

A sunburst graphic with numerous thin, light gray lines radiating from a central point behind the text.

Healthy Moms Podcast

BY **Wellness Mama**[®]
simple answers for healthier families

Episode 1: How to Reset Your Health

Welcome, this is Katie, also known as the Wellness Mama, and you're listening to the first episode of the Wellness Mama podcast where I provide simple answers for healthier families. My goal is to help you sift through and simplify all of the health and wellness information out there, and turn it into actionable steps to improve the health of your family.

I'm a wife and mom of five with a background in journalism and nutrition. These passions fused to create my love for blogging, and I blog at wellnessmama.com to share health and wellness information, real food recipes, natural living tips and more. The reason I started this podcast is because of a personal passion that I have myself. When my oldest son was just six weeks old, I was sitting in the doctor's office for my follow-up appointment reading a magazine, and I came across a line in that magazine that hit me like a ton of bricks. It said, "For the first time in two centuries, the current generation of children in America may have shorter life expectancies than their parents." The article continued to talk about the coming rise of cancer, and heart disease, and diabetes, and auto-immune disease, and all these other problems. And as I was reading this, I looked down at my little, tiny perfect infant and every single cell in my body rebelled against that idea, that he would have to suffer these problems. I decided then and there, that a 50-50 chance of diabetes was not going to cut it for our children. That a one in three chance of getting cancer was not good enough. And that statistics like 95% of the U.S. population will be obese in the next two decades, needed to change. That day the mission of wellnessmama.com was born, and I realized what an uphill battle we must fight to protect future generations.

It also started a personal journey for me to find ways to improve my own health and the health of my husband and my children. It ignited a fire in me to change these statistics for our future. I also realized that I was a victim of these statistics myself. I'm a classic Type A first child. In high school I was senior class president, I graduated with honors, and I was in 23 different extra-curricular activities and several sports. I made the grades, but I was up late studying and up early for school so I didn't sleep very much. Like most students, I figured I could eat whatever I wanted as long as I didn't gain weight so I subsisted on fried food, cafeteria pizza, and lots of caffeine. College was pretty much more of the same, plus writing assignments for my journalism degree that added extra hours, even at night, and occasional travel. One summer I walked across the country, literally, which was definitely one of the best experiences of my life but also one of the most difficult until I had children. I was with a group of other students, and we walked probably 15 to 20 miles a day, each person. And sometimes we would walk all night long. So, combine that and the stress of being up all night with bad food and just the physical stress of walking that much, and you pretty much had the breeding ground for health problems. Fast forward a few more years, and I left my journalism dream to become a wife and a mom, which is definitely the best choice I've ever made. But five kids pretty close together also meant not much sleep for about the last eight years. Turns out that stress, bad food, and lack of sleep are great ways to create problems like auto-immune disease, trouble losing weight and health problems.

Ever since that moment when I first read that statistic in the doctor's office, I've been on a search to create a better future for my children and yours, and to find answers for my own health struggles. I finally got some answers for myself lately when I found out that I have auto-immune thyroid problems, likely fueled by my years of stress, lack of sleep, and bad diet. I know firsthand how difficult these challenges are, and how hard they are to reverse once they're there. And I don't want my children, or yours, to suffer that fate.

My goal with this podcast and with wellnessmama.com is to address these topics and provide answers for your family. I'll be interviewing health experts, other moms, doctors, researchers, and getting their best advice to help you improve the health of your family. When talking about health and wellness, I focus on my seven core topics that work to transform health. An easy way to remember them is with the acronym RESETIT, and that stands for the seven core principles that I follow.

The "R" and the cornerstone of health is real food. I often say that you can't out-supplement or out-exercise a bad diet, and this is an area that really needs improvement for a lot of us. The three most consumed foods in the United States are corn, wheat and soybeans. And ironically, none of these are vegetables even though they're often considered that, especially corn. Some tribes around the world, consume hundreds of different types of plants, and we primarily focus on three. On top of this our food is home to hundreds of chemicals and additives that the body does not even recognize and which it must filter and remove, which increases the burden of these foods on our bodies. How many children think that food actually originates in a grocery store, or have never even seen a local farm where food is grown? If you look at the statistics for the last hundred years, especially the last four decades, you see some really disturbing trends. Some interesting trends to note are things like the rising rates of heart disease, stroke, cancer and death from those causes, the rise in the consumption of carbohydrates, the decline in saturated fat consumption, the rising rates of sugar and sweetener consumption, the rising consumption of vegetable oils, and rising rates of obesity. You'll also see declining rates of homegrown food, varied agriculture, home-cooked meals, and time spent as a family. All those statistics need to change. I will focus a lot on how to make real food manageable for your family, and especially topics like finding good sources of locally grown food, and avoiding chemicals and additives in our food system. And also just my passion for home cooking whenever possible, and focusing on nutrient dense foods and not calories.

The second part of the RESETIT challenge is "E", which stands for eliminate stress. While stress is often thought of as a strictly emotional and mental problem, there's a growing amount of evidence that has a host of physiological affects as well. One study found that a chemical is released within the body when the body is in a stress state. It's called Neuropeptide Y, which causes fat cells to open and store fat rather than burn it. That's not good. Another study found that, especially in women, higher cortisol, which is a stress hormone, leads to weight gain around the waist, even in otherwise thin women. Another study found that stress shortens telomeres and cells at a faster rate, leading to premature aging and increased risk of diseases that accompany aging. Stress can impact hormones and fertility. When cortisol is high in the body, progesterone is usually low since the body uses progesterone to manufacture cortisol. So this is why we often see stress and elevated cortisol levels correlating with trouble conceiving or infertility. Other physical reactions to high stress levels are things like hair loss, insomnia, headaches, heart palpitations, muscle pain, hormonal troubles. The list goes on and on. So effectively dealing with stress is a really important thing that we need to all address, and that includes physical stress, emotional stress and mental stress. This is definitely one of my biggest struggles personally, so I'll be sharing tips that have worked for me, but also interviewing experts who know a lot more than I do on how to deal with stress effectively.

The third factor of RESETIT is sleep. We all know that we should be sleeping, but most of us still aren't getting enough sleep. For some people, including me, the idea of getting a solid night of interrupted sleep may sound like a wonderful, but unrealistic goal. My excuse is the constant presence of a child under 18 months in my house, but for many people, their struggle is insomnia, or sleep disturbances, or just not having enough time. When my husband and I met walking across America, we didn't have very much time to sleep. And our motto on that walk was actually, "We'll sleep when we're dead." We often thought that. Turns out that not getting

enough sleep can actually make that day come sooner. Lack of adequate sleep, which is usually defined as six to eight hours per night, has been linked to poor memory function, lowered immune function, increased risk of diseases, decreased cell regeneration, behavioral problems, and skewed insulin and blood sugar numbers and more. In fact, statistically, one night of missed or severely impaired sleep can give you the blood sugar numbers of a diabetic, even if you're otherwise healthy. Now I'll be the first to admit, I'm not the best at sleep. It's been a journey for me, but I've learned some tips along the way so I'll be sharing those in future episodes.

The next part of RESETIT is exercise. It can definitely be hard to make time for exercise. I get it. With a family, a household, meals to cook, and work to do, it isn't always a top priority. But I found that if I can concentrate on fast workouts that provide maximum benefit, then I'm more likely to stick to them. And getting regular exercise is one thing that many of us just aren't doing despite the multi-billion dollar gym and training industries. But exercise isn't even something that requires a gym membership or equipment. So I'll be interviewing people who are much better at the exercise side than I am, about finding out ways to incorporate the exercise, realistically, into a normal life. We can all manage, you know, 5 to 10 minutes a day, and so we'll be focusing on that.

The "T" in RESETIT stands for toxin removal. We are exposed to a wide variety of toxins every day. In fact, a recent study found that babies are born with over 200 chemicals in their umbilical cord blood, which is especially scary since the placenta filters out quite a few chemicals. Indoor air is a source of many pollutants, often more than outdoor air. And many household cleaning and beauty products contain harmful chemicals and endocrine disruptors. So one of my favorite topics to write about on the blog are natural alternatives to conventional products so you can avoid the toxins in those products. So I share a lot of those recipes already on my blog but I'll be sharing my favorites here on the podcast as well.

The "IT" in RESETIT stands for important supplements and togetherness. After all of those other factors are in place, and only after them, I think that there is a time and a place for certain supplements, but of course only after diet and lifestyle have been addressed first. So I'll be interviewing doctors and top experts in areas of health like hormone health, thyroid problems, pediatric health and more so that you can determine for your own family what supplements you might need.

And the final part is togetherness, which is last, but definitely not least. It's also part of my motivation in starting wellnessmama.com and also starting this podcast. Making health changes and living in a way that is sometimes counter-cultural isn't always easy at all, but it's a lot easier with a friend or a few for advice and help. And I know how important that both my personal support community and the Wellness Mama community on the blog have been for me in my own journey, and I definitely wanted to create an outlet of this sense of community in others, so I'll be sharing resources for finding, both local and online sources of community.

We'll also be talking about some random and fun topics like why I use coconut oil as my mouthwash, and the weird foods I use to wash my face, the easiest way I've ever found to whiten teeth and that it's natural, the best tip I have for helping children sleep better naturally, and the weird ingredients I add to my coffee and tea. My hope is that you'll join me on this podcast each week, maybe while you're driving your kids around, or cooking dinner, or making time to workout. And that together, we can start making some lasting changes for our families. Some episodes, like this one, I'll just be speaking to you alone about various topics. But I've also already lined up a few other amazing speakers and guests who you probably already know, but who I can't wait to share with you.

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