em in the washing machine or in a hamper, and you wanna wash your clothes because pollen is gonna come in and be stuck on your clothes.

You also wanna get in the habit of taking a shower as soon as you come inside. We're at the very least, showering in the evenings. So if you wait to shower in the morning, then all of the pollen that then has got stuck in your hair and on your skin is then getting tracked into your bed, into your bedroom, and then that pollen becomes airborne and suspended in the air. You can't see it. But the allergy symptoms are like nonstop, not going away, so that's really important. The other thing I tell patients is not to wear hairspray in the springtime because pollen sticks your hair anyway, but it will stick to your hair even more if you've got product in it. Or you may wanna just wear a hat or a wide brim hat.

The other thing for your ladies out there, fake eyelashes. Pollen loves to get stuck in between your eyelashes. So if you've got those fake lashes with the adhesive glue, they're gonna get stuck in your lashes and you know you're not supposed to be scrubbing them, right? Because then the eyelashes will come off. So then you get pollen stuck in your lashes. So if you can't help it and you need to have fake lashes, you better buy a pair of like really big sunglasses and wear those when you go outside.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You might be putting a halt to the eyelash epidemic out here. All right? Because it's getting outta. Some of these eyelashes are like full on rakes at this point, like they're just grabbing up all kinds of pollen.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Well, and I will tell you the other thing with eyelashes as it relates to allergies is the type of eyelash glue that is used. The chemical. It's a chemical people, it's, it's an acrylate. And that is the worst type of allergy to have. And I see this all the time. Women come in and they're like, oh, I've got eyelid dermatitis or a rash like on my eyelids, or this dry patches around my eyes and I can't get it to go away. And I'm like, it's the eyelash glue. It's the eyelash adhesive. And they don't wanna hear that, but that's what it is. And so it's the last

thing they think of. They're like, oh, it's a personal product. It's a cream, it's a makeup, it's your eyelash glue. And the problem with acrylate allergy. You can also get it from gel manicures.

Acrylates are in so many things. So they're in nail polish. They're in the eyelash glue, they're also in dentures. They're in, if you ever end up with a prosthetic joint. So if you develop an allergy to acrylates, you're kind of screwed because they're in so many things. And as we age, you have exposure to those things and you can have. Really terrible allergic reactions to them. So I caution with the lashes, ladies.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. So is there anything related to, you know, maybe, maybe our sleep or exercise or maybe something with our nutrition, any supplements? Are there any other things that people can do to help to kind of downregulate their sensitivity to allergies?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So a couple things you can do. So histamine, which we talked about before, gets produced when you're stressed. And we see this over and over again, especially with skin symptoms. When you are stressed out, you have an increase of blood flow to your skin, a dilation of those blood vessels, increased release of histamine, and then you end up getting itchy all over. Also, when you're stressed out, your eyes can tear, your nose can get congested, so it's important to regulate your stress levels. It does impact your allergy symptoms. The other thing as it relates to histamine are external sources of histamine. And so there are certain foods that are high in histamine content.

So like for example, when you eat pineapple, sometimes your mouth gets itchy, and some people are more sensitive to that than others because certain foods are high in histamine content. Pineapple, red wine, aged cheeses. People are looking like, oh my gosh, I can't eat anything now. But you wanna consider being on a low histamine diet because your body's already producing a lot of internal histamine. You don't need external histamine sources as well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. This is so good, so good. Listen, I can ask you a hundred more questions and I know that you're here for a short time and I just appreciate this. This is

so insightful. Can you share where people can follow you? Get more information, just get more into your universe.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: So you can follow me at Dr. Tania Elliott. I also have a Healthy Home ebook, which walks you through room by room. A lot of the stuff that we've been talking about, it's like how to be aware of the things that. Could be harming your health and you don't realize it. And then how to make smart decisions and healthy decisions about your home. But it's also in an aesthetic way. So I give recommendations for different types of products and things that you may wanna have in your home. None of it's paid. And then also I link to clinical studies if you wanna like geek out on the science of like, okay, how much fecal matter am I tracking into my house when I wear my shoes in the house?

There are clinical studies that are attached to that, so you may wanna check out my Healthy Home ebook, and then I'm launching substack soon, so that's gonna be like my community, my people, where you guys will be able to come on and we'll be able to talk about stuff, chat, and then. My audience can tell me like what they wanna learn more about. Right? And then we can geek out, we can get into it. We can bring in expert guests. I could ask them the hard questions 'cause I'm not afraid to ask hard questions. And so it's real, it's called Real Health with Dr. Tania. And it's really a place for people to get accurate, no nonsense health information.

Because I will tell you, like when you go to see your doctor, they're like, you know, well we don't say always. We don't say never. We will leave it up to you for your clinical decision making. And it's like. Stop. What would you tell your brother or sister? What would you tell your friend at a cocktail party? Right? Like that's what medicine needs to be. We need to be much more real. We can't just be like three steps removed and just leave it all on the onus on the patient to do their own research, like give them a point of view. So anyway, that's like what this is all about. It's real health.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's awesome. And you know, specifically with helping people to navigate their home and. You are a pioneer, truly in telehealth. So you were like literally doing walkthroughs in people's homes virtually and being able for them to create a safer space for

themselves and for their families, and seeing incredible results with that. And so taking all of that knowledge and putting it into an ebook is uber valuable, so people can find that on your Instagram.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: On my website, which is just TaniaElliotMD.com.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Perfect. Awesome. Last question, what is the model that you're here to create for everyone else, for, for your community with the way that you live your life personally?

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Hmm. That's a really good question. What is the model for the way I live my life personally? Number one is just like having an awareness of our actions and how they can impact our health. Number two is being a realist to say like, okay, this is how things can impact my health, but I'm not doing that. And that's okay. Number three is accepting yourself for who you are and where you are in your journey, and not being so hard on yourself 'cause the last thing I want is to, for people to become neurotic because they're like, I should be doing this. I shouldn't be doing that. And I'll admit like I've been a perfectionist in my life and like I get so hard on myself and it doesn't serve anybody, right?

So like, accept who you are and where you are, and then celebrate those wins when you're like, you know what? I did that, that wasn't so hard. I'm feeling better about it. I'm gonna celebrate those wins, but I'm not gonna be that hard on myself if I haven't achieved or accomplished or didn't do what Dr. Tania said.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that. I love that. Well, I appreciate you so much for coming to hang out with us. It's been awesome.

DR. TANIA ELLIOT: Yeah, thanks for having me. It was too short.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I know, right? We'll do this again. We'll do this again someday. I appreciate you so much, the one and only Dr. Tania Elliott. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today.

I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. If you did, you already know what to do, share this out with somebody that you care about and of course, pop over and check out Dr. Tania Elliot on Instagram. Really, really great videos and contents that she's sharing there in very, you know how social media is bite size, consumable way. So it's really awesome for her. This is the first, big podcast, major podcasts that she's ever been on, and to share her voice in this longer form to be able to really dig in deeper on some topics, and I'm so grateful. Again, this is the right use of technology to be able to connect with such experienced and insightful and talented people, and to be able to share their message in a broader and new and different dynamic ways.

We need more voices and lifting people up and highlighting functional wellness and highlighting the very abnormal nature of the environment that we're living in. And just to again, point us back to, yes, we gotta have awareness. I love how she closed things up, but we gotta have awareness, but we also gotta be empowered and know what are some better choices for us to make and we gotta share this information with the people that we care about and pass this information down to our children. Because again, technology is not slowing down. I don't even think we've even scratched the surface. So we've gotta really make sure more than ever that we're investing in our humanness.

And really taking care of ourselves physically and mentally. We've got some amazing masterclasses and class guests heading your way 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 the model health show.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes. You can find transcriptions videos for each episode, and if you've 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 and powering great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.