

Episode 129 Transcript

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

What would you consider to be the things that are like everyday stressors for most women?

00:00:03:26 - 00:00:08:25

Esther Blum

The balancing act, which there is no balancing act. Okay, we're all lopsided.

00:00:08:29 - 00:00:34:10

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Welcome to the DUTCH Podcast, where we dive deep into the science of hormones, wellness, and personalized health care. I'm Doctor Jaclyn Smeaton, chief medical officer at DUTCH. Join us every Tuesday as we bring you expert insights, cutting edge research, and practical tips to help you take control of your health from the inside out. Whether you're a health care professional or simply looking to optimize your own well-being, we've got you covered.

00:00:34:13 - 00:00:53:26

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

The contents of this podcast are for educational and informational purposes only. This information is not to be interpreted or mistaken for medical advice. Consult your health care provider for medical advice, diagnosis and treatment. Hi, I'm so glad you're with me on today's episode of the DUTCH Podcast. I've had this guest on before and she's one of my favorite people to talk to.

00:00:53:27 - 00:01:18:12

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

She's just like a girlfriend and it feels so easy to dive into topics that maybe feel more vulnerable or untouchable. Today's episode is something that probably feels really vulnerable to a lot of women, and for clinicians, it can be one of the toughest things to address with patients. But in my experience, having been in practice now for a couple of decades, it's one of the lynchpins that has to be addressed in order to really help people get well.

00:01:18:14 - 00:01:44:24

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And that one is stress. It's a very difficult topic to talk about with patients, because a lot of times the stress comes from situations that are very close to home, like their relationship

or their family or their jobs, but also it can come from their behavior as it can come from the food that they eat. And our guest today is a nutritionist by background, an integrative dietitian, and really brings it all together for us in a way that, for me was really fun to be a part of the conversation.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Our guest today is Esther Blum. She's an integrative dietitian and a menopause expert. She spent over 25 years helping women balance hormones and reclaim their energy through personalized nutrition and lifestyle strategies. She earned her bachelor's degree in clinical nutrition from Simmons College, and then a master's in clinical nutrition from NYU. Esther. Most importantly, she's so passionate about empowering women to advocate for their health.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

To break the silence around menopause and to really navigate this stage of life, the perimenopause and menopausal stages, with confidence and clarity. She's a bestselling author. She got five books published and a sought after speaker, and really continues to educate and inspire women to take charge of their hormonal health. I can't wait to dive into this topic. Thank you so much for joining me.

00:02:30:27 - 00:02:34:22

Esther Blum

Well, so appreciate you having me back on Jaclyn. Thank you.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So before Get in, I don't know that I asked you this last time, but can you share a little bit about your backstory and how you ended up being so interested in hormones and interested in kind of this perimenopause menopause transition?

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Esther Blum

So when I first started out in practice, I was in my 20s, you know, 25, 27 and, had come out of grad school. I had years of experience in the hospital, but I started building a side hustle and a side practice, and one of the first two women to walk into my practice was, menopausal psychotherapist. And she was like, I sit all day for my job.

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Esther Blum

I have time to work out twice a week, and I have this stubborn 5 to 10 pounds that won't budge. And I was like, crap, I better figure out how I'm going to solve this problem and fix her midlife metabolism with, you know, a lot of limited activity. And so that's really when it started. It wasn't a new phenomenon for me.

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Esther Blum

And but it was, long before I started testing, I really was just working with diet and some supplements. And so I don't even think I had my functional training, in place back then. It was before I did my functional training. So I really started dialing in her protein. I started and I restricted her carbs to either fruits or vegetables for four weeks.

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Esther Blum

I was like, let's just pare everything down to the basics. Just protein, some fat, fruits and veggies. As much as you want of. And, she also really decided she wanted to start fasting one day a week, and her fast of choice was hot water with cayenne. And, I think that was my mother back in the day.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Lemon. Lemon cayenne. Yeah.

00:04:25:20 - 00:04:52:17

Esther Blum

So that's and that's what got her weight off is, was just the combination of the two. But then I began using, you know, that method with all my ladies of protein, veggies and fruits and really understanding that, we metabolize carbs differently in midlife. We do need more protein. And then as I, aged my, a lot of my clients aged with me.

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Esther Blum

And by then I was doing my functional medicine training. I did that back in 1998 or 1999. So then I really started working in supplements and I started working in testing. And so the knowledge base has expanded since then, but it's been a long process of honing it, for sure.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. And you've written a few books.

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Esther Blum

Five.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Tell us a little bit about those two, because, I mean, that must have really chiseled your perspective and your expertise and kind of your approach.

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Esther Blum

Yeah. Well, my first book was eat, Drink and Be Gorgeous, which was really the sex and the City Guide to Good Nutrition. So I really wrote it as a love letter to my 20s and my young clients. And it was, I noticed and I say this without any disrespect to my colleagues, but a lot of nutrition books can be very dry and boring.

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Esther Blum

And I was like, I want mine to be fun and sexy. So, you know, I wrote about and I was living in New York City and I was single and dating. So there's a chapter in there on hangover recovery. There's a chapter on there, unhealthy sex with good nutrition and how to keep, how to prevent utilize and how to keep the vaginal canal, happy and healthy and how to keep your hormones happy.

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Esther Blum

And what to do if you're drinking alcohol. And there was the the illustrator was this man from Australia. We hadn't even met James Dignan. And he had photos of me, and he drew me in a very formfitting lab coat with fishnet and a martini glass in one hand and a shot of wheatgrass in the other. Or me, it was a bottle of vitamins in the other.

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Esther Blum

And I was like, yeah, that's my 20s right there. So I mean,

00:06:36:10 - 00:06:56:29

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I mean, that's one thing that's like, unique about you. And that, I think, is makes it always really fun to talk to you. Is you very nice to keep it real. And I think as a provider, you know, in this space there can be so much pressure to be perfect. Yeah. And I just I really, you know, we can talk more about your other books, but I'm just really grateful and want

to put it out there that you allow women to just be themselves.

00:06:56:29 - 00:07:15:26

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I think as it's hard to do that sometimes because, like, you want to show yourself on Instagram with the wheatgrass, but maybe not so much with the martini, but the fact of the matter is that most of our patients and most of our clients that we're working with, they want a well-rounded life, too. They want to be able to kind of experience life the way others do and also stay well.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And so the fact that you blend that kind of in your own way, in a very real way, I just love.

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Esther Blum

Thank you. I mean, really, I would be a smoking alcoholic if I had my druthers, but not now. I mean, I look at a drink and I have a hangover. It's so bad I can't tolerate it and all, but, like. Which shocked me. I joked to my husband, I was like, I can't even believe it. Like we're about to go on vacation.

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Esther Blum

I said, I, I'm not even get a drink on vacation, which I've never not done. I usually don't drink much at all, maybe a drink a month, but on vacation I'll have an apple spritz or something. Not this time. I'm like, I'm done. My body is just that party is over for me. I think so, yeah, well, I'll bring my wife.

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Esther Blum

But then I think, well, for family events, I better find some really good herbal tinctures to take to just keep me chill. Because sometimes I do have cocktails to, you know, take the edge off. Quite frankly.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I know we didn't all use a vacation in September, and my husband told me it was like the biggest waste of money for me, because usually people go there and they just like they wake up in the morning and they start with mimosas and they just kind of go all day with espresso martinis and, you know, I'm, you know, you can't drink enough, you know, nonalcoholic drinks to get your money's worth.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Those places.

00:08:28:04 - 00:08:29:23

Esther Blum

It's true. It's true.

00:08:29:25 - 00:08:49:17

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. So, you know, you've done this through many different phases of life, and I love your, like, see you later. Later. Your most recent back again putting the fun in that process. And like, I think being able to look at the things that we experience as women going through perimenopause and menopause and really like kind of laughing at ourselves about it because it's wild.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Like we get to go through puberty twice at both ends of the reproductive spectrum, and there's beauty to that, but there's also some pain and some laughs.

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Esther Blum

Yes. And I really like to say, you know, there's a light at the end of the vaginal tunnel because I do want to make women feel hopeful. But yeah, sometimes it feels dark and it can feel like you're shouting in a vacuum. And, there's a lot of unknowns and the science is still emerging. But also when you find the right cocktail of your macronutrients, when you find, you know, a ways to help you get sleep with diet, blood sugar, movement, meditation, hormones, you know, then and when you figure out also how to manage stress and say, no, like I was, I was quote, well, Coley says, let no be your multivitamin, right?

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I heard that before.

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Esther Blum

That's my favorite. And so when we do those things and we're in greater alignment, when we're in better hormonal harmony, but we're in we're also in our most powerful phase of

our lives. Then it does get lighter and it does feel better, and we are more at peace, because I think what a lot of women don't realize is what a spiritual journey it is to go through perimenopause and menopause, and all the energy of that, you know, keeps us in our sacral power.

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Esther Blum

When we're younger, all the energy around our ovaries and the monthly and the cycles, when that kind of takes a backseat and quiets down, our energy moves into our heart. It moves into our brains. And it's a complete spiritual realignment. Like, I just had a hysterectomy last month, and for me, I felt it. I, I grieved, I didn't think I would be so sad.

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Esther Blum

I had some Reiki after and I was bawling and I was like, wow, I guess I am grieving the loss of my beautiful uterus, which was quite angry. I it turned out I had had no meiosis but and a lot of fibroids. But you know, I grieved the loss of the home that grew my son. And I was like, that's a part of me.

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Esther Blum

It doesn't make me any less feminine. You know, it's a liberation to no longer have cycles and be fully done. I'm on my hormone cocktail. I'm steady as a rock now, but at the same time, you know, it is. It's a real mindset and spiritual shift in midlife.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I thank you so much for, you know, laying that out that way. And I think they're it's such an interesting time for women. I'm kind of in the early perimenopausal transition. I'm in my 45 this year. But seeing I am in that space where like my oldest child's a senior in high school, my youngest is a first grader.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So I've got the whole gamut. But that whole like you're at a different place professionally. You're, you know, I had this thought a couple weeks ago about like my role as mother is starting to change. And I said to my husband, we're no longer building our family. We're like sending them off. And that just that transition of, like, adding more kids into the funnel to, like launching them into the world, along with the hormonal change, along with our parents aging.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

All of that stuff creates a really juicy environment to really grow and really be challenged and rethink the things that maybe you've believed for a long time about yourself, about your family, about your work, about your world. So it is this really fascinating time. There's a lot to be said for that spiritual opportunity.

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Esther Blum

Well, what do you feel like you've rethought of late? What are some of the transitions you've personally gone through?

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Well, I think especially in relationship to like my friends around me and other women I speak with, I think I love. In getting back to what you quoted from, we'll call that no B or multivitamin is that I think that for so long we are so focused. We're like effervescent with giving, right, that you have these bubbles that are always leaving you to serve others.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I think that's a real natural inclination for a lot of women to be giving. And I think about even the women in my life who have not Earth children, they give in myriads of other ways. And I think that there becomes what I see within women in this time frame is a little bit more self-reflection and a transition to allow.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I would say this may allow themselves to be served in the way that they've served others allow them to serve themselves the way they serve others, and for others to give back to fill their cup. And I think that is probably one of the most profound shifts for me, is allowing things to come in, in a way, versus feeling obligation to be putting out, if that makes sense.

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Esther Blum

Yeah, the receiving is very difficult for a lot of women, a lot of high achieving women, women who are used to serving. That's just our love language. And that's probably the role models we had growing up. I mean, I up, right? The community of good girls, the community of hosting. I know you do a lot of cooking and hosting and gosh, you're hosting on a daily with, you know, you have a beautiful big blended family, right?

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Esther Blum

Every day is a hosting event for you.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I never did giving around here.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But I mean, it gets me into like what we want to talk about on the pod today, which is I think it's the merging of stress and hormonal shift and I'm so grateful that you're the one to have this conversation with us here today, because you I think you get it and you pull it together in a very real way.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I think this whole the transition, a lot of times women maybe do it because they are growing. But the other piece of it is in my own practice, I remember because I was in my early 20s when I started in clinic. I remember seeing Perimenopausal women and they were doing they were making the shift because they had to, because the mechanisms and the decisions that they'd always made weren't working for them anymore because they developed autoimmune disease or hormonal dysfunction or mood changes that made it impossible for them to continue in the same way.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And it makes me think about the role that stress plays and through our hormonal transitions. And then, you know, now that I've got more clinical experience, you see that some women breeze through perimenopause and menopause. It's like nothing but period cycle changes and then other women struggle so significantly. And when you think about the science of hormones shifting from being made by the ovaries to being made from DHEA, from the adrenal glands, it really makes a lot of sense why we see a lot of that compound for women who have a lot of stress in their life.

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Esther Blum

Yes. And especially, you know, if you have unresolved trauma that you have not, fully unpacked or had a minute to process, now is a really wise time to do it because the greater your trauma, you know, the harder often menopause symptoms will be. I mean, a

few things to say here about that. So number one, you know, our brain stress drives hormones from the top down.

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Esther Blum

So A you will put a lot of extra stress on the adrenals. If you grew up in an unsafe environment, food insecure physical abuse, emotional abuse accidents, you know, death loss. Right. Whatever. Wherever, whatever trauma is informing you if it's significant and you haven't processed it. That and all those years of being in fight or flight, your poor midlife body is tired.

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Esther Blum

Your nails are really tired. Maybe you're at stage 3 or 4, adrenal burnout, and your body isn't even making cortisol anymore. So you really, really exhausted and less resilient and feeling like you just can't even get out of bed a lot of days, right? I can tell.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

You one more, one more thing about that that's so interesting is that it's also shown they've shown epigenetic scientific links from that generationally as well. So I there's a really interesting study done on women in pregnancy that have had stress during their pregnancy. And your, in women who report depression and anxiety during their pregnancy. The study specifically they found a HPA axis dysregulation in the offspring.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And what's fascinating about it is that that didn't change if women were treated with SSRI medications. So even when Mom reported more mood stabilization, thanks to the wonders of chemistry, the offspring still had HPR axis dysfunction, which it just speaks to that role of trauma. And like you might have had really wonderful parents who did their best to shield you from exposure to things that could cause trauma.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But there's generational impact as well, which I think if we look back through our own parents generation and their parents generation, even just like going through the Great Depression, like there's epigenetic tags that get passed along that affect stress, resilience and affect probably our hormone regulation.

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Esther Blum

Oh, 100%, 100%. And also, you know, it depends on your access to good care. I mean, we know statistically women of color get the lowest access to menopause care and have the greatest amount of menopausal symptoms. So imagine just how you know how hard it is on a day to day basis for women to get good menopause care.

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Esther Blum

And then you ratchet it up a notch and, you know, couple that with generational trauma too. So it's no surprise that women have such wicked symptoms.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Totally. So when we think about women, like we all have, some kind of baseline of stress is like everyday stress when you're thinking about stress, has a bucket with many drops coming in, what would you consider to be the things that are like everyday stressors? For most women?

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Esther Blum

The balancing act, which there is no balancing act. Okay, we're all lopsided. Think you can have it all? You just may not have it all at once. So you just think about the alarm goes off. All right. But in the five minutes you've gotten up, you've brushed your teeth, you have loaded, laundry, you've woken the kids up.

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Esther Blum

You've gotten the dog out of bed, right? That's just decent from 630 to 640, right? Maybe you've had the chance to pee and poop. If you're lucky. Then you go downstairs, you make breakfast for the kids. You make breakfast for the dog. You make breakfast for yourself. You get the kid off to school. Then you actually have to clean up the mess.

00:19:26:11 - 00:19:31:22

Esther Blum

Then you have to try and squeeze in the workout, and then you've got to be at your desk by, you know, 9:00.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I can feel my cortisol rising, right? I'm afraid basically, it's like Groundhog Day every single day of my life.

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Esther Blum

Right. And then you go from meeting to meeting to meeting, right? And then you get to, figure out when your meeting ends at 615, what to start cooking for dinner at 630, which means dinner won't be another for another hour at 730. And you're ravenous by then. And then by the time you get done with homework, clean up, maybe folding that laundry.

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Esther Blum

It's afterschool activity.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Taxi service.

00:20:04:05 - 00:20:17:02

Esther Blum

Yeah, all of that. So that, I mean, we're not we're really not meant to handle this level of chaos continuously day in and day out. And we're not meant to do it by ourselves.

00:20:17:09 - 00:20:31:24

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah, I was talking to the doctor. Smith, Allison Smith, one of the docs on our team yesterday, because we've just had a really busy season here at as we, you know, launched our new report and it hit our education team quite heavily. And we were just saying, like, it feels like our processor speed is down a little bit.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And we're like, well yeah, obviously because we have like too many programs running, too many PowerPoints open, you know, too many things going on at one time. And just like, ironically, my computer was telling me I had to close some applications. It felt that way internally as well. And we kind of had a laugh at it. Like, you're right, we're not meant to be at this level of function consistently over years, decades, etc..

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Esther Blum

Yeah. And then we wonder why we can't get off the couch on the weekend and don't want to see or talk to anybody. So it's just like when that you just look at the week you've had and give yourself a little grace, because it's perfectly okay to do nothing.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Totally, totally. I call them robot days. They're like the best. It's not taxing. Like, it's hard to do when you have kids because it's like you're running here and there and everywhere as you chase them to activities. But, definitely having those down days is critical. Now, a lot of women, when we think about stress, though, it's not just the mental emotional like labor.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

There's a lot more to it when it comes to our physiology because there's biochemical stress. Can you talk a little bit about like, hormone changes and maybe talk a little bit about the periods of life where we have massive hormone changes and what that can do to our cortisol level because of a biochemical stimulus.

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Esther Blum

Well, again, it goes back to that top down. Right. So if you are in, a state of fight or flight, your body can't distinguish. Evolution has not had a genetic change where we cannot distinguish modern day stress from our Paleolithic time. So Paleolithic times, you know, we'd be asleep in a cave, maybe a tiger or woolly mammoth would wander in looking for shelter, food.

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Esther Blum

We would jump to our senses, or a tribe would kind of come into our village and try and attack us, and we would jump and go into fight or flight and run, or fight back. And then the stress would come down now with perpetual stimulus. And we're always dodging bullets and we have a thousand moving parts, going on at once.

00:22:35:07 - 00:23:02:26

Esther Blum

Our bodies don't have the chance to actually restore our cortisol levels. So you couple that with declining progesterone and estrogen and also seeing, a parallel rise or a concurrent rise in cortisol, when that happens, when our hormones start to tame and ironically, it's our midlife stress can take our progesterone before it even falls on our own.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And testosterone for men as well. Similarly.

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Esther Blum

And testosterone for men. Because why? Well, your evolution, your body is not going to want to ovulate and potentially get pregnant when you're in a state of fight or flight. And this is why I mean, there's a thousand things that affect fertility nowadays, environmental exposure to, you know, endocrine disruptors, but also the level of stress that we have is so high and our cortisol is so high.

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Esther Blum

Caffeine, alcohol, too low carbs for too long. Just too much of an imbalance and, you know, not being grounded, not breathing, not spending time in nature. All of these things really can contribute to cortisol dysregulation, the late night scrolling, you know, all of that can really contribute to cortisol dysregulation. And so in midlife, yeah, it hits extra hard because, you know, I always say, like sometimes the warranty on a replacement part falls short or wears out.

00:24:10:28 - 00:24:31:09

Esther Blum

You know, and it's such a great wake up call to for me, it's how I learned to say no. I was like, I just can't, I just can't. It's too much for me. I need, you know, if I go out 1 or 2 nights a week, I've gotta still be home by a decent hour and then the next day not do that again.

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Esther Blum

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. It's interesting that you bring up fertility. I mean of course that's an area that I love and really spend a lot of time in. And I was really struck as a student when I was trying to really hone my expertise in fertility. I bought Yen and Jaffe's Reproductive Endocrinology, which was like the leading textbook at the time.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

It's, you know, 2 to 3in thick. And I literally just read it cover to cover, just post-graduation. Well, I started for boards because I'm a nerd like that, and I remember and it still sticks with me learning about hypothalamic amenorrhea, which is when the hypothalamus, pituitary and ovaries basically stop communicating. And when it's like when you talk about

root causes, the one recognized root cause was stress, like extreme stress and trauma.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I think we've seen that it's it's in extreme circumstance cases like like traumatic situations like I said, almost like a PTSD reaction. But then we also see it in like teenage athletes, sometimes female athletes that are, like you said, reducing caloric intake too much. That has that same effect to kind of shut down the reproductive cycle. That's a stress HPA axis, mediate mediated action.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And then you think about, okay, well, if that's what happens in the extreme case, either extreme stress or extreme sensitivity to stress. What's that mean. There's that's black versus white. What's happening in the gray zone. Right. What's in the gray zone where we're exposed to stress. Can it just regulate our menstrual cycle. Can it harm our ovarian tissue.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And now there's more information out around that. And certainly it affects women of all ages, not just reproductive age.

00:26:05:26 - 00:26:40:27

Esther Blum

Yeah, 100%. And ironically, like one of the best ways to fix your adrenals is by re feeding your body and introducing more carbs. And it's it's what I love teaching my midlife women is like you actually have to feel your body. And you know, when I was a hospital dietitian, I covered all the Tardi ology units and including like the surgical, cardiac, ICU and post-op and the stepdown units and people who were on ventilators, just lying there, breathing now, obviously healing, which uses a lot more energy.

00:26:40:27 - 00:27:15:14

Esther Blum

But their baseline for calories was 1200 calories a day just lying in bed. And we put ourselves we're lifting weights, we're doing high intensity interval training or walking, you know, six, eight, six miles a day. And we're expecting our bodies to function on 1200 calories a day. Or I've seen clients come to me with anywhere from 9 to 1100 calories a day and just they're caught in this vicious cycle where they're so low calorie for so long that the minute we recede, they gain weight because their body is like, I'm going to hold on to all this fat BS.

00:27:15:14 - 00:27:38:21

Esther Blum

So when you starve me again, I'll have something to live off of. But ironically, when we slowly re feed and bump up the carbs, then, you know, the thyroid starts functioning again, the adrenals are supported, the thyroid starts functioning and it becomes more active and we can actually lose weight. Re feeding the body. But women don't, you know, trust our bodies.

00:27:38:21 - 00:28:01:21

Esther Blum

We've been a told you know, we've received external messages that we have to cut calories, eat less, exercise more. But we've also, you know, learned over the years we grew up in LA. Diet culture is me. I grew up when I became a clinical dietitian. I graduated in 1992. There was a company called Snack Wells. You might have heard of cocktail cookies.

00:28:01:21 - 00:28:04:28

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Those are have like they had like a marshmallow one dipped in chocolate.

00:28:05:03 - 00:28:08:03

Esther Blum

They did, but it was all sugar. They were fat.

00:28:08:06 - 00:28:09:09

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Everything was no fat, no.

00:28:09:09 - 00:28:15:16

Esther Blum

Fat, everything was no fat. And then there was like the Alastor chips and potato chips cause anal leakage.

00:28:15:16 - 00:28:17:08

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So fun. I never got into those.

00:28:17:08 - 00:28:37:23

Esther Blum

But, no. I was like, who is eating this fake crap? So, you know, we, you know, my generation really grew up with, like, fat free and low calorie and watching my mom

constantly, constantly diet and, you know, it's like, gosh, that is so old school at this point. It's so done.

00:28:37:24 - 00:29:00:21

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Totally. And I want to acknowledge that, like, at that time, all of us and our mothers were trying to do the right thing. We were trying to listen to the messages and make healthy choices. We just got it so wrong nutritionally for so long. You know, I think I do appreciate that now, while there are still some pretty wild diets out there, for the most part, people are pushing whole foods diets.

00:29:00:23 - 00:29:13:14

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And that, I mean, even if you could just if your only instruction was like, eat foods that either came from the ground or had a mother, and those are the only rules you followed, you'd get 80% there on most of your goals for health, I think.

00:29:13:18 - 00:29:15:22

Esther Blum

Yes, yes.

00:29:15:25 - 00:29:34:00

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. So anyhow, I want to talk a little bit more about like women and stress. And as we go through the looking at the DUTCH Test and things like that, let's start with like a clinical picture. What are the most common things that you see crop up for women that make you think, well, you know, stress is probably a big piece of her case.

00:29:34:03 - 00:29:37:24

Esther Blum

Oh, cortisol. I love that.

00:29:37:24 - 00:29:38:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

You laugh before.

00:29:38:29 - 00:29:51:00

Esther Blum

You know damn well a I mean, you've got the classic sky high cortisol in the morning, and this is without caffeine because, you know, you can't have caffeine. So this is what women experience.

00:29:51:00 - 00:29:52:26

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

We're not talking about testing yet. This is just what.

00:29:52:26 - 00:30:15:15

Esther Blum

They know what they feel and experience. Well, it's quite simply wired and tired. It's okay. It's the motor is running with no gas in the tank, and they're running on fumes and they're running on, not thinking about their I come on, you just just wake up and get through the day. It's kind of like slap some cold water on your face and just grind through your day.

00:30:15:15 - 00:30:36:29

Esther Blum

I'm like, I, I when I see the clinical test, I say, I truly don't even know how to get out of bed in the morning, or how you're sleeping it, or how you're functioning at 3 p.m.. And most of them, spoiler alert they're not. So yeah, I mean, and then really, the cherry on the Sunday is being awake all night is.

00:30:37:00 - 00:30:37:08

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So.

00:30:37:08 - 00:30:54:25

Esther Blum

Unfair. It's so unfair. It really is. And it's brutal. It's just there's a lot of self-talk that has to happen after that, after one day of that, let alone weeks, months and years of like, come on, just get through a day, you can nap later and then you never nap later. And then it's like, oh, the sleep will be better.

00:30:54:25 - 00:31:01:21

Esther Blum

Night sleep's not better tonight, you know? And it's just it's a really hard hamster wheel to be on it.

00:31:01:21 - 00:31:18:05

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Totally. And I the piece that I see that comes into that there's like an extra added layer is that nighttime waking tends to be a time where, like, unwelcome thoughts kind of creep their way in and prevent you from getting back to sleep. And I think it's the stress you carry all day that then you try to process in the middle of the night.

00:31:18:05 - 00:31:24:25

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I, I mean, I think one mantra that I've given to my patients, I've used it myself is just like, I will not come up with the best solution right now for this problem.

00:31:24:25 - 00:31:28:17

Esther Blum

But that's right. Nobody's solving world peace at 3 a.m..

00:31:28:17 - 00:31:51:09

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Like, I could just put it down and go to sleep or and it's like the worst to pick up your phone and kind of get that, get into that cycle. But I do find a lot of women under a lot of stress. Not only are they doing nighttime waking, but they're like waking in a panic or waking up or trying to process something that's happened during the day or trying to distract themselves from life by getting online, or distract themselves from the insomnia that they're experiencing.

00:31:51:09 - 00:31:53:23

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I mean, it's such a challenging, challenging thing.

00:31:53:25 - 00:32:18:21

Esther Blum

It is, it is. And we, you know, the best thing to know about this, ladies, is we have I have a free tool for all of you that you can access from your bed, and that is your breath. And so I love, you know, 478 breathing or box breathing. Four, seven, eight is when you inhale four you hold for seven, you release, you exhale for eight or box breathing which is inhale for sure.

00:32:18:21 - 00:32:52:11

Esther Blum

Hold for four, exhale for four, hold for four. Whatever you decide, even if you just imagine diaphragmatic breathing or for me, if I envision if I try to breathe through my third eye, it takes me so much concentration to even get to that point that I usually fall asleep because my brain can't think about anything else. But breathwork is free, and ten minutes of deep breathing lowers cortisol and can get you back to sleep without medications or, you know, any tricky any any extensive efforts at all.

00:32:52:14 - 00:32:54:12

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton
I love that.

00:32:54:15 - 00:32:57:29
DUTCH
We'll be right back.

00:32:58:01 - 00:33:24:06
DUTCH
Here at Precision Analytical, we've launched the biggest update to our report since 2013. The new and enhanced report puts the most actionable hormone insights right on page one, making it faster and easier to interpret. You'll see a reimagined summary page, upgraded visuals for estrogen and cortisol metabolism, and an all new about your results section, what we call the DUTCH Dozen, a 12 point framework that helps you understand your patient's hormone story in minutes.

00:33:24:09 - 00:33:48:03
DUTCH
It's a smarter, simpler, and more insightful DUTCH experience. From now through December 19th, 2025, all registered DUTCH providers can order five DUTCH Complete or DUTCH Plus kits for 50% off. Give us a call or visit [DUTCH Test.com/order](https://DUTCHTest.com/order) now. Must have a registered DUTCH provider ID domestic and Canada only promotion not available through distributors. Prepaid and shipped to facility only.

00:33:48:05 - 00:33:59:15
DUTCH
No drop ships cannot be combined with any other offer. You can mix and match DUTCH Complete or DUTCH Plus must be purchased by December 19th, 2020. By. Welcome back to the DUTCH Podcast.

00:33:59:17 - 00:34:23:03
Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton
Now, one of the reasons why I feel so passionate about the DUTCH Test is related to the fact that it tells the whole story with reproductive hormones and androgens and cortisol. Because I really, truly believe you don't understand the whole picture by just serum hormone testing, because there's such an intricate connection between those systems. I know you see it the same way because you do a ton of DUTCH Testing.

00:34:23:03 - 00:34:36:03
Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton
Like, what are the things that you tend to look for? Let's talk about like a typical,

perimenopausal or postmenopausal woman. One of the things that you are most interested in checking when you get their DUTCH Test back.

00:34:36:05 - 00:34:59:23

Esther Blum

Well, first and foremost, cortisol, because that's going to drive, that is going to inform me a lot about your lifestyle and your hormone production. Of course, I'm going to look at your hormones, but you know, you can't build a house without a solid foundation. And so hormones as much as I'm passionate about hormones, you have to earn them.

00:34:59:23 - 00:35:26:02

Esther Blum

They're a piece of the pie. They're not the whole picture. And lifestyle and stress management. Remember that top down ideology? We have to manage stress first, first and foremost because that is going to drive your gut health, your nutrient absorption, your cortisol levels. And so I want to see, are you the kind of woman who has sky high cortisol in the morning?

00:35:26:02 - 00:35:45:12

Esther Blum

Like you come charging out of the gate, you wake up your feet hit the floor, the devil's like, oh man, she's up. Let's go everybody. And you know. But by mid-afternoon you're in, you know, you're circling the drain and you just are absolutely exhausted. You get yourself through dinner and then you're on the couch by 8 p.m., asleep.

00:35:45:14 - 00:36:08:20

Esther Blum

Right? Or are you just do you have a reverse cortisol pattern, which is, you know, extremely low, suboptimal, like some of you are in even on the cortisol curve, you're below it. And then at night your cortisol is peaking and you're so exhausted. So for those people like I have to know, okay, stress management, we fix sleep first.

00:36:08:20 - 00:36:31:00

Esther Blum

We always fix sleep. That is the biggest rock because that will help balance your cortisol curve. Your blood sugar inflammation. And that is done with bringing in, protein and fiber vegetables throughout the day. It's also bringing in carbs strategically. I love to tell people to have carbs at dinner. I love.

00:36:31:00 - 00:36:33:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

That too. It's like sleep. So good.

00:36:33:18 - 00:37:15:13

Esther Blum

Sleep you sleep so much better. And of course, bringing in some nutrients if need be. Some, you know, nutrients to lower cortisol, some calming herbs, some magnesium. But then, of course, hormones. Progesterone is incredible for sleep. Progesterone helps you stay asleep. Estrogen helps you fall asleep, especially if you're quelling hot flashes. So that's really important. But I really love I mean I'm so hot Jaclyn for methylation and looking at how you're detoxing your cortisol and your hormones too, because 30% of women in that time when our hormones are declining, 30% of us develop a nonalcoholic fatty liver.

00:37:15:16 - 00:37:42:18

Esther Blum

And so if our detoxification methods are impaired, our methylation is impaired. We don't have enough nutrients, we have genetic snips. Then we also want to make sure we're supporting those. Because when a woman comes to me who is a great candidate for hormones, but she has poor methylation, if we don't support how she is detoxing hormones and then we put her on hormones, she is going to feel worse no matter what.

00:37:42:18 - 00:38:01:27

Esther Blum

And I'm not interested in making women feel worse. I'm interested in setting them up for success. Right. So those to me are like my two favorite parts of the DUTCH is just how hormones are moving through your body and how cortisol is moving through your body. Those are my juiciest tidbits.

00:38:01:27 - 00:38:24:12

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I love that, thank you so much. And one thing that was so fascinating to me because I learned, you know, HIPAA access testing by looking at a diurnal free cortisol pattern, usually in saliva. I think that first company that I use when I came out of school, but with the DUTCH Test, I, you know, I learned how much I was missing with only that piece for essentially the diurnal curve is so important to look at.

00:38:24:14 - 00:38:43:07

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But you talked about cortisol metabolism. And I think a lot of people don't understand the role that cortisol metabolites play in the overall picture. And you can't measure metabolites in saliva. You have to do urine. So that's why DUTCH is so great with this. And

because sometimes there'll be a mismatch between the free cortisol, which is what you can measure in saliva.

00:38:43:08 - 00:39:03:10

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

We can measure it in urine too. And that's like the cortisol that's kind of active in the body. But then also the metabolized cortisol if there's a mismatch there. Like I actually reviewed a case earlier today with another group where when they looked at the diurnal curve it was almost flat line because of course remember cortisol when you wake up it should be high.

00:39:03:12 - 00:39:16:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

You know, it's spikes about 30 minutes after waking as part of our course I'll make any response. Then it kind of slowly, gradually comes down through the day. And then in the evening it should be at its lowest. So if you're kind of new to testing, that's what you'd expect to see, like a spike upon waking. And then it comes down.

00:39:16:18 - 00:39:35:19

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But this person was flatline across the day. And when I asked the team, what do you think's going on? They're like, wow, they're really not making any cortisol. But then when we looked at metabolized cortisol, the dial was over the top way above normal range, which actually means they're making a ton of cortisol, but they're just metabolizing through it.

00:39:35:19 - 00:39:39:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And that's a little bit of a different picture. Can you talk a little bit about that?

00:39:39:18 - 00:39:44:21

Esther Blum

This is honestly the part where my clinical knowledge is oh okay solid. So I'm like that's fine.

00:39:44:21 - 00:39:45:06

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I'll talk about.

00:39:45:06 - 00:39:47:19

Esther Blum

That. So yes you talk about.

00:39:47:21 - 00:40:07:28

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So that's really interesting because it shows that you're metabolizing that very quickly. So we tend to see that with things like metabolic syndrome and obesity along with things like hypothyroidism. But if you treated just the diurnal pattern you might give the wrong treatment because you might be trying to get more out of the adrenal gland, when really we need to affect metabolism, not production.

00:40:07:28 - 00:40:21:19

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And so I think that's where when it comes to cortisol, it makes a big difference to use a tool like the DUTCH Test, compared to one that only looks at like a diurnal pattern. And and I'm glad to have learned that because it's really changed the way that I assess it.

00:40:21:21 - 00:40:28:27

Esther Blum

And it's so it's so complex. It really it is complex. How do you love to treat it? I would love to learn from you too.

00:40:28:29 - 00:40:54:29

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Well, I think that the more time I've spent in medicine, the less tools I think I need to use. So I'll just start with that. And I mean, I came from the supplement industry. I spent like almost 15 years working for the largest distributor, 250 professional supplement brands. I like know a lot about supplements. I think they're super cool, but I think there can be an overemphasis on supplement use.

00:40:55:06 - 00:41:14:20

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Really, what I see to be most impactful are the lifestyle changes. So the things that I tend to think about when it comes to like resetting the pattern are you have to figure out where the stress is coming from. Is it social, emotional? Is it trauma in your past? Is it your blood sugar? Is a roller coaster, you know, what are the things that are contributing?

00:41:14:20 - 00:41:40:01

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Is it that you have a lot of environmental chemicals that you're trying to detoxify? All of those things can contribute to cortisol being released. They're all stressors on the body. Yeah. The next thing I think about is how can we get more pattern in our day? So I always

and I remember learning this from an Australian are you Veda clinician where she talked I was going into I was in this workshop where you learn like vata, pitta, kappa.

00:41:40:01 - 00:42:00:07

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

The three main constitutions, and she talked about the purpose of schedule and the purpose of a daily schedule for each of the three constitutions is wholly different, but the outcome is kind of the same. They all need it for a purpose. So I always like to have patients start with what are the elements of their day that they can schedule.

00:42:00:08 - 00:42:15:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

You can wake up at the same time every day. You can eat your first meal at the same. You can workout at the same time every day, take a walk, go to sleep. You might have chaos in between because your days change, but there are always elements to our day that we can put some controls around. That's the first.

00:42:15:18 - 00:42:23:22

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

The second is exposure to light, which I would add into the schedule. You're nodding so like you can so don't you time and you agree with that. Yeah.

00:42:23:24 - 00:42:45:00

Esther Blum

That is honestly my greatest rule of thumb. And the greatest way to restore your circadian rhythm is to get your face in outdoor sun, ideally in nature. But even if you live in an apartment complex, if you could step outside your bed, if you have a balcony or your front door, get your face exposed to the sun. Even better, if you can walk outside in nature when the sun is rising.

00:42:45:02 - 00:43:04:21

Esther Blum

That it to me is the most impactful because the sun is 200 times greater light spectrum than any indoor bulb. So it's really, really important. It's just it puts you a positive mood. It's when I meditate, I listen, people say, oh, I'm not good at meeting. Literally, you can just listen to a meditation while you're walking and breathing.

00:43:04:21 - 00:43:11:28

Esther Blum

You don't have to over complicate it at all, or just breathe and be in silence and let your thoughts come to you. It's just that's the call.

00:43:12:00 - 00:43:35:11

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I, when I'm walking, because I also find walking is huge. I'll be another one. It's like a great reset for your stress. Yeah, generally and being in nature is another one for me that's really critical. And so when I walk, I very, very rarely will be listening to anything. And I that actually is my meditation. So one of them, it's just an awareness meditation where you think like, let me think about five things that I can see right now.

00:43:35:13 - 00:43:49:24

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Let me think about five things that I can hear, I can smell, what do I taste? I live by the oceans. I'm going to stay salt. So, you know, I just kind of go through that to pay attention to it. Like, just quiet yourself. Do you hear birds chirping? Well, funny enough, they've been chirping all along. We just weren't paying attention.

00:43:49:24 - 00:43:59:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Right. So what are the things that you can kind of be more aware of in your surroundings as a way to reset? Reset? I mean, I just find that to be really helpful.

00:44:00:00 - 00:44:27:07

Esther Blum

And also, can we talk about the big G, which is gratitude, like, oh, absolutely. Gratitude totally lowers your cortisol levels. And really what you appreciate appreciates. So it's a very simple way to bring yourself back into alignment. So I'll always be thankful in advance. Like before I have my hysterectomy, you know, I envisioned I surrounded my pelvic floor and white light every night, envisioned full and whole healing.

00:44:27:07 - 00:44:54:28

Esther Blum

But long before I had surgery, I put my hands on my abdomen. I'd say thank you for my healing. Thank you for my gorgeous surgery. Thank you for the surgeon being on his game that morning. Thank you for X, Y, and Z. Thank things in advance because the universe will rise up to meet you wherever you're at. But if you're always angry, always complaining, never seeing the joy, then you will continue to attract that as well, I believe.

00:44:54:28 - 00:45:13:15

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah, absolutely. And that's not a personality trait or flaw. It's a mindset. It can be coached, it can be developed. And so if that's something that feels difficult, if you're the

kind of person that walks into a room and sees what's wrong versus what's right, I do think that that that can be behaviorally changed just by trying to think about it.

00:45:13:17 - 00:45:30:04

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I do this with my kids all the time. It's like you, at the end of the day, we talk about the things that went great in the day or the things we wish were different, but focusing on the things that went great. Now they go through their day looking for those things, and that changes like the heart presence of your day.

00:45:30:04 - 00:45:39:20

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And it changes the way that you look at the world. And and absolutely, I think that's related. I had a funny experience. I was talking to a friend of mine who went to the Menopause Society conference, which was.

00:45:39:26 - 00:45:40:15

Esther Blum

Oh, yeah.

00:45:40:15 - 00:46:00:04

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Recently. And she said to me, I saw this speaker and there's one speaker like, really made me mad. They were so negative. It was they like, knew everything. And and I knew exactly who it was by without them even saying, I'm not going to talk about it here, but just someone who from what I've observed, they're typically criticizing others.

00:46:00:04 - 00:46:17:25

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I, I think that that's I said, well, it could be worse. You could be living in that body and in that brain. I think what she said, thank you for giving me that like level of, you know, reframe because I'm like, if it's hard for you to sit there and listen to it for an hour, imagine having that be the inner dialog in your brain.

00:46:17:25 - 00:46:29:19

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And again, that's trainable. That's teachable. And what's cool about that is it's a modifiable stress influence. You know, the word the negative voice you have in your own head that's a modifiable stress influence. It's a really I mean, pretty cool.

00:46:29:19 - 00:46:48:12

Esther Blum

Oh yeah. My husband and I joke all the time there this funny story, we lived in New York City for a long time, and a friend of ours, was taking the bus crosstown and saw this couple fighting. And the way we were is just screaming and scream and screaming. And the couple gets off the bus and the bus driver yells to, too bad she's taken.

00:46:48:15 - 00:47:08:18

Esther Blum

And we were all just dying laughing. And so it's like, yes, when, you know, people are negative, you know, and I try and give grace. I'm like, okay, you know, you don't know their wounds. You don't know their stories the day they're having. But okay, send a little white light their day their way and say, I'm just grateful for what I have and that that's not me.

00:47:08:18 - 00:47:21:10

Esther Blum

I don't have to live in that body, as you said, or live with that person. So. So yeah, it's a little I we always used to joke when my son was young, I'd say a little more gratitude, a little less attitude, or, oh, I love that.

00:47:21:10 - 00:47:21:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I'm going around.

00:47:21:27 - 00:47:46:25

Esther Blum

A little that attitude. Yeah. And he is he really he's in college now and he really does practice a lot of gratitude. And it makes me so happy. You're doing such a great job with your tribe, too, Jaclyn. And I get really it teaching people how to have gratitude now and practice it every single day. Waking up five things you're grateful for going to bed five things you're grateful for.

00:47:47:02 - 00:48:07:24

Esther Blum

Will help continue and perpetuate the cycle of joy in your life. And it's again, these are free. You don't have to take a pill. You don't. You take a quarter. You just write it down. And, you know, in my with my coaching clients, too, you know, a couple of folks in there were just, really, stretching, for lack of a better word.

00:48:07:24 - 00:48:27:29

Esther Blum

And you know, and I was like, stop, name five. I think I said, name three things you're

grateful for. And she could barely think of three. I say, great, now think of ten. Because if I said, you clearly need to build this practice and like you do on your watch, look for the light, look for the joy. The little things are the big things.

00:48:28:05 - 00:48:58:18

Esther Blum

A warm shower, hot shower, just having a hot shower, just having a roof over your head, food on the table, a hug. A dog coming up to you with the tail wagging. You know, the sun in the sky like legs in your body. When when I, worked in the hospital, I would come home and I was living with one of my close friends at the time, and I should say, I'm so glad I can walk on two legs and breathe on my own and not be on a breathing tube right now, like nothing gives you better perspective.

00:48:58:20 - 00:49:01:08

Esther Blum

Nothing gives you better perspective than that.

00:49:01:08 - 00:49:24:22

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. And now when you're when you're thinking about hormone balance and we talk about stress, we've talked a lot about this and about these kind of soft skills. And I will say like supplements. Getting back to your question, I think magnesium, most of us need a good multivitamin. B-complex I think adrenal herbs are fantastic. There's so many, and I generally recommend you get them into your lifestyle rather than consuming them as a supplement.

00:49:24:25 - 00:49:45:10

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Get a mix that is into a drink. Get them in your coffee. Drink it as a tea. Like that idea as a food like shot. Avari is another one that's really great. That is a hormone adaptogen and stress adaptogen for women. You can mix that with milk. Drink it like a chai. Like, I just think getting that to be part of your ritual, those are how those are meant to be done.

00:49:45:10 - 00:50:02:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Eat mushrooms, blah blah blah. All those, when we talk about stress management and the impact on hormones, do you feel like you have to really sell it? Like women are like? Well, yeah. But, like, I need the hormone therapy, you know, when you're like, no, really, stress is at the root where you have to address your stress.

00:50:02:19 - 00:50:04:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton
Is it a hard sell.

00:50:05:00 - 00:50:34:18

Esther Blum

Sometimes, like, I'll use a client of mine who's an example, and she, is a partner at a huge hedge fund in New York City. And she came to me just wanting to lose, like, initially was 10 pounds, right. And the first five came off when we changed her habit and all that. But, you know, she would come to me in this state of extreme stress, and I could just feel the energy coming at me, and I would just hold space for her.

00:50:34:18 - 00:50:59:22

Esther Blum

I would just sit. It was I would just let her unload and I would just be absolutely silent for the first 20 minutes, and then I would feel the energy shift. Right. And then she would say, you know, these supplements are a waste of time. My husband thinks this is a scam. What are you doing to me? And I and, I finally said, but she wasn't really looking at her stress.

00:50:59:22 - 00:51:22:16

Esther Blum

Right. And finally and and she was frustrated she wasn't losing those last 5 pounds. And I finally said to her, if you stopped working at your job, you would lose those last 5 pounds if you could get your stress down. We really worked on that. And the last call we had, she said, I have my exit strategy in place.

00:51:22:16 - 00:51:36:02

Esther Blum

I'm leaving my job. And it was so I said, you tell me your last day and I'm going to come in to New York and we're going to have coffee together. Just not coffee. Sound check. Coffee. But, you know, a hot water with lemon.

00:51:36:04 - 00:52:03:21

Esther Blum

Why does she say a hot beverage? Yeah, but, you know, and and women do it, you know, the hormone, and lifestyle. Women come for the hormones, but they stay for the stress management because once they understand, they think hormones are the fix. So yes, they give people what they want, and I refer them to a hormone later a provider and do go through their DUTCH, go through their gut testing, go through all the supplements.

00:52:03:21 - 00:52:15:08

Esther Blum

But I always say to them, all the supplements aren't in the world, aren't going to do anything. All the dieting you're doing, all the exercise until this, this gets straight. There's a wonderful doc.

00:52:15:08 - 00:52:16:22

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

In my head. She's playing your.

00:52:16:22 - 00:52:40:04

Esther Blum

Head and pointing to my that for those. Yeah, yeah. So the the maker of the heal documentary, he's so wonderful. And I'm totally blank. Yeah. Saying forgive me, but there's a documentary on Netflix called heal. It's an hour long. I would encourage you all to watch. It talks about the 10 or 11 healing modalities in the world from Western medicine, eastern medicine.

00:52:40:11 - 00:53:10:01

Esther Blum

Vedic medicine. The top two healing modalities start in the brain mindset. You know, they interview Joe Dispenza, who had been in a biking accident, fractured his spine, was told he could never walk again, and he started envisioning healing his bone cells, one cell at a time, rebuilding his vertebrae. He's a fully functioning human now, walking again, exercising again like they, featured another woman who left.

00:53:10:04 - 00:53:30:15

Esther Blum

She went into the hospital. She had lemon sized cancer, tumors, all over her body. She died in the hospital and went up to heaven and talked to her father. And he said, do you honestly want this for yourself? She said, no, I do. I want to go live the rest of my life. He put her back in her body.

00:53:30:15 - 00:53:59:13

Esther Blum

She woke up and, she left the hospital four months later without any cancer whatsoever. So. And I tell these stories to my clients over and over again. I'm like, until you heal, you know, work on healing your trauma. And I will refer them sometimes for plant medicine support as well, for psychotherapy for, you know, exercise therapy, whatever it is, until it no supplement or diet will fix you.

00:53:59:13 - 00:54:24:27

Esther Blum

If you don't work on feeling your feelings that maybe you've never had permission to feel like this isn't your fault, but you do need to work on it, right? Feeling your feelings? Journaling, having hard conversations which people think is confrontation, which they avoid. But, you know, being able to express yourself, being able to, stand in your power and have a regulated nervous system is the greatest flex of all.

00:54:24:29 - 00:54:43:01

Esther Blum

And so it's cool because I have worked, I have looked at tests on women who've had terrific childhood trauma, but have done the healing, and they actually have a very beautiful cortisol curve. And that just brings me the greatest joy because I'm like, this is proof you've done the work on yourself.

00:54:43:04 - 00:54:44:02

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. I mean, kind.

00:54:44:02 - 00:54:44:12

Esther Blum

Of.

00:54:44:14 - 00:54:59:14

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

It is incredible. And I think when you think about what women should aim for, that's kind of my next question. Like, what does a woman in balance look like in menopause? What do they feel like? What does it look like on a doctor's? But what? And also what do they feel like?

00:54:59:16 - 00:55:22:25

Esther Blum

Yeah, so very simple. It's really not complicated. Going to bed between 10 and 11, ideally. Right. Waking up, sleeping well through the night. Maybe you get up once to pee, but you can fall back asleep, right? You wake up in the morning. You may not, like, jump out of bed, but you're reasonably awake and function within an hour of rising.

00:55:22:27 - 00:56:00:13

Esther Blum

You're awake. Your brain is firing on all cylinders. You go for a walk even if it's ten 20 minutes outside, or you go for a full hour outside, you know, get your feel good chemicals up, your endorphins going. You eat, a protein and fiber rich breakfast, you know, some eggs, some veggies and fruit or a protein shake with some flax seeds and berries thrown

in there and then having stable energy throughout the day, again, having your mood regulated, not feeling anxious, not feeling depressed, just kind of even feel happy.

00:56:00:16 - 00:56:19:22

Esther Blum

For me, my happy place is talking to my girlfriends while I walk. That is like just my favorite oxytocin boost in the world. And then again, spend quality time with your family. If you have a family or friends just being very present in your own life, taking a minute to have some gratitude, you know, and then bedtime.

00:56:19:22 - 00:56:40:16

Esther Blum

Nighttime should be relaxed. This is not the high octane time to scroll and be on your phone. It's the time to actually put your phone on quiet, sleep mode. And you can program it to do that, and maybe actually reading a book on paper or journaling or not. Or, you know, if you do have screen time.

00:56:40:18 - 00:56:59:22

Esther Blum

Listen, I love Netflix too. I just make sure I'm done by like 9 or 10. And my shutdown is a good 45 minutes of no screens reading. Even if it's just self-care. This just moisturizing my face and doing some, you know, nice teeth whitening or something. It's just quiet, you know? And then I love that. Simple, simple, simple.

00:56:59:22 - 00:57:01:06

Esther Blum

Just definitely good.

00:57:01:08 - 00:57:17:15

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Hey, I usually ask people like, you know, you know how I, when you go on vacation, like day two, 3 or 4 into the vacation, you're like, This is what relaxation feels like, you know? Like, this is how I meant to feel. Have you ever had that light bulb moment?

00:57:17:18 - 00:57:45:18

Esther Blum

Yeah, well, it was. It really, inspired me to change my entire business a few months ago because I couldn't. My, my stress levels were so horrible. And when I would go on vacation, I could really see that I was a completely different person. And it was. So I was like, I have to get out of this place and let go of everything I thought I wanted.

00:57:45:18 - 00:58:10:13

Esther Blum

I had my own midlife realignment, so I said, okay, I'm going to detach myself and not base my value on my financial earnings. I'm going to base my value and on how much joy I'm having with my day. And if I'm present and I completely rebuild my business, I downsize my whole team. I made many structural and strategic changes, and there's a lot of unknowns right now.

00:58:10:13 - 00:58:22:15

Esther Blum

But man, my nervous system is a lot more regulated and I feel a lot more it balanced and in alignment to the point where I'm like, I don't I can never go back to where I was. I yeah, because it's.

00:58:22:15 - 00:58:42:21

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I mean totally it's. Yeah. And you like, can't remember the last time you felt that way. We've been speaking you this last hour of like paying off. Because I do think that, you know, when we think about balance and midlife, knowing how to get there, taking less time to get there, you know, my mom might. We have a place that I grew up my, like, little childhood summer cabin.

00:58:42:23 - 00:59:07:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And my mom says, you know, every time we drive over that bridge, she has a specific spot. Every time I drive over that bridge, which is one mile from the house, I exhale on it. I, like, literally feel something wash over my body. And I it made me think about, like, if we can all reflect on those places, those people that make us feel that way, those things that we do, maybe it's painting or whatever you're into that brings you to that place.

00:59:07:29 - 00:59:22:22

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Like you said, I love that you're chasing joy, you know, and chase the joy, chase the peace. And we all have chaotic lives, but can we find pockets where we can bring our nervous system back down, get back in that rest and digest stage instead of that fight or flight. I mean, it will help your overall hormone balance.

00:59:22:22 - 00:59:28:14

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And this it's not just that we think that we absolutely know that with scientific data.

00:59:28:16 - 00:59:49:16

Esther Blum

Yeah. And for those of you who really, truly have, you know, multiple children jobs where you're really juggling, know that this doesn't have to be complicated either. No one's expecting you to sit on top of a mountain meditating all day. Literally. I'll have days where I, where I'm in the car and I'll practice my four, seven, eight breathing at a stoplight.

00:59:49:18 - 01:00:13:19

Esther Blum

And my favorite thing to do now is to listen to you can just, type in like Spotify or YouTube. Chakra clearing sounds right. And it's just a vibrational melodic tune or I like, pink, pink, rose quartz is another frequency you can just put in, you know, anxiety calming music. Like you can just do that. That is simple.

01:00:13:19 - 01:00:37:04

Esther Blum

It doesn't take your body as much as as quickly as your body can go into a stress state. You can also teach it to come out of a stress day and or fire breathing. You know where you're really doing quick inhale and exhaling. It's very simple. Your breath is your greatest tool and the simplest one. We don't need to over complicate this at all.

01:00:37:06 - 01:00:42:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Fabulous. Well, this hour with you has been as awesome as I knew it would be.

01:00:42:18 - 01:00:43:14

Esther Blum

So thank you.

01:00:43:14 - 01:00:58:18

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I really appreciate you being here, Esther. I always love talking with you and I think your message really resonates with women. You know, you share your lived experience or very real. You understand what people need. And I it's just always refreshing and a joy to spend time with you. So thank you.

01:00:58:23 - 01:01:01:02

Esther Blum

I appreciate you, Jaclyn Thank you so much.

01:01:01:05 - 01:01:05:02

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

If people want to connect with you and learn more, what are their best places to do that?

01:01:05:04 - 01:01:14:09

Esther Blum

Well, you can listen to my new podcast, The Midlife Realignment, and you can find me on Instagram at Gorgeous Esther.

01:01:14:12 - 01:01:21:00

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Wonderful. Well, thank you guys so much. And, thanks for joining us today. Thank you.

01:01:21:02 - 01:01:33:23

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