



EPISODE 910

The Surprising Truth About Longevity Medicine

With Guest Dr. Darshan Shah

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SHAWN STEVENSON: What are the latest innovations in longevity? Well, today you're going to hear from the person who is just awarded the Longevity Doctor of the Year by the Prestigious Longevity Doctors Association. If anyone knows about the Science of Longevity, it is our special guest today, and I'm telling you, we're gonna dive into a bunch of different subject matters. He's gonna talk about these four important pillars when he's working with his patients, and also he's gonna be talking about some of the things that we might not know about yet, right? Some emerging supplements and some of the signs behind it. And some things were pretty surprising for me and we haven't really talked about before.

And so all of this in this rich conversation, but this is one of the blessings of having. Access to information like this today, right at our fingertips, is that we get to learn from the very best people in the world in their respective fields. And it's just amazing. And it's just a matter of like, where are we investing our attention? And so I'm so grateful for you being here and choosing to be here with me today and to share in this knowledge. And of course, not just us taking this in ourselves, but being able to express this by the way that we live our lives and to share it with the people that we care about. This is important now, more than ever, to be a model and to also be a giver and a person being of service to help to uplift the people around us.

Again, we need this now more than ever. So again, today we're gonna be talking about the emerging field of longevity medicine supplements to keep an eye out for blood tests and so much more. Very, very excited about today's episode. Now, before we get to our special guest, any conversation. About longevity deserves a conversation about some of the most revered longevity beverages that humans have been consuming for centuries, and one of the most revered, one of the most favorited. It would be hearted if it had the ability to push a button in real life when people are having their cup of coffee. Now, if you're like me, growing up, I thought that coffee was the complete opposite of anything healthful. I thought that it was problematic. I thought that my grandparents were super weird for drinking it because taking a little sip as a kid, I thought it was gross. And little did I know that, of course, like the Folgers in your cup, whatever version of coffee that my grandparents were drinking, that was not the good stuff.

All right. It was littered with all manner of pesticides and herbicides and you know, chemical contaminants, probably mold. The list goes on and on. But high quality coffee is actually, according to the data, one of the most healthful drinks when it comes to extending your lifespan than just about anything that's been studied. A meta-analysis of 40 studies published in the European Journal of Epidemiology revealed that regularly drinking coffee was associated with a lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease, certain types of cancer, and all cause mortality. Now, although this was a notable association, the researchers adjusted for a variety of confounding factors, including age, obesity, alcohol consumption, smoking, and still found that drinking coffee stood out as a significant defense against all cause mortality.

It is a strong element of longevity. Now, some researchers at Stanford University deduce that a part of this connection to longevity when it comes to coffee is that coffee has these compounds that have been found to defend our body against age related inflammation. But once more, the quality is important. It is extremely important. The best part of waking up Folgers in your cup paradigm is over. All right. We're really being mindful of the quality of coffee, and also something that I don't talk about quite enough is utilizing incredible organic coffee. Yes, but coffee that is infused with science-backed medicinal mushrooms like Chaga.

I don't talk about Chaga enough. Chaga is one of the most researched and has some of the highest amounts of published data affirming its benefits. Studies indicate that Chaga can significantly increase the activity and effectiveness of our natural killer cells. So these are immune cells that are able to be essentially trained to help to modulate, right? So Immunomodulation ramp our immune system up if need be, or help it to down regulate its activity and its function if we're talking about in the case of a potential autoimmune condition where the immune system is overactive. CHA is also one of the richest sources of antioxidants utilized by humans, and it's been shown to increase our body's levels of something called superoxide dismutase.

And this is an antioxidant enzyme within our bodies. That plays a significant role as a free radical scavenger. It essentially acts as a bodyguard that protects your DNA from damage and helps to reduce the workload placed on your immune system. Very, very special. The coffee that I had today was organic coffee infused with dual extracted organic chaga mushroom and

lion's mane as well, which is affirmed by the University of Malaya to be neuroprotective and even stimulate the production of something called nerve growth factor in the brain, just helping to be protective and to provide us with a better brain and better cognitive function.

All of this is found in the Think Blend from four Sigmatic. Head over to foursigmatic.com/model. Right now you're gonna get up to 20% off of their amazing coffee blends. In particular, the Think Blend is my favorite. It's the one that I use most often. But they've got some amazing coffee blends. They've got some half calf and they've got some higher caffeinated versions of coffee as well. So it's something for everybody. And also, if you're not a fan of coffee, they've got dual extracted medicinal mushroom blends that I've been utilizing for years. These wonderful elixirs, like their Rishi Elixir, their cordyceps, and much, much more.

They're just doing stuff the very best way possible. Head over there, check 'em out foursigmatic.com/model. That's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model. And now let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Darshan Shah MD is a health and wellness specialist, board certified surgeon, published author and founder of Next Health, the world's first and largest health optimization and longevity clinic. As a longevity medicine specialist, he's advised thousands of patients on how to optimize their wellbeing and extend their health span and lifespan. Dr. Shah began his career at an accelerated MD program and earned his medical degree at the age of 21, becoming one of the youngest doctors in the United States.

He continued his training at the Mayo Clinic, one of the most prestigious medical institutes in the country. After earning his board certification and working with patients for many years, he continued his education and began work in training as a functional medicine doctor. Again, because of his pioneering and empowering work. He was recently named the number one Longevity Doctor in the World by the Prestigious Longevity Doctors Association, and now we have him here to share his insights with us. Let's dive in this conversation with the one and only Dr. Darshan Shah. All right. It's so good to have a friend here.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And to hang out. I haven't seen you in a little while. How you doing today?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: I'm doing fantastic today.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thank you for asking.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The one and only Dr. Darshan Shah. You were just awarded the Longevity Doctor of the Year by the Renowned Longevity Doctor's Association. How do you feel about that?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, it's quite an honor. You know, I got into this field never thinking that this would turn into anything. You know, I was just doing it because I had seen the benefits of some of the advice I was giving on that, first of all, on myself and then on my patients. I'm like, lemme just start a little clinic. And now to be here at this moment where, you know, I'm getting awards for Longevity Doctor of the Year. And also I just got recently nominated by Alfa Tech. You know what Alfa Tech is? Functional Medicine, innovator of the Year is a big kind of media house around fitness in the fitness industry. So yeah, it's pretty amazing. I feel really good about it. And even though I don't need the recognition, I'm kind of like shy in that way, you know, but it's just kind of cool.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And, and, you know, it couldn't be a better person because, you know, just, just the place that you're coming from with this knowledge and also you are one of the most generous people that I've ever been around and sharing what you know, and I don't think there's a better person that can help us to like, get through all of the, the murkiness of the longevity conversation right now and get down to the bare bones, like

what is this really and what this is really about? And what are the things that are affirmed by science to help us to extend our lifespan?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So I think a good place for us to start first and foremost in this conversation about longevity. What does that actually mean?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, it's such a good question. And you know, you and I were talking about this a little bit earlier. The word longevity has been over marketed now and has become like a buzzword. And I feel that the term is like losing its significance a little bit. So I'm trying to bring the focus of the conversation back into what really is longevity. And what I mean by that is, you know, it's not biohacking, right? It's not adding a bunch of years to your life that are non-productive. But what it is to me is really how do we add health span into our years, right? And that's how you get years out of your life is adding more productive years where you still have your brain and your ability to recognize friends and family.

Where you still have the ability to move. Maybe you like traveling, golfing, whatever it is, you could still do that, right? Where you don't have added risk to your life as well. Risk of falling, right? Because you've lost your balance, added risk of maybe cancer, maybe all the chronic diseases, heart attack. How do you remove all those risks that we take for granted right now that it's just gonna happen to us, right? Like we think, you know, I'll probably drive a heart attack because that's what most people die of. And the reality situation is you don't have to die of a heart attack. We have the technology now and the tools now to prevent you from dying of a heart attack, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, metabolic disease, all the things that are killing most of us right now.

And so, to me, bringing along the conversation back to what is really longevity, and to me that is adding health span into our years and removing the risk of dying from something that we just take it for granted, that this is what we're gonna die of.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Right. Thank you. That is, is one of the most captain obvious things, but not so much now.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, because it's so focused on all the other stuff to do.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: A big part of this is not dying from the stuff that's preventable.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The most largely the, the biggest killers in our world today, as you just mentioned. Heart disease, cancer, diabetes is affecting all these other conditions.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Obesity has exploded.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so helping to prevent these issues, yes. But I don't think that we understand. And if you could, since I have you here. What is the current state of affair when we, when we're talking about these chronic conditions? Is this now the norm is, are most people just kind of expecting, you just said it, like expecting to have a heart attack. Because of the current state of affairs, is the average person just going to have these diseases?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: So we are at a really interesting point in human history right now where we're actually reversing the trend of chronic disease. Okay. So we have been increasing exponentially the number of people that have been diagnosed with a chronic disease over the last 50 years. But I really believe in this moment, in 2025, that we've got to a point where we can reverse this trend now. Okay. And so we actually are seeing statistically less people being, dying of heart attacks, for example. And the nice thing about that is, is I feel that we are gonna get to an accelerated reduction of chronic disease at this moment in time.

So we're living in a really exciting time period. And there's a lot of reasons for that. You know, I think there's good technology out that we're using sooner and is becoming cheaper, but also the mindset of just people has changed since COVID. Right? I think there's a lot more conversation around health. Dr. Mark Hyman says all the time, people are sick and tired of being sick and tired, and people now have access to information that they never had access to before. And so I feel really optimistic that we, you and I were talking about, you know, a kid born today, right. What is their life gonna be like in 50, 60 years? I think chronic disease will not be something that they're necessarily worried about the way we worry about it today.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So, question, and I wanna steer this towards, you've mentioned technology a couple of times. What are some of the things that you are utilizing in your practice that you're studying, that you're considering when it comes to longevity? And also some of the things that you are already, you know, you've been utilizing for quite some time. And I've had the experience of having, you know, actually going with my wife to Next health and having these incredible experiences like top to bottom. You know, the red light therapy, the hyperbaric oxygen, the cryotherapy. You've got every ib.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: What cool toys.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That you can name, you know? But to do this with my friend, my, my wife, my best friend.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And what I saw was that a lot of people were coming with a buddy or their significant other and like hanging out and doing all the things. So what are some of these technologies that are really supportive of longevity.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That, that you're into right now?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right. So what I would say is, maybe I can take it a step back a little bit, just once again, let's talk about the definition of longevity again. So being a doctor, like I always use medical terminology a little bit more, but when I was going through medical school, we talked about different types of medicine that were been kind of ignored in the western medicine world of sick care. Right? And so when I look at the longevity conversation, I divided into four verticals. Vertical number one is lifestyle medicine. Okay? So this is something that doctors are told to practice, but they're not given any education on how to really practice lifestyle medicine. Well, and you talk a lot about this.

I probably learned more from your podcast about lifestyle medicine than I did in medical school, to be honest with you. Sleep, exercise, nutrition, right? And avoidance of metabolic health problems. Okay? So if you don't get enough sleep, if you don't get good nutrition, and if you don't have good movement in your life, you're gonna be metabolically unhealthy, right? So one of the best pieces of technology in that vertical is a continuous glucose monitor in my mind. Alright? And we can talk about that more a little bit later. Second vertical is functional medicine. So functional medicine, again, is also ignored by sick care western medicine, because it is root cause medicine, it prevents chronic disease.

So when you look at the root causes of why people are unhealthy, things like, you know, gut health, detoxifying their lifestyle, hormonal health, this all falls into the realm of functional medicine. Stuff that, you know, in traditional medicine you don't really talk about a lot. Like when was the last time you talked to your primary care doctor about your gut health, right? They send you to a gastroenterologist. But we have incredible tools and technology in that vertical now as well. We have hormone replacement therapy. We have the ability to measure your hormones and to do something about it, even without hormone replacement therapy. Same with gut health. We can look at your gut health and we have great techniques now to restore your gut balance.

Third vertical then is preventative medicine. Okay. And preventative medicine is how do we prevent you from dying of a heart attack, Alzheimer's disease or cancer. Incredible technology there. And the truth of that vertical is that we've had this technology for a while. We just used it way too late. So it was always like too little or too much, too late, is the way we

practice western medicine right now. If we can bring some of that technology into prevention, we can prevent all the chronic diseases. And then lastly, I talk about longevity medicine, and that is where we have also incredible new technology. Regenerative medicine techniques like stem cells, exosomes, peptides. We have also some of the biohacking stuff like you talked about, like hyperbaric oxygen therapy, LED light therapy.

And these have science behind them. The only thing I will say about longevity medicine is that if you don't have those first three verticals addressed and perfected, the stuff in the longevity medicine vertical is not gonna be as effective, or it just simply won't work. You know? And so you have to kind of take it in that order. Right? And this is the practice, this is how we practice medicine now in Nexel. This is our entire kind of longevity medicine practice and how we do things. And, that's the structure that we have around it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much for sharing that. Because, you know, we, we have colleagues that get obsessed with that fourth pillar.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, and just like they're looking for that thing and completely missing the ball. Like this is going to be radically ineffective if you're not doing these other things. Yeah. You're just gonna be trying to cancel out all the other problems.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Essentially trying to.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Trying to, yeah. Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you for that, man. So.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: No, no problem. Now I was gonna say like, you know, the human body is a, a biological mechanism that's always affected by the inputs that you're putting into it, right? And so if you are doing all these biohacking things, but you haven't fixed the inputs,

you're just chasing your tail constantly, right? And the inputs are a hundred times more consequential than doing some of these biohacks, right? So, and the inputs are diet, toxins, you know, movement. All of these things are inputs and you gotta fix your inputs before you do any of these biohacking technologies. And look like, I'm not saying they don't work, obviously, like we have them in Next Health, they work. But I don't want anyone getting into a hyperbaric chamber until they've talked to me about all this other stuff first.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love it. I love it. So since I have you here, I want to ask you about some of these emerging supplements and things that people are implementing. You know, I get a lot of questions about these kind of things and to have you here again, is very special.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But NAD is one of those things that a lot of people are interested in talking about. And I'm asking this specifically because I was leaving the gym just yesterday. And a guy stopped me, who sees me all the time. He's like, I, yo, like I saw you, you popped up on my feed. He's like, I didn't know you were one of those guys. Like, and so he just starts asking me all these health questions.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And he mentioned that, you know, he was utilizing NAD and so, first of all, what is NAD? And what are the best practices? And you know, who is this implicated for?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Great, great question. Okay, so NAD is a molecule that without it we would be dead, basically because it's a precursor for energy being made in our mitochondria at the cellular level, obviously every cell in our body needs energy to perform its function. And if you don't have enough energy, the function of that cell is not optimal, right? So having enough energy is the key to life. And we figured out how to give people that precursor either an oral or IV form. And there's different ways of getting this precursor, but as long as it gets inside the cell as NAD, your mitochondria can turn that into ATP, which is energy. So obviously, you know, we all want as much energy as possible, right?

And this is not just energy, like I feel energetic today. It's the energy for your liver to detoxify. You see energy for your brain to keep you moving all of it. And so, the, you can take NAD in the form of either N-A-D N-M-N or nicotinamide, riboside and r, which is goes by the trade name of Nigen. So those are the three forms of NAD that you can take. What a lot of people notice when they take NAD is they have more energy, and specifically like in low energy states, like after traveling or after you've been sick, it can get you better, much more quickly, right? So those are the kind of people that use NAD. I also like to use NAD on a daily basis, and so I use it orally.

What I found is that nigen or NR is the form of NAD that is absorbed the best into the cell. And this is why, that's the product that I use. There's also IV versions of NAD. IV NAD. If you've ever had it before, it's very uncomfortable because when you give IV NAD, your immune system has a reaction to it 'cause nAD is supposed to be inside your cell, not outside your cell, floating around in your bloodstream. So people get chest pain. People get a feeling of nausea when they're taking it IV and r nigen again, is absorbed incredibly rapidly into the cell and so you don't feel as bad as you do with IV NAD and because it's absorbed more rapidly, it actually has a better intercellular concentration as well.

So that's like the big picture on NAD. Now there is NMN as well you've probably heard of, right? And there's a lot of research going around about that as well. Unfortunately, the FDA took it off the market because they, they're gonna consider it as a drug actually. And so a lot more researches needs to be done for NMN to come back into the market. Some people are getting it in supplement form. But, you know, and I think there's great research around NMN as well, but it's just harder to get.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it. So you mentioned a nicotinamide version, which got me thinking about this category of nicotine.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Ah, yeah. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. And so now this is kind of having an emergence in the longevity space in particular, but also around cognitive function.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But when I think about nicotine, I think about cigs, I think about smoking. So what's going on there? It's like, is nicotine something that's dangerous for humans? Do you think that this is a potential benefit? Talk about that one for me.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. I mean, I actually use nicotine sometimes and I use it in the form of an absorbable pouch that you can put inside your mouth. Right. And nicotine, we know is a cognitive and performance enhancer. And, a lot, I use it sometimes before I do a podcast, to be honest with you. And, I like it for that nicotine in cigarettes. However, obviously the cigarette has a lot of respiratory consequences, causes cancer, so you don't wanna have you don't wanna smoke it. But the problem with nicotine is for some people it can be extremely addictive, right? And so that's why people get addicted to cigarettes, right? And so if you are one of these people that get addicted to nicotine, you probably want to reduce your consumption of it. However, if you use, if you're one of these people that can manage your intake and you can use it for cognitive enhancement, a lot of athletes are using nicotine as well. The form that I use is called athletic nicotine, and I love it for cognitive enhancement and performance enhancement.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Fascinating, fascinating. So there are any other, because again, we tie that so closely to smoking. Are there any other like negative implications if you're utilizing even, you know, nicotine supplement?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: I mean, I think the main thing is the addiction of it, you know, and so other than that, if you can control, you know, the dose is always the poison, right? If you can control your dosage, you're using it for specific situations, I think that it can be valuable. But obviously overdosing and getting addicted to it is gonna be a problem.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it. Well, going back to one of the hallmarks of longevity, which is not dying.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Not dying from things in especially, especially things that are preventable.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Largely preventable. And the number one cause of, of death here in the United States and also worldwide. But where the kings of it is heart disease. You've got some information about. Potentially being able to detect heart attacks decades before they happen?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Talk about that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Absolutely. Yeah. No, I mean, look, once again, we're living in a really exciting time right now that we can look at the arteries of your heart with a CAT scan and use AI to lay out every artery and see exactly how much plaque you have and where it's at. Right? And so for decades, all we did was follow cholesterol levels 'cause we're looking at that as a risk factor, right? We're looking at your risk factors and we're saying how? How at risk are you of heart attack, right? But now we can see with incredible clarity with a non-invasive scan, what's going on with your heart? This is called the clearly scan and. This is a game changer for cardiology because if you can do a clearly scan early enough and detect plaque enough, you know how aggressive you need to be with mitigating all of the risk factors for heart disease.

The risk factors for heart disease are not just high cholesterol, they're also inflammation, they're also metabolic disease. They're also heart hypertension, high blood pressure. You have to work on all of those to reduce your risk of heart disease, not just your cholesterol level. And, but prior, all we had was, you know, blood pressure and cholesterol. So we would throw medications at it. I could tell you I have patients that have total cholesterol that are really high, like 250, and they have zero plaque on there. Clearly. And I can tell you I have patients with low cholesterol levels and they have a lot of plaque in their arteries, and there's reasons for that, right? And so now with the ability to see.

With the scan beautifully, what these arteries are doing, you can totally prevent yourself from having a heart attack.

SHAWN STEVENSON: One of my biggest concerns over the years, again, really being acclimated to the research around cholesterol. Again, for years, and looking at this number without context has been the habitual problem. And people coming into my office, you know, I was working as a nutritionist for many years and they're like, you know, I've got this, you know, my cholesterol's high, you know, I'm on the statin, da da da. But I'm just like, there's so much more here to this. There's a picture here.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That your blood work will be telling if you're more educated on the blood work. And unfortunately a lot of physicians are not educated on that connection because you just said that somebody could have a high cholesterol number but not have these plaques showing up to that extreme degree, but their cholesterol could be lower than other people and have higher amounts of plaque. There's other factors involved here.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That can make cholesterol dangerous. Let's talk about that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. Yeah, sure. So the reason people kept plaque is three reasons, and cholesterol is the last reason actually. The first reason is there's some damage to the wall of the artery. Okay? There's called the endothelium, and there's another layer called the glycocalyx. Once this gets damaged. It starts to allow cholesterol into the artery wall. Okay? The reason you can damage the, the blood vessel is by over training high blood pressure. A lot of stress can do it. Metabolic health issues can do it. All of these are damaging to the inside of your blood vessel. So step one is don't damage the inside of your blood vessel, right? Step two then is cholesterol enters the blood vessel, and this causes the plaque that we talk about because once cholesterol enters in there, your body realizes that it's not supposed to be there, and it sets off a cascade with your immune system called inflammation, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: So it's a combination of all of these factors that work together to create the plaque inside the artery wall. And why is plaque bad? Well, because your arteries are tiny. I used to do heart surgery and I used to operate on these arteries and bypass 'em on people. They're tiny. They're like, you have to use a microscope to sew into them, right. So a little bit of cholesterol accumulating in there can block that artery. But what can also happen, and this is why, you know, 50% of all heart attacks are diag, 50% of heart disease is diagnosed as someone's first heart attack, right? And that's because once sometimes when you get cholesterol on the artery wall, you can also get a clot forming in that artery as well. And this kind of plaque is very dangerous plaque.

And typically we've never had any rea any way to see if you have this dangerous plaque or not unless you got an angiogram, which is a very invasive test. So that clearly test again, once again, shows you with even better clarity than an angiogram if you have some of this dangerous plaque as well, which makes it more urgent that you do something about it. Yeah. So, you know, there's lots of reasons why people get plaque. You have to kind of manage all of those reasons, and like I said, just because you have high cholesterol doesn't mean you need to be put on a statin, you know?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Okay. Now all of these factors and being able to deep dive and do more comprehensive tests are now available. So if you're wondering, okay, so my cholesterol, these are my numbers here, but what are the, what is the context they're existing in? Do I have high levels of inflammation that could be interacting here. My metabolic health, do I have abnormal, you know, management of my blood sugar? Yeah. Like how does all this play together? Right. And so our blood work, if we're getting something comprehensive, can really tell us a great story. Yeah. And now we've got this testing that you're talking about with

clearly, clearly that you can actually get a look at what's going on inside and see from that perspective as well.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, exactly. Every single person listening to this podcast, I don't care if you're, you know, maybe less, maybe if you're 21 and over if you're listening to this podcast, should go and get their blood work done, right. And look, we live in 2025. You should be able to ask your doctor for it. If they're not gonna do it for you, either find a new doctor or just go and get it done yourself.

It's not that expensive anymore to do this. Once you understand what your blood biomarkers are telling you, you can avoid heart attacks or any of these diseases, you know. And so I put a guide on my website actually, if you want to have people get a guide to their biomarkers, which ones they should ask for, what is the optimal range and why it's important to get into optimal. And there's only like 15 of them. They're not a lot of 'em. You will dramatically affect the course of your longevity and your health span for sure. And every person should be doing this for themselves.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. Just get a, get a look at what's going on. Instead of just wondering and questioning. And what I use, and I'm just gonna share this with everybody, is a comprehensive panel. It's like over a hundred biomarkers. Yeah. Hormone levels, immune system markers, inflammatory markers, the list goes on and on. Yeah. And obviously the cholesterol panels and the other general stuff, but so much more expansive and it feeds you back also a biological age.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so I got to see, which was pretty cool. I'm eight years younger biologically than I am chronologically, and it's just using the most advanced technology to get this data all put together for you. And that's number one. Number two, also being able to keep an eye on your metabolic health with continuous glucose monitors as well. And so we both love levels for that. And so that's the company that I've been working with when I'm getting my own blood work done. And if you wanna check out levels, go to levels.link/model,

and you can get two months for free when you get their annual membership and they just add it in, they give you a free 20 marker blood test annually. That's amazing. As part of your membership. Amazing. Right? Yeah, and so, but I just did the add-on where I can get the even more expansive. I love it. Blood panel done. So they're really doing some cool stuff. Levels.Link/model.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: You know what I love My Levels app too is you can take a picture of your food and it's pretty accurate about how much protein is in it. Micronutrients, like, it's amazing. And you know, like sometimes you go to a restaurant, like there's no way it's gonna recognize what that is and it does.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's, I mean, but of course, of course with the technology is there to do that stuff.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: So the other thing I tell people is with their biomarkers too, is once you get your blood test done. So I, first of all, like you're, you're super advanced and you have a lot of knowledge. Obviously most people are really just kind of starting on down this path and, but whatever blood markers you get done now you can upload them to chat GPT and it'll kind of tell you what to look at. Now, obviously it's not gonna give you any intervention, so you still want to talk to a doctor before you change anything, or take medications. But I mean, the tools are all out there now for everyone to become the CEO of their own health.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: And so I think it's so important for people to start doing it now 'cause we've outsourced our health to, you know, who we thought was taking care of it for. And this is not a knock to all the primary care doctors out there, right. But primary care doctors are basically, you're outsourcing your entire health to this person that sees you once a year for 30 minutes. Just if that if that. And they're just trying to like, make sure you don't have a disease, you know. And it's so, there's so much more good information in those blood tests than people really realize.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. And also, again, some of these companies providing personalized plans for you based off your unique blood work is very special. This for me is the right use of technology.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: There's, there's a lot going on with technology obviously, and some stuff is, you know, I, I'm conflicted about because I think it's like really dumbing us down. But we can free up some capacity for ourselves to learn, right? When I'm thinking about dumbing ourselves down, I'm thinking about we don't have to remember stuff now, right? Like, remember phone numbers, whatever. What happens to that space in your brain if you're not using it proactively for, you know, memory, right? That part of the brain is just gonna basically, you know, kind of just degrade.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And right now we have the opportunity to proactively utilize technology for our betterment. Right. But we gotta be intentional about it. Yeah. You know? And so we have access. One of those benefits is right now what everybody's doing, who's a part of this conversation.

They're proactively listening and learning to something to empower them, right? And you could use that same time. And, you know, I don't want to throw out any names, but like, you could be up into the, you know, Kanye beef or whatever, you know what I mean?

There's infinite stuff for you to be, you know, concerning your attention with exactly that's here today, gone today or you can study things that are more life affirming and sustainable and you've never, none of us have ever had such close proximity. They get to learn from the person who is the number one longevity doctor?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. And then this is, this is affirmed. This award is given to you by your peers and they get to learn from you. Oh, no. They gotta do is push a button.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's priceless, man.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Priceless.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, it's pretty. I mean, look, we, we live in an incredible age of information, the internet, artificial intelligence podcasts like this, all of this information is all free for people now. Right. And, I think when you, as using biomarkers as an example, right, don't just like get them and then, you know, put them in Chat GPT and, and say, what do I do? Right? Learn what they each mean. Because once you learn what each one of those numbers means, like hemoglobin A one, C-H-S-C-R-P, you start putting this model in your head of where you need to focus your attention. And you kind of gamified for yourself too, right? Like you're like watching your numbers get into the optimal range. And so I think that learning process is so empowering because now you, you actually know how the machine works, right? Your body works and you, and the learning is just so self sustain too, right? You, you just keep wanting to know more.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What do you feel is the most surprising thing for people as far as like something that is impacting their longevity in a negative way that most people have no idea about?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: I would say when you get your blood tests back, there's probably three things I see that people are always surprised about. Number one is their hemoglobin A1C. This is a three month average of their sugar, and most people have this in the range of suboptimal. And what I mean by suboptimal is that you want to optimize your blood test number. 5.2 or below to me is optimal. Most people are much closer to pre-diabetes or in pre-diabetes already, which is 5.7. The second thing is their testosterone level. Both men and women are always surprised and is mind blowing to me how low testosterone levels are in the general population when I see blood tests right now.

And third is their inflammation marker. HSCRP, highly sensitive C-reactive protein. Many people have this way over two or three actually. And so we see a lot of surprises there as well. Optimal for that number is as close to zero as you can get it. And so I think those are my three biggest categories of surprises. And, you know, once you know what those numbers are, you can start making changes or going down a discovery path to see what's causing it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Powerful. Powerful. Yeah. There's a, I mean, to put it bluntly, a epidemic when it comes to testosterone. Epidemic. And of course, you know, we know some of the culprits now is really affirmed in the data, just the environmental input of these kind of estrogenic compounds. Right. Xenoestrogens we're just swimming in this stuff. And also it ties back testosterone is related to your hemoglobin A1C.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? And so what's going on with your blood sugar aromatization can be robbing, even if you're making the testosterone, it can be getting converted into estrogen.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Like, and so all this stuff paints a picture and you could start to find out what, what the issue is. And I love that so much, man. And that, that's one of those things too where mind being mindful of your blood sugar management and seeing that long term, it's kind of like your blood glucose right now is like a snapshot versus something that's

more extended, maybe like a. Like a long term movie. Like how would, what would it be a good analogy for a hemoglobin A1C?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. I mean.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Versus a snapshot.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, exactly. I think, you know, because it's a three month average, um, it's giving you all of those habits added together over time. Right. And so I guess a good analogy would be like, I don't know, watching the entire game versus just one inning. You know what I mean? Like, you really, when you watch just one inning, you, you only see like what those specific players did during that one inning. But when you watch the whole game, you get a really good feeling of the entire team and how it's working together, all of it.

And so, yeah, you want to, but you also wanna look at the snapshots too, right? Because the other important marker is fasting insulin level. So this is the first thing that changes. When you start developing metabolic disease, fasting insulin is the first detection of it. It's not fasting glucose, it's fasting insulin. Hemoglobin A1C changes after things are already broken, actually. So, so hemoglobin A1C is telling you like, things are really not going well for the last three months, like really not going well. And so another marker I talk about a lot is fasting insulin level. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what's so crazy is like we're just now getting that as part of the conversation.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: When this was a part of it all the whole time.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: I know.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The whole time. Yeah.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: And we've been able to check these markers now for decades, but no one talked about 'em, you know?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And, and the average panel wasn't looking at that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, no. And a lot of these, you know, markers, you can't even, if you ask your doctor to say, you know, if you ask your doctor, I want a blood panel done, they wouldn't even check these things. They would check what's called the CBCA complete blood count or, a chemistry profile. Okay. All of that stuff is, if that stuff is in the red range or the bad range, like you have a bad problem already. A lot of people are not checking hemoglobin A1C, HSCRP, you know, all these things are not normally being checked, so you have to ask for them. So on my website, drshah.com/biomarkers, there's a list of all the biomarkers. Just take it to your doctor and say, I want these.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. What a great resource. Now, something that can affect all of these biomarkers that we've talked about that is kind of insidious and even hidden in a way is stress.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, for sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I wanna talk about the connection with stress and our lifespan.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Mm-hmm. Yeah. So for me, stress is really something that we really need to kind of understand. How is your mental stress affecting you physiologically, right? And so the whole concept of de-stressing. I think it's something that we spend way too much attention on because it's hard. We live in a very stressful environment. Obviously we wanna reduce the amount of time that we're exposed to stress. And the one main reason for that is because psychological stress can turn into physiological stress by the secretion of cortisol from your adrenal glands, right? And we know that if you have high levels of cortisol for long periods of time, it can lead to metabolic disease, it can lead to inflammation, all these problems.

So when does psychological stress lead to cortisol release? It's after about 20 to 30 minutes, right? And so if whatever you're doing that's stressful, you're having a stressful conversation, you are, you know, you're on your computer banging away, trying to do something, and you're not in a flow state, in a stressful. If you could just break up that, those periods of time into 30 minute chunks then and take a little break and kind of let your cortisol reset. You can really mitigate the negative physiological consequences of stress. Right. And so what do I do with that one? The hack there is I have a egg timer on my desk and I just put it to 30 minutes and every 30 minutes I get up and I do something different. I'll either, you know, I'll do, I'll do a little walk around the office or I'll do some jumping jacks or I have some weights at my, by my desk and so I'll lift some weights and if you can break up that stress, it'll be extremely helpful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ah, man, I love that. That's, you know, one of the greatest metabolizers of stress are relationships.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Absolutely. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But they can also on the other side, be one of the greatest contributors to our stress.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Absolutely. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so it's not an accident that you proactively engage in healthy relationships. And get people together. And that's one of the experiences that we had recently. There was a time before last that I saw you, we came to hang out at your house and you invited over this amazing group of people.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It was myself, my wife, Dr. Kelly Starret. Juliet Starret. Dr. Casey means was there with, with her husband. And it was also, Rob was there who's big in the, in the health and wellness space. As far as like a background kind of producer guy and also your amazing wife was there. Yeah. And we just had this incredible experience and it was something that was called a Jeffersonian dinner.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Talk about that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, so Thomas Jefferson, you know, he couldn't hear very well out of one ear. So he was kind of deaf in one ear, and his other ear was not that good either. And so when he would have people over, he made sure that only one person talked at a time. And so he would then ask a question and only one person could answer the question at a time. And, then he would. If two people were talking or having a side conversation, he would take his ear and just kind of pull it forward and stop the whole conversation to get it back into one person talking at a time. And it's so powerful when you can do that, right? Because everyone's attention is focused on one person and that person gets to say something deep about what they want to talk about.

Like we ask some questions going around the table like, what are you most excited about coming up in your life? How have you contributed to the conversation on longevity and health? And, you know, people really think about what they want to answer. And so it's not just a random conversation is very thoughtful and everyone puts their attention on one person. I love doing that. I do that on almost every single dinner now.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, it was an incredible experience. Yeah, for sure.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: To say the least. And also the cherry on top was, I had no idea that this was gonna happen. The dessert that was served. Was, you blew me away, man. It was from my cookbook. Yeah. The e Smarter Family Cookbook.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And it just was just like, are you kidding me, man? Yeah. You know? It's so awesome because I didn't know it at first and I took a bite. I was like, this tastes so familiar. You know? And, the presentation, you know, the, the energy, the people as well. Whv. whv was

this something that you chose to do as far as like investing in relationships and getting people together like this?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: It's, it's a rock in my life. I know that I am the happiest and I am the least stressed, and I have the best health. When I'm surrounded by people that are smart, that I really, I have like a genuine love for, you know, like I wanna be around them and I have great conversations that are meaningful and deep, you know. And like to me, like if I go more than a couple weeks without something like that, like I, I, I do get depressed, you know? And so this is, this is how I stay happy and I just stay vibrant in my own mind is having these kind of conversations.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And we, we need each other. Yeah. You know, even the most introverted among us.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We need each other. You know, we evolved. In community, you know? And today we know, and this was just actually published, as of this recording, just very recently looking at one of the biggest contributing agents, one of these, again, seemingly invisible issues to early death. And it was on social, social isolation.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And loneliness. And so this was a data set of over 2 million people. And it was a longitudinal study. So they're tracking them, this might be six months or even up to 25 years. And they found that people who felt lonely, frequently, chronically lonely had a 14% increase in mortality, right? So premature death from all causes, but social isolation was more than twice that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So we're talking about somewhere around 35% increased risk of early death when people are socially isolated. So the distinction is even if you could feel lonely

around other people. But being around other people is still preventative. It's still nourishing. You're still getting these inputs.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And some of these inputs are, again, most of them, they're invisible, right. This change in our chemistry being around each other is something that we can't see exactly, but we feel it. Right. We have an increase in oxytocin. We have a decrease in cortisol. Again, if it's people that you connect with and resonate with, we're also doing microbial data sharing, right. Our, our immune systems get a little light work, a little light little lift up, you know, being around each other. What happens when you're, when you're not around other people, you're not getting these inputs.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: No.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That you vitally need, and this is something for us to be more intentional about.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, absolutely. It's, it's so well said. And I think, you know, if you look at like all the pillars of health, right? Some of them are obvious. Some of them are not so obvious, and you know, this is one of them that's not so obvious is social isolation. And, community is a major pillar of health that it's easy to forget because, you know, there's not hunger telling you that you need to. You when you're hungry, you know you need to eat something, right. When you're tired, you need to sleep, but for this particular one, there's nothing they're telling you like, I need to get out there and like be around other people more. You know, so gotta remember it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're one of, you're one of those people. And generally, you know, we, we all know somebody who's like a great connector of people. You put people together, you don't even know how much I love Kelly Starlett and Juliet, you don't even know. Oh, really? Right. And they, it just so happened we were all invited together.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, on the same date. And like, Juliet is one of those people that checks in on me, like, wow. Just, it'll be like a random Tuesday and she'll be like, Hey Shawn, good morning. Just wanted to say that. I was thinking about you. Send you lots of love. That kind of thing.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: That's awesome.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. And not to mention Casey Means. Like we've, you know, yeah. We're, we're just like tight, you know? Yeah. And so just being able to, to get together this group of people that are so cohesive. And it's just very special man. It's so valuable. And my wife and I were just on a high.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Oh, I love it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Leaving there, you know, like, and it lasts, it kind of like. Stays on you. Yeah. For, you know, days after it does. Yeah. For sure. So, yeah, I'm very grateful for that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: And I didn't even know you guys all knew each other. I was like.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. That's what I'm saying.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: These are all great people. They're really smart. We're all in the health and wellness conversation. Let's get together. You know, and so, and all, everyone kind of recognized everybody for the most part in some way or the other.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It's awesome, man.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: So awesome.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So with that.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Can't wait to do it again.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I know. Like yesterday, we gotta get together. Yes. But you know, with this being said, this is one metabolizer of stress you mentioned, essentially just walking away, breaking up that monotony.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of like being on your screen, working or whatever the case might be because of that buildup of stress, right. So, is there anything else, you said, something along the lines of, you know, not really even believing in this like de-stressing paradigm. Like, can you talk a little bit more about that?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Well, I guess, I guess what I'm trying to say is no one's gonna live a life with no stress. No one's gonna have a day with no stress. There's a scale that you can, you know, go online and take a test. It's called a stress inventory score. There's a lot of like, things that are pretty positive on there too. Like, I'm getting married, I have in, I'm in a new relationship, you know, but these are all still contributors of stress, right? Even though they're positive stress, they, if you, if you don't kind of understand that stress is always gonna be around us all the time, it's hard, it's hard to like, make any progress because you're, you're not focusing on what is the treatment for that.

And the treatment for that is breaking up the stress into smaller chunks, especially if it's work related or conversationally related. The treatment is doing things like what you're talking about being social more often. It's also like taking a vacation. Like, you know, I think it's some, there's a statistic, 70% of Americans don't even take their, all their PTO days. It's crazy to be, you know.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Whoa. Yeah, yeah.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Or like having time for self care. Like you have to intentionally build in. These routines into your life. Otherwise, the consequences will add up into, you know, negative physiological consequences. Not just through cortisol, but also through things like drinking, being sedentary. Stress makes that happen too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. Okay. Got it. Got it. Yeah, we're, we're not gonna find some bubble that we can exist in without stress.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes, exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So it's arming ourselves and understanding the situation we're dealing with and there are simple things that we can do. There's simple things we can do.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Simple things. Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I gotta ask you about this since I have you here. I mentioned microbial file sharing. Earlier and obviously, or maybe not so obvious. And so right now we know that there's a huge connection between gut health. The microbiome and longevity. And again, having you here, I get to hear it from the guy. So what's going on with, with gut health and longevity? Like what is this association and what are some things that we can do to fortify the health of our microbiome so that we can fortify our lifespan?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, great question. Okay, so right now, we're still at the very beginning of our knowledge on this. We know there's a connection between our gut health and, pretty much every other system in our body, whether it be your brain, your heart, obviously, your liver, et cetera. There's definitely a connection there. And by gut health, I mean the status of your microbiome, right? We don't know. Exactly what microbes, other than a few of them that we are focused on really make a big difference. We just know that you need to have diversity and there's certain keystone microbes that you need to have in your gut that will promote health in the long term.

Okay. We also know that our gut microbiome is extremely important for a few other factors. Number one is that it prevents you from becoming metabolically unhealthy. Number two, it acts as an additional barrier to toxins getting into our system. And also number three, there's chemicals and communication molecules being made between our gut and every other system in our body that if you don't have good diversity or just really poor microbial populations, you're, that communication is lost.

GLP one, everyone's talking about these now is one of those communication molecules that our gut actually makes. Okay. So, and without a gut healthy gut microbiome, we don't make a lot of GLP one. That's why there's this obesity crisis, right? So what can you do as a second part of your question? Like, how do we keep our gut microbiome healthy?

It's actually fairly simple. Number one, don't destroy your gut microbiome. Buy ultra processed food pharmaceuticals, like non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or antibiotics. Obviously, if you're really sick, take an antibiotic, but don't take an antibiotic just, just because you know, you're kind of feeling maybe you're sick. And thirdly, alcohol can also be wreak havoc on your gut microbiome if you drink it in excess as well. And other things such as I mentioned ultra processed food already, right? Yeah. So, so those avoid those things. Once you do avoid those things, your gut will naturally become healthier.

Okay? Now, there's a few additional things that you can do to keep your gut microbiome super healthy, and that is fiber intake is extremely important. Collagen intake is also extremely important, and so you need a varied diet, you know, to keep your gut microbiome healthy. There's some probiotics that I think that are useful as well. There's this one called akkermansia, which is a keystone bacteria that helps us make GLP one, that's very helpful. And yeah. I mean, that's kind of a good starting point right there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Awesome. So you mentioned diversity as being one of those hallmarks.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And we see in our modern society that our diversity of microbial species is significantly less.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Than folks who are living more of what we would consider like a kind of more indigenous experience hunter gatherer, you know, adjacent. Yeah. Individuals that are being studied today. they could have four to even 10 times more diversity.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So we have a lot of species of microbes in our culture, in our, in our own bodies that are going extinct. Right. Or they're on the endangered species list. And so getting them back up to par is focusing on increasing diversity. So how do we do that? Is that maybe by increasing the diversity of what we're eating?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, absolutely. This is increasing the diversity of what you're eating. E eating the rainbow. You know, having more fiber in your diet is also extremely important, but that's exactly how you do it. Increasing diversity of what you're eating.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it. Fiber. Fiber and fiber types. Yeah.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: And fiber types. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, okay. So what do we wanna do as far as, is there like maybe something for us to strive for, you know, each week maybe, you know, I don't know, 20 different plant inputs?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. I mean, I think, I think that's, that's a good place to start. I mean, there's, you know, there's some books I write about a hundred different plants per week. I'm like, there's no way I can even find a hundred different plants. They start eating the flowers you have

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Blend the flowers up.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. But I think definitely, you know, um, at least 10 to 20 different plants per week is a good idea as far as diversity goes. But look, the reality is it's, it's hard to kind of do that. Right? So I just think just having the thought in your brain. That every plate of food you eat should have some vegetables in it, you know? Yeah. And maybe definitely like trying to diversify the types of vegetables throughout the week is also a good idea as well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. I just did that yesterday actually. You know, 'cause you, you can get into a rhythm or a rut.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Eating the same things again and again and again.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Right, right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Especially, I think a lot of people do this a lot for breakfast. Like they have the same thing getting this opportunity for some diversity. You know, and so I actually, my wife made the night before some, a recipe from the East Smarter Family Cookbook. Ah, which was the it was the Greek salad bowl.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And this bowl includes. Things like quinoa and arugula and this phenomenal dressing we've been making for, you know, I don't know, maybe 15 years is my favorite dressing. And just all these, even the dressing itself and making the dressing, which is super easy to make yourself has like fresh basil.

Yeah. And all these different spices. And so being able to get this input in cucumber, tomatoes. All these things that you normally wouldn't see in a conventional breakfast. Right. Because I didn't have it the night before because I eaten a little bit earlier. I was, you know, on the run, but I was like, I'm gonna have that tomorrow for breakfast.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I got in this diversity of plants that I normally wouldn't do in that breakfast meal.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. No, that is, that's awesome. Yeah. I think, you know, one way to kind of put the more diversity into your food choices is to buy a good recipe book like yours

you know. And once you start experimenting with different recipes, you're gonna naturally buy something you've never bought before, you know, and, put into your food the next day.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What are you most excited about right now?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: What am I most excited about right now? Well, we're kind of on a rocket ship with Next Health. My clinical practice of, you know, I call it health optimization and longevity medicine. We're opening three locations next month. We're opening probably 30 locations in the next 365 days. And we're gonna be the biggest practice of clinical longevity medicine in the world by, you know, in a year. And I'm super excited about it. And when I say biggest practice, I mean we have four wall clinics that people can go to and use these technologies, meet with a medical practitioner, get their blood tests done, and we put it all together for people under those four pillars.

And so I really feel like we're creating a new system of healthcare. Our previous healthcare system was really just sick care. We want to create a new parallel system that is true healthcare, that keeps you healthy, keeps you vibrant, keeps you functional for as long as possible. And I think that's the definition of longevity. You know that when we, you asked earlier in the podcast, the first thing you asked me, that I really feel like having a place to go where you can experience those four verticals is what we're trying to create.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes. And you're doing it.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: I'm super excited about it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're doing it. It's awesome. It is so awesome and inspiring. Can you let people know where they can find a clinic and also just where they can connect with you and get more information?

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah, so if you go to next-health.com, there's a list of all of our clinics and where we're coming right now, we're LA, we're New York. We are gonna be in Newport Beach, Chicago. We're Nashville as well, Montecito, Santa Barbara area, but we're gonna be everywhere in the next few months.

And so just they can find the clinics on the website. I'm at drshah.com is my website for me personally. And, I also have an Instagram presence, of course, @DarshanShahmd.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And you also have a amazing podcast.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Oh, podcast. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: By the way.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thanks to you, you know, when you interviewed me, you kind of gave me the push to make it happen, and I did.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You did. And you, this is the thing about you and I share this with you. Certain people like yourself, if you give them, you know, this kind of nudge to do this particular thing, you don't just do it, you do it exceedingly well like I'm talking top tier out of the gate. Because of the person that you are, the knowledge that you have, the warmth that you have as well. But also just knowing how to create a system around things. Right. And having good people and just the studio set up and the placement and just like, it was all like, you've been doing this forever, basically, right out of the gate. So it was super fun.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: To even experience this and to see this. And I, my first revelation that, oh, it's out, is actually, I came out of an interview that I was doing in West Hollywood and I see this gigantic billboard for your show. I was like, I know that guy. And I took a picture, I text you. I was like, yo, the show is out. You was like, yeah, man. Yeah, man. So it's just, it's amazing. So people can find your show.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Extend.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Extend.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: The Extend podcast. Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Where they're listening to this podcast.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Yeah. We, what we really try to do is, you know, there's a lot of medical information out there. My whole goal with the podcast is to make it so that people understand it, you know? And it's easy for people to have, take home value, and that's another thing I got from you. Like I always learn something that I'm gonna do after I listen to an episode. And so that's the whole goal. And yeah, Extend is the name of the podcast. We're on episode 65 already, which is amazing. And thank you for coming on the show. It was awesome. Yeah. Every year we gotta do this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes, for sure, for sure. Well, this has just been a joy. I love talking with you. It's always inspiring, always get new insights, and I just appreciate you so much.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: I appreciate you so much, man. Thank you for being a great friend.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Yes, my guy, one and only Dr. Darshan Shah.

DR. DARSHAN SHAH: Thanks.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. Again, we get to learn from the very best people in the world in their respective fields, and Darshan is really leading the charge in longevity medicine, as he mentioned, the importance of getting a blood panel done. We don't have to solely rely on guesswork anymore. And also the technology, the innovations, and understanding our blood work and the story. The important messages that our body's providing us at all time. It's never been more accurate and easier for us to get this information. This is something that you no longer need permission to do, to have someone gate keep and keep it from you.

You can access this information wherever you are right now. There are clinics all over the country that can collect your blood work and then you can utilize the phenomenal. Levels app and this amazing team to actually read this blood work and to give you valuable information. I recently did this and I was able to get all of my hormones analyzed.

My immune system markers, metabolic health markers, nutrient levels in my body, everything that I could even think of and more. And also to be able to put it all together in easy to read and to understand readouts of all these data points and to see the ranges that my body is in all these various aspects. And I was really surprised there was one nutrient that my body was lacking, was in the lower end on, and something that impacts so many other factors.

And of course, getting this biological age back is really awesome. But I could be even younger already, younger biologically than chronologically, but I could be potentially even younger by addressing that one key nutrient. And so invaluable information, sometimes our body's already telling us things and we just need to get it affirmed, like what is going on, what is going wrong? And sometimes it's just there might be something going on that's leading to a problem in the future that we can circumvent and avoid by getting this information. So again, head over to [Levels.link/model](https://levels.link/model). That's L-E-V-E-L dot L-I-N-K slash M-O-D-E-L to take advantage of the Levels membership. If you get the annual membership, you're gonna get two additional months for free.

And as Darshan shared, the Levels app is amazing. It is absolutely. Amazing all the value that you get through levels. And you also get access to CGMs continuous glucose monitors. And they're also now providing you with, as part of your levels membership and annual biometrics test for 20 of the most important ERs. But you can also get an upgrade. You can invest in an upgrade to get that comprehensive test like I did to get over a hundred of your biomarkers. Checked off and studied, and the data is delivered right to your device, your computer, your phone in a way that you can understand what your blood work is actually telling you. So incredibly valuable, and again, make sure to check out Dr. Darshan Shah's podcast Extend as well, where you're listening to podcasts. He has some phenomenal guests. I was over at his studio recently and got the experience and to see what he created, and it's just really amazing. He's such a big heart and just an amazing person, and I'm grateful to be able to share this conversation with you today.

Listen, we got some amazing, I'm talking about amazing guests coming up here very soon, and also some powerful, powerful masterclasses. 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](http://modelhealthshow.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 empowering great content to help you transform tuning in.