



Solving the Mysteries of the Immune System | Dr. Heather Moday

[00:00:00] Guest Intro - Dr. Heather Moday

Darin: Hey, everybody, welcome to the show. This is Darin Olien. This is The Darin Olien Show. I'm stoked you're here. Do you know why? Because we are going to dive into the mystery of the immune system with my amazing new guest, Dr. Heather Moday. You can find her on Twitter and Instagram and everything called the Immunity MD. That's right, she's an immunologist, certified allergist, integrative and functional medicine physician. You may have heard those terms. If your regular doctors do not have functional medicine training, they don't know how to balance and have your body thrive, they're just reacting. So we all know that at this point. You guys are intelligent. I don't need to tell you that. That's why it's great to have doctors who are "traditionally trained" and then went off and said, hey, you know what, this isn't everything. This isn't helping my patients do well. So, Dr. Heather Moday, after years of working as an allergist and immunologist in private practice, she went on to complete her fellowship in integrative medicine at the Arizona Center of integrative medicine in Tucson, and became certified by the Institute of Functional Medicine. She now is also a part of The Mindbodygreen Collective, a bunch of wellness advocates and websites to help curate the wellness space a little better. She founded the Moday Center. She works to empower people to reclaim their health with comprehensive lifestyle programs, and we dug into this. Her book is amazing because again, there's no one place you can put your finger on the immune system, it's kind of everywhere. It's an invisible, complex network of cells and receptors and messengers because it's navigating your body to see if there's threats to do its job. So, it's sending out the signals and messages and receptors and it's reacting to all those things, creating T cells and through the lymphatic system and everything else. In spite of all that, we need to help understand our own health and what's influencing it. With her amazing book, *The Immunotype Breakthrough*, which we again unpacked a bit, you start to understand what is influencing the immune system, behaviors, diets, habits, the environment. Yes, all of that stuff and more, your mental focus on your body, your emotions, your positive mental outlooks or your negative mental outlooks. All of these things can absolutely react, misguide and under perform your immune system. Also when the immune system is off, guess what, the underlying issues of disease and chronic inflammation and allergies, autoimmunity, all of these things then fester and are created. In this book, it's accessible science, practical, customizable takeaways, that you will better understand your own immunotype. Once you understand that, you can modify and upgrade and uplevel and update your own lifestyle and what you're eating, what you're not doing to increase your vitality, your resilience, your longevity. Guess what, we need that. We need our resilience. We need our bodies to be strong so that any bacteria, virus, any issue comes a long way and we let our body do its thing because it's been here. It knows what to do. This God-given nature thriving body knows what to do. But if we're toxified we're not taking care of ourselves, we don't understand what to do, then we get compromised. So, we're gonna unpack that today. Sit back, relax and enjoy this amazing conversation with Dr. Heather Moday.

[00:04:16] Podcast Intro



Darin: You are listening to The Darin Olien Show. I am Darin, and it is my life's mission to find and share healthy and sustainable ways of living. In this podcast, I talk to inspiring people and professionals from around the world to uncover ways that we as humans can improve our lifestyles, strengthen our mindsets, and take better care of this beautiful planet we call home. If you're looking for motivation to take the next steps towards a happier, healthier life, then you're in the right place, and I'm stoked that you're here. So let's do this. This is my show, The Darin Olien Show.

[00:05:00] First Part of the Interview

Darin: Thank you for jumping on. Super stoked to talk with you. You have such a great background, and it's just wonderful to see the traditional medical doctor training with the functional medicine doctor training. Then obviously, in this day and age, the immunology training that you have, it couldn't be more perfect at this time. Thanks for jumping on here.

Dr. Heather: Thank you. Excited to talk to you as well.

Darin: You have this great book and the book's title, just so everyone knows, is Immunotype Breakthrough, and we'll put all that in the show notes for everyone, so don't feel like anyone's driving that they need to take that down and get in the car wreck. We don't need any of that. I want to dive into what immunotype is, of course, because everyone's like, wait a minute, there's a type and there are categories. Over the years, you hear from traditional Chinese medicine, you hear from the types of Doshas in ancient Ayurveda. So this is an interesting topic because the immune system is a little amorphous. It's a little like, how do you put your finger on it. It's not so mechanical, in the sense that sometimes you can say we blow our knee out, and you just have to replace that ligament, and you're fine. The immune system is this network.

Dr. Heather: It's like a moving target, I say the only system in our body that's nowhere and everywhere. It's sort of like far reaching, goes into every part of the body. You could point at your heart, point at your brain and of course, in fact, the rest of the body as well but most people know where it is. Whereas nobody can point to their immune system because like you said, it's like a network. It's a network of cells and chemicals and chemical messengers. It's pretty amazing.

Darin: I want to pick apart all these things because you hear all of these things like, boost your immune system and what kind of compounds to take. Of course, everyone knows the vitamin C and vitamin D now, and, of course, there's a tons of evidence to support that but also, there are all these other things, which is why I love the career that you've chosen and that is this lifestyle pleomorphic look at this stuff that obviously affects us and our environment. The immune system is this incredible listener and reactor to all of that. So maybe just as a way to start, what is your best definition of the immune system?

[00:07:38] What is the immune system, exactly?

Dr. Heather: It is really a network. I guess I can use the idea of an army, which a lot of scientists use when they talk about the immune system, that there's different cells, which are of course, like your generals and your soldiers and your whatever. They have barracks, so



they've got lymph nodes that they go to. We have certain organs in the body that are very immune important, like our spleen, our kidneys, things like that. Then we have this huge sort of like the central station of our immune system is the gall to which is the gut-associated lymphoid tissues, so that's what gall stands for. If you think about it, just this massive amount of really lymph tissue, almost like lymph nodes that sit one cell layer between our bloodstream and the inside of our gut is this massive amount of intelligence, so basically, all these immune cells. That's where a lot of the work is done. We always have some immune cells that are trolling through, and there are certain immune cells and that's one of their jobs is their garbage collectors. They sort of cruise through, they make repairs, they sort of take pieces of things so they can take it back and say, is this something we need to attack, do we need to create specialized antibodies, or do we need certain kinds of T cells? So they're constant, it's everywhere. It's this all-knowing system in our body that might exist in large numbers in certain places but really, it can go anywhere.

Darin: It's daunting to think about. It has to delineate between healthy cells, not healthy cells, viruses, bacteria, or pathogen, and it's this constant circulating monitoring system. As we dive into that, what pops in my head is what got you so curious about the immune system and what paved your way for that?

Dr. Heather: I write this in one of the chapters. There's a whole chapter on stress, which is one of my big favorite things to talk about. Before I even went to medical school, I graduated with a biology degree and I wasn't really sure what to do and I didn't have a job and I needed money. So, I went and I worked in a lab, which is what a lot of pre med students do. But I ended up in this lab, this very famous, well-known scientist, whose name was Bruce McEwen. He died a few years ago. Bruce McEwen for people who are interested in stress and cortisol was one of the grandfathers, the giants in research looking at how cortisol and how stress in general affects our immune system. I was in this guy's lab not knowing anything, running assays, and things. For example, he termed the term allostatic load. So, allostatic load is basically the level of wear and tear on your body. The projects I was involved in were looking at how certain stressors, these were in animal models, which I don't like to do, but this is what I did when I was 21, looking at models of chronic stress, and how it changed their immune cells. It was really very early in this whole field of what's called psychoneuroimmunology. Basically, how stress psychology, emotional stress, physical stress, how that literally changes the release of hormones, specifically cortisol, and then how that affects our immune system. That was back, not to date myself, but this was back like in the early '90s. I was there for three years and then I went to medical school, and I sort of forgot about it, quite honestly. It really wasn't until I was probably a resident training post medical school in medicine and got interested again in the mysteries of the immune system. Then, of course, when I discovered functional medicine, it was like, whoa, because in functional medicine, it's all we talk about is the immune system and how it affects the body and inflammation. I realized just how important it was in terms of development of disease. Really, you can look at almost any disease process and at the crux of that is the immune system gone awry in some way.

Darin: Man, nothing throws a monkey wrench in the works than stress and this chronic kind of getting hit with all this stuff. I don't know a person on the planet at this point that's not getting hit with some sort of chronic stress that, from an adaptation standpoint, we're so



behind in the way that we've created our modern-day kind of-- What are your thoughts on that?

[00:12:20] The impact of stress on the immune system

Dr. Heather: It's a problem. I think also, the message I try to get across is, you really need to address it because it is sort of silent. People feel the effects of stress, sort of silent in the way, and a lot of people don't take it seriously. They're like, whatever, I should meditate, or I should do this, or I should do that. They think of it as that's at the end of the list after exercise and sleep and whatever which are also super important. But just the connections between chronic, I'm going to say unmanaged stress because we all have stress, but our inability or resistance in changing how our body responds to stress. Unfortunately, when we do that for our whole lives, the outcomes aren't great. We know that it's associated with everything from heart disease, heart attacks, obesity, depression, anxiety, Alzheimer's, the list goes on and on and on. My message is we really need to take this seriously, you really need to. It's true, I mean, yes, we can take some stressors out of our life. There's a lot of things that we even just keeping up with the Joneses and having too much stuff or being around toxic friends and toxic relationships, staying at a job that you hate. All of these things we have control over. Sometimes we think we don't, but we do. But then there are those that we can't control like the death of a friend or a family member, a financial problem. But the thing is, is that you can't take away all the stress in the world. That wouldn't be good either because evolutionarily, it's there for a reason. But what we can do is we can buffer our physical response to the thoughts, the actions, the things that are happening to us. Half the time we're imagining anyway, we're just thinking all this stuff up. We're future catastrophizing about something hasn't happened yet, but that's real because the body perceives it as a real true threat. So that's where we have to intervene and whether that's through cognitive behavioral therapy, whether that's through journaling, tapping, meditation, whatever it is. Whatever works for you, you can make your own cocktail of stress management interventions, and it's about being consistent with them.

Darin: You brought up so much great stuff there because it's like hooked on this word of an avatar. Like I'm Darin, that's my avatar, I'm choosing to kind of have this human experience. Whatever I get hooked on in terms of my stressors, or my happiness, whatever, it's very addictive. Certainly now it's justified in this world. We can easily go, well, this happens so therefore this is going to happen. Like you said, those patterns of catastrophizing, it feels like it's not in control. It feels like we don't have control of it because so much of it we're so used to it, we're addicted to it, we just do it all the time and this is "who I am." That's so challenging, but at the same time, it absolutely is something that we can change. Just on that part alone, what do you find maybe for yourself personally or clinically? Obviously, meditations and stuff, but what's some quick things that people can do? I think of just like taking breaths before a meal, just intermediate breakups of the automation patterns. What do you think?

Dr. Heather: A lot of people when I'm talking to them, they'll say, I meditate, but it doesn't make any difference. It's because anybody could go sit in the corner of a room and meditate for 10 minutes with incense and candles and feel really good for those 10 minutes. But if they don't take those lessons and then apply them when they're in traffic or in line at the grocery store or whatever, having an argument with someone, then it's not going to help. So



the more appropriate way to say it is more being present and mindful. Then also trying to interrupt those thoughts that come in to what you were talking about when you just get these automatic thoughts. It's true, sometimes we just go with them, but you can stop it and say, is that thought real? Is that a real thought? Is that the truth what I'm hearing in my brain. It's something you have to practice over and over. It's almost like, when you start to feel whatever emotion you feel, they call this the think-feel-act cycle. You might have a thought, it may be sort of subconscious, or someone says something, or looks at you in the funny way, and it creates a physical emotion, anger, jealousy, whatever. Some people just go with it. Then their next action is triggered from that instead of being like, wait a minute, is that thought true? Why am I having this thought? Do I need to listen to this? Just because it's a thought in my brain, it doesn't mean it's true. If you can just be mindful and present and say, that's actually not true, or that person that looked at me, they just might be having a bad day, it's not about me. Then all of a sudden, it's like the emotion sort of goes away. Then you don't feel like you're gonna have to do whatever that next action was going to be, whether that action was you punching the wall or picking up a drink or whatever it is, something that would have relieved your stress. I think that's more of it. It's that daily intervention of what is thought is being provoked, what's that feeling, where's it coming from, really sort of digging and dissecting it.

Darin: Well, it's that self-reflection side of things that it's so beneficial. I mean, as I continue to cruise in this life, the more reflective and nature I get, the more powerful that is to not repeat patterns, and also change those patterns into something that's deemed a lesson I learned and then apply it in a better way, and those things are so important to do. If we understand that chronic levels of stress, what are the things that they're actually doing to our joystick of our hormonal system as it relates to our immune system? Pick that apart a little bit because people need to understand that those little things added up over time are creating some big things because we have so much of it, so much of the little stressors that are creating problems.

[00:18:30] Breaking down the changes stress makes to your immunity

Dr. Heather: There are two types of stress. There's physical stress, and there's more, I would say, mental emotional stress. I would say those would cause more of an oxidative stress, more damaging of ourselves, damaging of our DNA, forcing an increased need for repair and an increased need for decreased inflammation. So there's that, but then when we are dealing with just day-to-day stressors, we actually react differently to acute stress versus chronic stress. This is a little tricky, gotta think about it. So, cortisol, which is our main stress hormone, after we get the big adrenaline surge and we get that fight or flight, we then about 10 minutes later, that's when the cortisol starts to go up. Cortisol is actually anti-inflammatory. They can sort of think about that, like, when you hurt yourself, you get poison ivy, you're gonna put cortisone cream right or you're gonna get an injection in your knee with cortisone. It's extremely anti-inflammatory when it's acute. What happens is over time, people would say why would you need an anti-inflammatory response when you're under stress? Because say you go and you're gonna go run a race, something like that. If you think about it, evolutionary times, you're gonna go hunt, and you might get injured, you might get hurt. So you need that cortisol to be there to do repair. It does some other great things too like it gives you blood sugar surges so that you have energy. Great when you're running a race, not great when you're paying your bills. What happens is over time, if we



have chronic stressors, you're not just getting that big surge of cortisol, and then it's resolving and you're walking away and everything's fine. You're having this little bit of stressor all the time. Your cortisol is constantly being provoked, provoked, provoked, a couple of things happen. Our receptors for cortisol, because there's so much, start to get downgraded, we have less of them available. We have less of that anti inflammatory response. Then cortisol can cause problems over time chronically, such as lowering production of immune cells, white blood cells, neutrophils. It can lower the production of antibodies, and it can also damage the lining of our guts. It can actually cause intestinal permeability, leaky gut, which is the gateway to show many problems because then it just allows things to provoke the rest of our immune cells and they're like, what's going on. So, acute stress can be very good, it can cause what's called hormesis, makes us a little stronger. Think about getting into like a cold plunge pool. Exercise is a great acute hit workouts, weightlifting, all that kind of stuff, great. When things are going on for long periods of time, it's like a U-shaped curve, it actually acts really, really differently when it's chronic.

Darin: Again, it's like the body is so brilliant, it doesn't do anything wrong that all these mechanisms that are there to protect us and actually help us thrive but we keep doing these repeated patterns, they're either going to be undermining our health or supporting it. That's where we kind of have to step back in and change some of these behaviors, like you layout behaviors and diet and habits and environment. All these things are around us all the time. I'm totally fascinated with this immunotypes. You've got smoldering, weak, hyperactive, and misguided. I'm so fascinated by those terms. What are the definitions of those?

[00:22:11] Different Immunotypes and what they mean

Dr. Heather: This really came out of this idea of being in the field that I'm in. We talk a lot about inflammation, and we also talk a lot about boosting immunity. But what came to me was sometimes some of the diseases we're dealing with, we don't really need to boost anything, we might need to calm it down. We want to like redirect or quiet down, soothe. There's actually underlying sort of biochemical immunologic changes that occur when we obviously are inflamed, or when we have autoimmune disease or allergies. There are different cells that are more predominant. A lot of that has to do with what are called our T cells. T cells made a big portion of our white blood cells or lymphocytes. Then also all of these cells release cytokines. Cytokines are basically chemical messengers, and there's over a couple of hundreds of them, but they direct basically what cells do. They're sort of the communication system. We can get sort of stuck in let's say, for example, let's talking about the misguided immunotype, which are people who have generally autoimmune disease. Underlying autoimmune disease is almost always some sort of inflammation. It starts out with a chronic infection. Recently, we've been talking a lot about Epstein Barr Virus has been in the news. We've known for a long time as functional medicine doctors, but they're finally saying, yeah, it's true that Epstein Barr Virus can be associated with the development of autoimmune disease. Lyme disease, things like that are chronic stress. What happens is the body makes a normal response, your T cells are going to make a normal response to kill the bacteria, kill the virus, whatever. What happens is we start attacking or own tissues because the body gets confused or misguided. So that is the immunotype associated with autoimmune disease. With the smoldering, these are people that are like they may not have developed an autoimmune disease yet. They may not have other issues related to getting sick, but they have chronically inflamed arteries, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes,



these are people who are just chronically inflamed. They're over repairing their bodies, and because of that, they develop plaques in their arteries. They develop more Alzheimer's disease, arthritis. These are sort of hot smoldering people. They may not have a lot of antioxidants, they can't put out the fire because they're living a life, a lot of their behaviors are sort of driving them in this smoldering direction. Then people who have the hyperactive, these are people who it might have started out that they were fighting a parasite or some sort of bacteria. What happens is they make more of a specific kind of T cell called a T helper cell 2, so they call them TH2 cells. TH2 cells, they create or they encourage the production of antibodies related to allergies. So, things that are called IGE antibodies, and those are the ones that creates histamine. So people with allergies in this hyperactive immunotype tend to have asthma and eczema because they're stuck in this sort of polarization. Then lastly, weak is a little bit different. These are the ones who really, truly need boosting. So they may have trouble clearing infections, getting rid of viruses, gets sick a lot. They might be more likely to develop cancer because maybe their natural killer cells aren't as good at trolling and getting rid of cancer cells. The weak immunotype is that person. But what's interesting is all the things we do, how we sleep, how we eat, how we exercise, they affect all of these immunotypes.

Darin: It goes back to that holism approach, rather than this weird ass reductionism that we've gotten. So it's kind of addicted to as a society. It's astonishing to me that really, in this day and age, we're still so hyper focused on this reducing things down to auto mechanics, and just like, that's broke, let's take this out, let's burn that, let's radiate that. There's still a huge amount of people that don't fully exercise that. I just had a great interview with this traditional healer out of New Mexico. She just caught this word "ology" around. She learned from generations from her grandparents on both paternal and maternal and had all this medicinal, herbal curandero knowledge. It's funny, people looked at her and said, you're non traditionally trained.

Dr. Heather: She's like, no, I'm really traditionally trained.

Darin: You know how weird that sounds when you really think about it. It's wacky. It's like traditional in the lexicon, we somehow flipped this whole thing and then we lead with the American Medical Association as the answers and it's insane.

Dr. Heather: My interpretation of, I mean, I like to call it conventional medicine is let's just wait and see what happens. We'll wait till you get sick, and then we'll try and fix it. I see it all the time. It's this complete fear of actually doing harmless interventions that actually might prevent a disease or reverse a disease. It's like they're fearful of it, like it's going to somehow take away their livelihood if you talk to someone about how they eat or sleep. Believe me, you're still gonna have plenty of patients. There's plenty of people that are still not going to follow your lead because we're human.

[00:27:42] Beekeeper's Naturals Ad

Darin: Bees harness some incredible benefits to the environment and to our health. Bees are truly a fascinating and incredible little insects. Beekeeper's Naturals are a proud advocate for these bees in so many ways, and their sustainable source products offer real safe health solutions derived straight from the hive. Through the power of natural ingredients like bee



propolis extract, royal jelly, raw bee pollen, Beekeeper's products provide similar results to what you'd find in your local pharmacy, that's right, but don't force you to compromise your values. Their products undergo third-party testing to make sure that they're free of these modern day additives, artificial colors preservatives, fillers, gluten, GMOs, and the dangerous pesticides that are everywhere as well as refined sugars. I use their bee propolis throat spray every morning to set me up throughout my day. I love it because it supports my overall health as well as soothing my throat because I am definitely talking a lot when I'm recording podcasts like this. I am completely plant-based and I support insects and animals and everything else, and so I really spent time understanding their harvest methods and how they're actually allowing the bees to thrive better as a result of their caretaking. Beekeeper's main mission is to save the bees. They even donate 10% of their profits to honey bee research, and that is awesome. To improve your health today, Beekeeper's Naturals is offering my listeners 25% off by going to beekeepersnaturals.com/darin or enter code, D-A-R-I-N at the checkout.

[00:29:57] Second Part of the Interview

Darin: If you were given the wand of like, I mean, I don't even want to call it Surgeon General because it's a fish within the fishbowl still, but let's just kind of say, if you could change the way our healthcare system is set up, what are some of the things that you would go about doing maybe educating or setting out to do?

[00:30:20] How to change our medical system

Dr. Heather: There are a couple of things. It's so hard to unpack, but you can start with education. I write in the book and this is true is that the people that we put the responsibility of our health on to have no education in nutrition. At the level of the medical school level and residencies, we need to be learning more integrative medicine. You need to be learning this stuff. I think, really, they should change that completely. The other problem is that so many of the things that would save people's lives and prevent things aren't covered by insurance. For perfect example of vitamin D testing. Vitamin D is super amazing, it's really a hormone, but it's something that many of us don't produce enough of. We know that it's totally linked to autoimmune disease, we know that people have more infections. There are studies showing people died of COVID more readily or put on a ventilator because they didn't have adequate vitamin D levels. We know this. This is something that is so dirt cheap to test for, I think it costs like \$7. Our Medicare does not cover it. It's completely insane. Hearing aids, we know that you have increased dementia when you lose your hearing, and so at the time that we're at our most vulnerable and we're starting to have increase of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, people can't afford hearing aids because they cost \$1,000 or more. We know that you need that auditory input in order to keep certain parts of your brain awake. There are studies showing this. You can accelerate dementia by having hearing loss. Just crazy stuff like that. One of our biggest issues is Alzheimer's disease, but no, we're looking for billion-dollar drugs that none of them work anyway instead of covering hearing aids for people or covering vitamin D levels for people. It's so insane.

Darin: Yes, or eating more plants and lowering fast food and all this stuff. Neurologist, Dr. Sherzai, do tons of work on just like the evidence is just mounting about all the ways that you can lower that inflammatory response.



Dr. Heather: Let's feed your brain with healthy fats and antioxidants. They just go, well, there's nothing we can do. I usually tell people that is really sad, too. They could just say I don't know, that would be more helpful.

Darin: Well, they would have to set their ego aside in order for them to say, they probably don't like the three words because they've spent all this time and money into that resource. There's so much power in the compounds and the plants that are sitting there right there. You're talking about vitamin D, you're talking about things like turmeric, and curcumin. These things are just dirt cheap and so protective. You talk about neurologically protective. I think every week, curcumin has another study that comes out.

Dr. Heather: I think there are over 120 human studies, which is amazing because there's not a lot of money put into testing food compounds, especially in the United States because it's all pharmaceutically driven. But there are actually a lot of studies looking at curcumin because it hits so many levels at so many different cellular levels, in terms of shutting down inflammation. It doesn't just have one way of doing it, it intervenes so many different places. It's like the superstar, it really is.

Darin: That's the beautiful thing about this incredible interaction between the plant world and the human world and that there's not this line, and this line that is created and some of the drugs and the shots and things like that where they just have this linear approach. So, you have some great quizzes and stuff in the book where people can start exercising their understanding of maybe where their immunotypes are sitting. People can check that book out from there and then--

Dr. Heather: The quizzes are in the book. It should be up on my website in a couple of days because we just revamped the website. So it's launching next week, but the quiz should be I think on the front page, so they can take that for free. It really just gives you a sense of where you are out of balance because we're all sort of slightly out of balance. There are some things that are pretty much good for everyone, but for specific sort of immunotypes, there are maybe things that might even be more beneficial to sort of hone in on. Then also people have their specific issues. I have people come in and say, I've got my nutrition dialed in, it's awesome. I work out every day, but my sleep is a wreck. I get five hours of sleep, and I travel, and I have insomnia, and all this kind of stuff. So, that's their thing, that's their thing that they have to work on because it's really about just trying to shore up as much as you can. You want to fill every hole or as many holes as you can. You may not be able to do all of it but as much as you can you want to really improve your life as much as you're able.

Darin: That's a great analogy, too, because sometimes we don't realize where there's a leak and where there's kind of that susceptibility. I termed this thing called fatal conveniences where we think we're doing something good, but in reality, it's kind of leading us towards a place that we don't want to go. Those kinds of patterns are important for us to go, wait a minute, I need to plug this hole or I need to do something different. From a general perspective, what do you think are some of the biggest plugging of holes that people should absolutely be doing right now to fortify, improve their general immune well-being? Obviously, the easy ones that you've mentioned are the sleep and exercise and things like that. How about diet and more of the compounds or whatever.



[00:36:03] Diet and immune health

Dr. Heather: People need to take a very honest look at their diet. Our memories aren't so bad. I mean, it's so great because people will come in to see me and I have a nutritionist who works with me and they'll say, my dad's really pretty good. Then she has them use a food diary, but you can use other apps, that's what we use. We have them do a five-day food diary. We're like, don't try to make it look good, just be completely honest. We don't care. We're starting from scratch, just put out whatever. It is amazing what people think is healthy or good for them. And we start looking at the amount of they're eating, what they're eating, and the sugar that they're taking in and fake food and it's just hilarious. We're like, this is totally not optimized. I always recommend that people do that for themselves, really be honest. Then you can look and see how much fiber you're getting, how much protein, all the macronutrients, and you can see all the micronutrients too. Start there and go, I have not had vitamin C in three days, maybe I should eat more citrus fruits and red peppers and strawberries and Kiwis or whatever. You can really sort of hone in on that fiber. People talk about it's been really big in the news lately, in the health news, is that we're a fiber deficient nation. We focus way too much on making sure we get enough protein. Some people don't get enough protein but most people get adequate protein, but they do not get adequate fiber. Who counts their fiber? Nobody's counting the fiber. They're counting their carbs. That's a big deal because we need it for detoxification, we need it for bowel health, we need to feed our microbiome. If you eat a lot of plants, yes, it's great. You're way ahead of the game. You can also just focus on plant foods as much as possible. If they're not vegan or vegetarian, have at least one day a week that you're vegan and just really ramp, really try to be super competitive about your fiber intake, like, I'm going to hit 25 grams today. That's a good place to start. That's the minimum requirement for women. Men, for whatever reason, I actually don't know the science behind this but it's closer to 35. But people don't understand the concept of that because they're like, what does fiber do for you?

Darin: Well, maybe men are just full of shit, so they need to scrub a little more.

Dr. Heather: They understand it when they go to the bathroom and they're like, I'll just take some Metamucil, and that's the way that we live our modern world, and people are like, I'm not giving that up. Well, you don't want to give up everything, but let's just sort of look and see what are the things that you use every single day, what do you brush your teeth with, what do you put underneath your arms, do you use deodorant, what do you shower with, what are the things that contact your skin that you breathe in or that you eat, whatever, every single day because that's the thing that's probably impacting you the most, and then just make changes around those. You can start with three things. We know that over time that builds up, so if you can just make those small changes, and that's not something that has to be expensive. It's not something that like you have to give up every convenience. But that's really important because toxins act like distractors. They're the major distractors of our immune system. They're behind allergies, for sure, absolutely. They're behind inflammation, for sure. Then they're behind autoimmune disease, for sure. So they can impact all of those issues.

Darin: It's crazy in terms of that when you literally start to understand what endocrine disruptors are doing. It's astonishing and then yet the thing that scares me a lot, Dr. Heather, is that you can even see FDA, EPA, FCC, USDA, you could see that they write articles about



this stuff. Yet, they're doing very little to actually regulate it and even calling it out. We have to know what is truly going on and take this realistic approach. Like you said, what was it, the chronometer? So you can plug in your food, put in the serving size, what you ate, and it will spit out your nutrients, perceived nutrients based on I think it's the USDA is kind of ongoing, updated research data bank based on what an avocado is giving you. Then it spits out like what your fiber is, what your vitamin A is, what's your protein is. Like you said, I haven't met a person that said, I'm eating just fine, and then when you really look at it, they're not.

Dr. Heather: It takes practice and a lot of times, but I think it's that acknowledgment and that discovery that is what gets you to wake up. Because if you don't look it's sort of not opening your bills, you're not going to know what you owe, and you just ignore them. As human beings, we move away from pain and discomfort and towards things that make us feel better, at least in the moment. Sometimes it's hard to be honest with yourself and say, you know what, wow, I really have a hand in how I feel, in my illness or my health. But once you start, you sort of rip off the band-aid and you're like, this is reality, this is where I am right now, so then what can I do. I think that really starts to empower you. Then you're like, I'm so excited, I ate more fiber today, or I got rid of my scented laundry detergent, or I stopped drinking diet coke or got rid of my plastic Tupperware. These are things that you'd be like, I'm sort of proud of myself now because I know that down the line, this is going to be really beneficial. People always think it's going to be painful, it's always gonna be like, this is gonna be so hard but actually, it's really not and you get a lot of pride from making these health improvements. Then all of a sudden, you're like, I actually sort of feel better.

Darin: This is where the self-confidence really starts to build. This is self. This is like the things that you can do to nurture yourself on the deepest level. These are little prayers that we could do all the time in like getting more hydrated and just moving the body. It's a beautiful thing, but this is at the corner of it all, I think because like you said, the biggest thing is I'm so overwhelmed with changing that just the act of thinking of changing, I'm stressed out.

Dr. Heather: I think also people have a state. Change can be uncomfortable because sometimes you do have to get rid of things that you think are your crutches, but they're really not. I was reading an article the other day about comfort food. They did these studies where they had people watch this sort of depressing, disturbing movie. They interviewed them before and they said, what's your comfort food, what makes you feel better. Some people say ice cream, some people mac, and cheese, whatever it is. They took these people, they had them all watch this really horrible, disturbing film and they had to sort of write down how they felt. Then some were given a comfort food of their choice, some were given nothing, and some were given like a neutral food, like some other food. The only variable that actually improved these people's moods after this was time. Basically, the people who ate the comfort food, felt no better. It didn't make their mood better. It didn't accelerate how they felt. They all just felt just as horrible until things just sort of passed. We have this misconception too. We get caught up in these stories that we tell ourselves like I'm fat, I'm always going to be fat, my mom was fat. We sort of hold on to these things that keep us trapped, we own our diseases. It's almost like we can't see beyond what is here right now. We can't see the possibility because it feels too hard or too uncomfortable. That's why I'm really big about like those small wins because you start to trust yourself, and you start to believe in yourself, and you start to see changes and you're like, wow, I did that, that was me.



Darin: It's so necessary. It's so powerful because also we take that power back that we so easily give away. We go back to like the full circle talking about the non traditional doctors that don't know anything about vitamin D or vitamin C, or they're not even looking into it, or they're not even recommending it. You take that power back and say, you know what, I can do what I know is right for me because I got my test done for \$7. I know that I need to improve. That is such an important aspect. We all need to take personal responsibility for ourselves and find doctors like yourself that have this broad view, and also view people as their individuals, their individual biochemistry, they're getting hit with a million billion quadrillion different directions, how the hell can we have a uniform anything? This type of thing, I think is I vote for you, so if you get to be at the forefront of changing the way we're looking at it, I say let's do it.

Dr. Heather: People are slowly but surely really just getting set up and taking situations in their own hands or finding people to work with. They're making changes on their own, and there's always going to be outliers, but I think a lot of people are starting to realize like, the world's really been pulled over my eyes for a very, very long time and I trusted in this institution, I trusted in my doctor, and I feel like I've been led down the wrong path. One of the worst things that happened to medicine was all the power was taken away from doctors, and then all the litigation. I mean, doctors used to be able to think outside the box and come up with theories and ideas. I don't mean like experimental people, but sort of really think outside the box, but now people who think outside the box are called quacks. It doesn't mean that we should be doing things that would be potentially harmful or giving people lies and telling people that they have cures because there are those people out there or some people who have absolutely no background and have no business telling people what to be doing with their bodies but at the same time, doctors are so cautious now. They just sit and wait because they don't want to try anything. They don't want to do anything. They don't want to do anything that might be slightly off what would be the recommended thing to do. Not only is it uninspiring and not creative, it's boring, and it's really not helpful.

Darin: We've got to get back to healthy conversation, dialogue. Like you said, I think the innocence and the creativity using knowledge and questions and curiosity. When we're presented with the problem, the human spirit is one of the greatest things to employ at that point to go like, here's a problem, what can I do? I can lean on my knowledge, I can look, I can discover, I can ask colleagues, that is clearly part of our human expansion. And to divorce that now or to fire it back up is so necessary across the board, across every industry, across everything. That's where I think coming together with people like yourself, finding those community, finding your community of doctors where you can actually do that, and then that's serving the greater good at that point.

Dr. Heather: It's really funny when I started doing integrative medicine, I went to the Andrew Weil program in Arizona. It was just amazing because here I'd been a doctor for 10 years and working in a practice pretty much shoving pharmaceuticals down people's throats and whatever. I got to this program with these doctors from all over the country. They did all sorts of things. It was radiologists, cardiologists, primary care doctors, whatever but it was like they all wanted to do something different. It was like you just found your tribe. It was so cool. I was like, this actually exists. I didn't know that there were people like me that really wanted to make these changes and to discover it, it was just so refreshing because I was like, I can have all these great conversations. We can talk about all this stuff. We can talk about



mind-body stuff. We can talk about shamanism. It was just so cool. That really just made me love my career choice so much more because I was really starting to get discouraged. It's a super exciting time.

Darin: That's awesome. When you find your tribe, it's like nothing better. What else is possible at that point when you find that openness and that willingness to change and create something different? Well, Dr. Heather Moday, this has been so fun. I can't wait for people to hear this and check out your incredible book, *Immunotype Breakthrough*. Keep being the renegade, keeping the smart, intelligent, badass that you are. I'm just grateful for what you're doing and what you're committed to.

Dr. Heather: Thanks, Darin, this was super fun too. You keep doing what you're doing because it is amazing as well, reminding people of the incredible richness in the world that we have in terms of just what's out there, what's possible in terms of food and nutrients and you got to connect back with Mother Earth. There's so much that people can do for themselves. It's amazing.

Darin: Totally. It's a fun time. So I share that optimism with you and with pressure comes opportunity, so let's keep going. Well, thank you very much. So grateful and stay in touch too, please.

Dr. Heather: Absolutely. Absolutely, I will. Thanks for the opportunity.

[00:49:07] Podcast Outro

Darin: Thanks for tuning in to this episode of The Darin Olien Show. I hope you took something valuable away from this conversation that will help improve your life in some way. If you'd like to learn more about my incredible guests, you can find all of their information in the show notes on my website. If you enjoyed this episode, or even you didn't like it, please rate this podcast. The team and I value your feedback so we can continue to give you the most value possible. We want you to get the most out of every podcast. So please rate, subscribe, share anything you feel called to do. I truly appreciate it, and I love and value your support. So, thank you, and I'll meet you in the next episode.