

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 102: How to Stay Safe During Tick Season
and Avoid Chronic Lyme with Dr. Jay Davidson

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Katie: Hi and welcome to The Healthy Mom's Podcast. I'm Katie from Wellnessmama.com. And I'm here today with Dr. Jay Davidson, who is a chiropractor and functional medicine practitioner, and he specializes especially in Lyme disease recovery. After seeing his wife deteriorate due to Lyme disease, he made it his mission to find solutions for her. And after she recovered, he turned his work to others who struggle with Lyme. Now as a popular speaker, international best-selling author, he spreads the message of recovery from Lyme. And he's considered an expert in detoxification, drainage, and pathogen elimination. I think this is gonna be a really fun conversation, welcome Dr. Jay.

Jay: It's great to be here, Katie.

Katie: I'm excited. So let's just jump in, because I think this will be a topic that will be really enlightening for a lot of people. So, to start, what is Lyme disease and how does one contract it?

Jay: Yeah, so Lyme disease, you know, they call it "The great mimicker". So it can be a little tougher to understand, a little tougher to diagnose which we can always talk about as well too. But Lyme disease is essentially a bacteria, specifically, it's called the *Borrelia Burgdorferi*. Which is like a spiral-shaped bacteria, what they call a spirochete. So, there's just a couple other spiral-shaped bacterias. Lyme disease is one of them, Syphilis is another one of those.

But Lyme disease has different forms, which can make it a little bit more complex. It can change from its spiral-shape to more of like a ball sphere, or what term like a cyst to protect itself. It can also go inside of our cells, and basically hide inside of our cells. And this is where auto-immunity can start from with Lyme disease. And then, some experts will say, and I will agree with them on this, there's the fourth form biofilm, and easiest way to kind of explain this is just there's different bacteria, bugs, viruses, they make colonies together, and then they get like this layer of slime or snot, or like a blanket over top of them. And all that blanket is, which is the technically the biofilm, it's another way to protect itself.

And Lyme disease, the *Borrelia* bacteria actually makes its own biofilm. So, Lyme disease is known to be a bacteria, but definitely a lot more complex with some of the other things that get associated with it. And, easiest way to contract it or what the CDC would say "to contract", is a tick bite, which is technically a tick sting. A tick sting more like mosquitoes than necessarily bite. But there's, I really believe there's a lot more ways to transmit Lyme disease than just a tick bite. Most people that have Lyme disease, chronic Lyme disease diagnosed or suspecting, can't remember a tick, can't remember a bulls-eye rash.

And that's kind of the telltale sign at least in the standard medical world is you get a tick bite, or like I said technically a sting, and then all of the sudden you get this bulls-eye rash. Which kind of looks like the retail Target logo, you know, where you got like the circle and then the other you know, circle outside of that. And most rashes, if you get that, that is Lyme disease. That's a telltale sign. But most rashes don't always look like that and only about maybe a third of people actually even get rashes that contract Lyme disease from a tick. So while, a rash is a sign of Lyme, it definitely doesn't mean that you, like if you don't get it, it doesn't mean you don't have it.

Katie: Gotcha. So what are some other ways someone could contract Lyme besides a tick? Because that definitely the only one I was familiar with in the beginning as well.

Jay: Yeah so, modes of transmission, they've shown that Lyme disease is for instance, like University of Wisconsin did research on cows, and they actually showed that the spirochete was actually in cow's milk. So I mean, you can make a little bit of a jump. Obviously, we're not cows, we're a different type of mammal, human. But, it's very easily to see that moms that are producing breastmilk could actually spread it to their child breastfeeding. They've shown that moms actually pass it within utero. So when baby is in the womb, that mom actually with give Lyme disease to the baby.

And there's actually quite a bit of research showing that issues, babies passing away, miscarriages can actually be from active Lyme as well. Sexually-transmitted, so partners can transmit it. There's a bunch of different

rodents and things that will actually carry it. Like deer, birds, cows, horses, other mammals. But as far as like transmitting, spiders can actually give Lyme disease. Fleas, mosquitoes, deerflies, a bunch of other flies like black and horseflies. And many other insects, so the tick is kind of the accepted way. But there's definitely many different modes of transmission.

Katie: That's slightly terrifying. Especially just the little bit I know of Lyme and how serious it can be. Are there any tests that determine definitively if someone does have Lyme or not?

Jay: That's a great question. I wish. There's a lot of different testing out there. The important thing to remember about Lyme disease is that it's a clinical diagnosis. Meaning that it's literally like you know, the doctor has to use the brain, you know and look through history and examination. And if, I think some telltale signs like I mentioned earlier, if somebody develops a bulls-eye rash after a tick bite or sting, that's a telltale sign that's Lyme disease. And that's possibly more of an acute phase versus chronic, but you'll get some argument in there as well. Definitely, want to think of clinical diagnosis. But if you come back positive on a test, then I would assume that it is positive. It's more of it if it comes back negative, it doesn't necessarily mean it rules it out. Standard testing right now in the medical world is ELISA and Western Blot.

It's a two-tiered method, meaning they run test, if it comes back positive, then they run the other test. If that comes back positive, then "you're diagnosed with Lyme". But research has found that that's a 40 to 60% error rate. Which is like, when I'm like 40-60% I feel like Katie, you could just like do a coin flip and have a better, you know, odds of getting that test right. So, I'm definitely not a fan of the standard two-tiered method of testing at all. There's other companies that kind of take that type of testing a lot further, like Hygienics. There was a company that I was a really big fan of a little while ago, Pharmasan Labs. They have a blood test called the iSpot Lyme. 'I' like 'iPhone', 'iSpot'.

I haven't been using them as much, kind of been keying in from a testing standpoint, I really like DNA Connections, they're based out of Colorado. And they have a urine PCR test. But the key is you kind of wanna stir the body up, and this is maybe an important thing to make note of in the Lyme disease side of things is that spirochete, that spiral-shaped bacterial doesn't like to necessarily float around the bloodstream. It loves joints, tissues, organs. So conventional like blood testing isn't always best because that's like not the target organ, where it likes to hide is the blood. So the PCR DNA Connections test, it's a urine collection so you can do it at home. But the key is, you kinda wanna stir it up you know.

So whether you get a deep tissue massage, you know, you go depending on your state, lift some weights and really try to, you know, move your joints around. Get like a deep, you know, lymphatic massage. Or like a reiki treatment of something, and then after that, then you collect your urine, you're more likely to stir the bug up and then see it. But, I don't think there's a perfect test but there's definitely a lot of different testing companies out there, and, you know, a word of caution is you can definitely drop a few bucks just trying to determine whether it's Lyme or not from testing. But hopefully, that continues to advance.

Katie: Yeah. So, maybe from a symptoms standpoint, is that a better guide? Because I've heard and read some articles that Lyme is likely very much underdiagnosed and there are probably many people suffering with it who don't know that they are. In fact, In my state I think there are actually zero confirmed cases with the CDC. They say Lyme does not exist in our area, and I know several people personally who have had it. So, is it under diagnosed? And what are some of the symptoms someone would look for?

Jay: Yeah, what state are you in?

Katie: We're in Kentucky.

Jay: Kentucky, okay. Yeah so I mean, research has found that there's ticks with Lyme disease found in every single state in the United States. And Lyme, there's been Lyme, you know, "that's been contracted" in every single state now. Documented and accepted, you know, you could definitely get into some arguments but symptoms can be rather challenging too. And this is definitely the gray area which I think is what makes Lyme disease rather difficult to understand, to treat because it can mimic so many different things. I think a good starting point is if somebody's been diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome. Fibromyalgia, autoimmune conditions such as like Lupus or RA stands for Rheumatoid Arthritis. Or MS, Multiple Sclerosis. From a clinical side, I would say, "Let's make sure to rule Lyme out, that it's not a piece to the puzzle". Or it literally could be the cause of the diagnosis as well.

I'm not saying it's always 100%, but if you've been diagnosed with that, that would key-in on the Lyme for sure. Symptom-wise, there's over 150 different symptoms somebody could have with Lyme, which is pretty crazy. There's different types of Lyme, like a little bit more of a neurologic type Lyme, that can effect more of like the nervous system versus a little bit more of the arthritis type things. A few symptoms that stand out that I think the listener can take away Katie, is if they have arthritis that moves around the body. Kind of like the moving arthritis like, "Oh my gosh today my left shoulder hurts, it just feels like it's all arthritic", and then the next day it doesn't hurt and it's a different area. Like, "Oh my knee hurts" or "My hip hurts", and then, "Oh, it kinda keeps moving around". That would key in on Lyme disease for sure, from a symptoms standpoint.

Wax and waning pain, you know, where you have pain but it's like good one day and the next day it's bad. Um , you know, kind of coming and going. That would be for me at least, clinically really point to Lyme disease. And then one symptom really interesting, a sore sternum or like breastbone. So right where your ribs meet the front of your chest area, basically the junction of the sternum to the rib. If you poke around in there with your fingers, and you can do this right now, assuming that you aren't driving or anything, it's safe. If you're poking around in there, and, I mean, it's okay to have some soreness in there. But if you push on it and you're like, "Whoa, that does not feel good", that would be a sign for myself, you know, clinically saying, Lyme could be a piece to the puzzle.

Katie: That's really interesting and helpful. I think that, it feels like Lyme is kind of a moving target trying to figure out if you have it or if it could be a part of your puzzle like you said. And for you, there's definitely a very personal story here. So, can you talk about how you got into this world and kind of your wife's story?

Jay: Yeah. It definitely was not one day waking up thinking, "Oh I think Lyme disease would be a great topic to start researching and helping people." It was more just yeah out of the need to save my wife's life. So, a little back history on my wife. When she was seven years old she got sick. They gave her some medications that caused brain encephalitis, which is a fancy way to say brain swelling, and then she went into a coma for six weeks. It was through that process, and she's 34, about to turn 35 right now at the time that we're doing this. So seven years old was obviously a while ago. And at the time, her mom was hearing something about Lyme disease like, "Oh, there's this thing called Lyme disease. Can you check for it?", and the doctor was like, "No, no," they eventually check for it. And it was the classical test but it came back positive and they were like, "Oh, she has Lyme disease."

Never had a tick, never had a bulls-eye rash. And from that point, basically they started her with IV antibiotics, she was on that for about a year. Oral antibiotics for like another year, and just health, like, health problem after health problem ensued. She was supposed to go to the Junior Olympics for swimming, and couldn't because of health issues. And sinuses scraped. When she was 18 she had a couple heart ablations, the first one 'didn't take', the second one apparently did but then started having some symptoms later again. So she had a couple of heart surgeries, and when I met her, it was after the heart surgeries. It was winter in college and she was actually doing pretty good. But with her history, she always felt like she was the guinea-pig and so we never like dove into it. We just kind of did healthy stuff to get by.

And she had some crashes here and there, but when my daughter was born about five years ago, that's when the bottom fell out and she almost died. I mean there was so many stressful nights where just wondering is she gonna wake up in the morning, and if she doesn't, what am I gonna do with a little newborn. We have one child now, and, you know, haven't been a parent before and this is all new and very scary. You know, kind of really makes me sad to think about what I was thinking about back then. But this was a tough situation, and one of the first things that came to mind was Lyme disease, could it be Lyme coming back. And at the time we ran, Pharmasan Labs just came out with the iSpot test which I was a fan of for a little while, and I then I think something happened with the lab. But hopefully, they're back on track and moving forward. But it showed up not only positive, but in the acute phase.

So like the iSpot will give you a number, over 25 is positive, under 17 is negative. And then in between the 17-25 range is what they call 'equivocal' like 'in the middle, we're not really sure. Well, she came up 88. She was like not only positive but she was in the acute phase. And we were like 'Okay, Lyme is in the acute mode'. And then the other thing that came up was 'Wait a minute,' she had lead heavy metal toxicity and mercury heavy metal toxicity that we couldn't figure out to detox from it, she kept reacting so we kind of backed off. I wonder if that's a piece. And basically, when the bottom fell out, it shifted me from the high volume corrective chiropractic world to what does my wife need to do to, you know, save her life?

And as she got well, then others started coming. I guess I had no idea there were so many others like her, and then it just got so busy that we ended up selling our practice. The chiropractic side just do, you know, Lyme disease now. We work virtually with clients with Lyme disease so.

Katie: Wow, that's incredible. So, what were some of the specifics that helped her? I know I have had quite a few questions actually from listeners and readers about Lyme disease. And I'm thinking this is probably a big problem that is affecting quite a lot of people. So what was it that you guys did that got her well? I know there were several pieces to this puzzle, but kind of talk us through that.

Jay: Yeah, yeah so yeah I mean. I really would agree with you that it is a big issue, and I feel like unfortunately in the next couple of years it's gonna be even more known, you know, number wise. Like CDC, in 2013 I believe, they changed. They said 30,000 people contract Lyme a year. Then they changed in 2013 to 300,000, and that's each year. That's more people that are affected with Lyme than breast cancer, which is really scary when you think about it. And there's a good number of people that feel that that number's pretty conservative because it was just looking at like at 96% of their data was from 13 states. Which Lyme I would say, doesn't know borders. So it can affect many areas, but getting back to like what did my wife do to get her well? The big thing was to figure out, 'What was the upstream sources for her?'

So this is I feel like an important point for the listener to understand is okay, if you have Lyme disease which is

a bacteria, our thought process typically is ' Well, let's kill the bacteria.' But with Lyme, I would say in the chronic Lyme disease state which means you've had it for over you know eight weeks. Typically a lot longer than that, but if you just did not contract it, you're getting to the chronic phase. And there's always other pieces to the puzzle that need to be addressed. Probably some of the most common ones clinically I see Katie, mold exposure will trigger Lyme disease. Emotional stress, like somebody going through a divorce or losing a loved one. So there's, you know, the emotional stress that's a big thing. There's the chemical stress, which, you know, like mold, or you know breaking some of the... what are those called... the CFL bulbs and mercury exposure. You get mercury vaporized and you know you get mercury absorption. Those different stressors can trigger kind of the spiral to exhibit symptoms. Where maybe you had the bacteria before but you didn't have any symptoms and all of the sudden you did. So you know, there's things that definitely set people over.

But for my wife, it was primarily going after the pathogen Lyme disease and other co-infections. So there's many, they always term them co-infections because there's like other bugs that typically are in the body with Lyme disease and it's kind of to the aspect to think about that Lyme can only survive and persist in a weakened state or when the body's in a weakened state. So where we can make a lot of tracks, I personally believe at least, is if we look at the body as a whole holistically, and build the body up, then we're creating an environment that's not favorable for bad things to take effect.

But usually, when chronic Lyme is there, it's an environment that's favorable for bugs. So not only is there Lyme, but there's other bugs like other viruses like Epstein-Barr, HHV, which stands for the Human Herpes Virus. And it's not just a sexually transmitted STD, there's a bunch of different Herpes type Viruses. There's other bacteria like Bartonella, which is really big for causing people to have painful muscle spasms cramps like in the calves. Painful feet, like when you first wake up in the morning and you step down and you got that pain in the feet, you know. So you've got bacteria, you've got viruses, then you've got parasites. One of the probably most known parasite is the Babesia.

So really for her it was addressing what I would consider the pathogen side of things, which is a pretty big category. And then the toxicity side, and the toxicity was by far the biggest one for her. She had done a test back in 2007, a urine challenge where she took some DMSA, and collect the urine for, at the time it was 24 hours. We know you don't have to do it that long now but... and basically your super high mercury and super high lead came out. And so we knew with her that she had lead mercury toxicity. So the main thing that we started doing was actually detoxing her and going after pathogens. But I guess maybe the wild card with my wife was it seemed she reacted to everything, and especially after my daughter, was in a rough state, she was very sensitive and little things would set her off. Like there, it was about two months in when it was probably at it's worst after my daughter was born where she reacted to every single food. The only thing she could drink or eat was drinking water and then bone broth for about 17 days.

She'd have a piece of like lettuce and her throat would swell up. She'd have any other thing... her body was just like an inflamed state. So for her, it was, you know, calming inflammation. You're not gonna kill pathogens or detox in that state. It's kind of like get out of the emergency state, and then open up the drainage pathways, which we can talk more about. I think that would probably be really beneficial for the listener. But open up the drainage pathways to get the stuff, the normal flow of crud if you will, moving in the body. And then detoxing the heavy metals out and killing the pathogens. And it was really that that completely changed and transformed her life.

Katie: Wow, so how long did that entire process take? And were there rough patches for her along that road?

Jay: Yeah. That's a great question, how long... I get the question often Katie, you know, "How's Heather doing?" and I'm like, "She's healthier now than she's ever been". Is she 100%? I don't know if she's 100...I would say 95 easy, you know? But it seems like there's just like keeps peeling layers back and just like a higher level of health. To get out of the acute phase, I think took probably about three or four months. And then as far as like the healing after getting out of that acute emergency phase, it was probably a year, year and a half. It was... I mean it seemed like a long time. Probably just because we were living through it. And also the trial and error. I mean, going to anybody and everybody we could think of that might have any value to us and trying things. That's kind of where the whole, I wrote a book called 'The Five Steps to Restoring Health Protocol'.

You can just find it right on Amazon, just type 'Jay Davidson' or 'Dr. Jay Davidson', it's like the first thing that comes up. But that's kind of where that was birthed from was, just the process that seemed to end up working for her, just kind of, you know, wrote a book about that. And I had worked with clients after that and verified "Yeah, this actually really works well". But I'd say a little less than two years probably total. But there was definitely a lot of trial and error, and a lot of frustration, stress. I think the emotional stress was probably the most. Just kind of that wonder, "Is she ever gonna get, you know, fully well? Will she ever be able to have kids again if we want more kids?" I mean that was a pretty big, pretty big trauma, you know, with her almost dying after having the first one. So I think the emotional stress was probably the biggest wild card in the or you know emotional mind, thoughts was the wild card in the whole process.

Katie: Oh my gosh, I can only imagine. And that of course, impacts your physical health so much as well. I wanna go a little bit deeper though. You've mentioned drainage, and you also mentioned detox. So can you talk about what you did to facilitate those and what the difference is if there is one?

Jay: Yeah, yeah. So I love to distinguish the words detox versus drainage. So detox seems to very be the only word people use. Like "I detox this, I detox that. I've you know, done detox". I feel like it's such a broad word that it doesn't really specify. So I love to use drainage in addition to detox to kinda differentiate. So here's my simple definition of detox, it's when you're pulling chemicals out of the body. Whether they're heavy metals or biotoxins or, you know, pesticides, radiation, whatever it is, you're pulling them out. Drainage, I like to think of it as more of the pathways that just need to stay open and moving for your body just to normally function. So like an example of draining pathway, a really easy one is the colon. So if you're constipated and you're not going number two, that's a drainage pathway, and not moving, we got to work on that.

So the colon's a drainer. The kidney is a drainer. The skin if you don't sweat, that's actually a draining issue. My wife didn't sweat for many years. She didn't even have to use deodorant for many years. For which we thought was like an amazing blessing, realizing no that's actually kind of a curse because she's not draining you know, that pathway's not open. So colon, kidneys, skin, the liver bile duct systems of super important. I'd say that's probably one of the most important drainage areas. You've got the lymphatic system, and then the brain that connects to the lymphatic system, or what I like to refer to as brain drainage. So drainage is all about making sure these pathways are open and moving so that any normal function that the body's doing can clear that stuff out.

Detox is when you're specifically going to like the next level and pulling, you know, chemicals out, like heavy metals or pesticides or what not. Those are my definitions I guess of detox versus drainage.

Katie: Actually, that makes sense. So what are some of the ways you like to facilitate both detox and drainage? What are some parts of her key protocol in that?

Jay: Yeah, one of the most, probably one of the most important keys for her was opening drainage pathways before she detoxed. So she had tried to detox heavy metals back in 2007, 2008 she reacted both times. Then just got gun shy like you know, "I don't wanna be trying this and end up you know, worse off feeling worse off". So, we pretty much just kinda put that on the shelf, and said, "Oh, there's no way to detoxify heavy metals". She reacted to DMSA, which was, or is a true chelating agent. Then we had another doctor say, "Oh no, you need to take DMPS or brand name what's called MercOut." And then, you know, I actually was detoxing with her. I was kind of like that tag a long guy, you know, I did the tests and I had the high heavy metals and I'm like, "Well, I wanna do this too, you know?" And I actually reacted DMPS, and it freaked her out. And she wasn't doing great, so we kind of just backed away from it.

And the key that we found, definitely looking back on it of how everything fell in line, it was just opening up the drainage pathway. That liver bile duct system by far is the most important one. And that's one that listener, you know, your listener can easily start improving on. If you have chronic illness, I think that liver bile duct area is typically almost always clogged. And it plays such an important relationship with so many other parts of your body too, Katie. So, if the...I'll just back up to the liver anatomy for a second. S your liver is like the front right lower ribcage area. It's essentially like the detoxing organ of your body. It's got something called phase one detox and then something called phase two where it basically transforms a chemical into something a bit more dangerous chemical to get it into phase two, and then phase two kind of neutralizes. So your body does detox through the liver.

And then the liver makes bile, which gets pushed into the bile duct. And if you have a gallbladder still, it's stored in the sack, gallbladder sack. And then when you eat, the gallbladder squeezes to emulsify bile to help you digest food. Well, toxins after they're processed from the liver, most of them end up getting dumped into the bile. So the bile starts getting thick and sludgy from these toxins. And the reason why it starts getting thick and sludgy is when bile gets pushed into the GI tract, a lot of it will end up recycled. Because bile's from an energy ATP, how much energy it takes the body to make bile. It's expensive, so it likes to recycle it. Well, when it recycles it, the toxin goes along with it.

So this bile starts to get kind of thick and sludgy, and then that movement gets clogged up. And then there's other things that can clog it up besides toxicity. Parasites love the bile duct area, especially Giardia and some other things. But if this liver bile duct area is clogged, automatically means the lymphatic system is clogged because the lymphatic depends on the liver bile duct system. If the lymphatic system is clogged, automatically then the brain is gonna to have an issue draining. And what's termed like the glymphatic system. And now we know the lymph is connected right to the brain, but essentially, I like to kinda separate brain versus the rest of body lymph, and you've got the liver bile duct system. So I think that's one of the most important areas, and as far as like tools, I mean you can pretty much, every supplement company on the planet has something for the liver or the gallbladder typically. You know, as far as from like a formula. So if you've got like a favorite company you can use that.

There's a lot of things though I would say are you know, maybe a little bit more of health protocol. Things where you don't necessarily need a supplement, or you could even do teas. Like dandelion root tea is one of my favorites. I love that, it helps to increase bile production, the bile movement. Actually helps to drain the kidneys as well too, so I love dandelion root tea for sure. So somebody that doesn't sleep well at night,

sometimes it's just your liver going into it's healing function between like that two to four am period, and the bile can get clogged up. So drinking some dandelion root tea before bed sometimes can actually be a big helper for people to sleep better.

Coffee enemas. I originally heard of them years ago for more of weight loss. But realizing coffee enemas help to purge the bile, and help to get movement in there. It actually helps to increase glutathione, which is kind of a detoxer as well of the body. But coffee enemas, you can do like castor oil packing, where you put castor oil on your skin and put ideally like an infrared pad on your skin, and not just a classic heating pad but any type of heat kind of helps. And the castor oil's very drawing, so it can kind of pull stuff from that area to clear that out. There's more brutal things like the liver-gallbladder flush, where you drink the olive oil, grapefruit and you're drinking Epsom salt before and after to kind of flush it out. That one, I think you wanna be a little careful with if you're not in a great health state because it's a little stressful on the body. But there's, you know, many things that are very helpful for that liver, bile duct area.

Katie: That's a great list. And I think, at least for me and maybe for other people listening as well, is the idea of getting Lyme and realizing that it's more common than you thought, and there's more ways to get it. Especially even mosquitoes, it's pretty terrifying, and I know people, the question may be, is there any way to avoid it, or to make sure it never comes to the serious nature, like as your wife had it?. So do you have any tips for that, about preventing Lyme, and/or avoiding ticks? And other ways that it could be transferred.

Jay: Yeah, yeah, I mean, my wife still to this day, doesn't like to go in the woods. Just from her past experience of Lyme, and kind of that, that's still an emotional thing that we need to address. So, grassy, long grassy areas, and there's different parts of the United States that are more prevalent. Northeast is very well known for "tick country" and Lyme disease. You know, from Lyme, Connecticut, area where Lyme got it's original name. The Midwest, Michigan now we're seeing is a pretty big area. Minnesota, Wisconsin, especially northern areas are very prevalent. Northern California actually, like where Robin Williams grew up, right north there of San Francisco. I almost, you know, wondered if he had Lyme, in addition to any other issues he had. So there's different areas that are definitely more prevalent. But it, they're all over.

As far as if you're in a very tick-heavy area, I would say wearing light colored clothing like light socks, light pants, tucking your pants into your socks. And then just after you come in to do literally like a tick sweep or a tick check. You know, make sure you don't have anything on you. If you have pets, that's a really important thing to check them regularly. And the key takeaway is if you get a tick bite, or, you know, technically like I said, a sting, you wanna figure out how do you to remove it properly. So when a tick stings it pokes, and then it's got these barbs. So if you pull on the tick, the barbs are gonna engage like more. So it's gonna hold on to the tick. Well, if you think, "Well, how does a tick remove itself?" It twists it's head like 90 degrees or sometimes a little bit more, and what happens is these barbs then fold in and then it can just pull the mouth out.

So the most important thing is if you find a tick on you, to remove it properly. There's inexpensive tick removal devices you can get on Amazon, or you know most pet stores. And it's essentially kind of like a, it reminds me of like a spork. Where's it's essentially like a spoon with a 'V' in the middle, and you just kind of scoop under the tick. So the tick removal or the spork if you will, is between the skin and the tick. And then you just start twisting, and as you twist it, it's folding the barbs in, and you can just pull the tick right out.

The worst thing that you can do is irritate the tick when it's already on the skin. Whether it's you know,

burning the tick right on the skin, or putting rubbing alcohol on it. Or this big thing I'm seeing more and more is people pouring peppermint oil, essential oil right on the tick, and then the tick you know, detaches. I am a huge fan of essential oils, but I would strongly recommend never use essential oils when the tick is attached, or anything else because what happens is the tick gets irritated, and then it will throw up inside of you. Which is more likely then to transmit something in you. So the first step is tick removal device. So you go buy an inexpensive one, have it as part of your "health cabinet". So if you ever see a tick, you know you can scoop it, twist, remove it.

Then you can put whatever you want on it. Whether it's like, warm seed oil or clove or you know, any type of blend. You know, from your favorite essential oil, you can put that on but put that on after the tick is removed. Because you just don't wanna irritate the tick and have it throw up more. And another, a myth in the tick transmission is that the tick has to be attached at least 24 to 48 hours before it will transmit Lyme disease. This is a big myth because the research was done on animals. And if you think, you know the research was done for instance on, you know, looking at dogs, typically dogs are pretty hairy compared to maybe like somebody's arm. And granted, I guess there are some people with hairier body parts and arms than others, but it's kind of that tick having to migrate from the hair to get to the skin, so it can take longer.

There's doctors, like, there's one in California Dr. Sunjya Schweig. He's had clients that they left in the morning, went kayaking and canoeing, came back, found a tick on their skin with a bulls-eye rash and it had been less than eight hours. So we know that transmitting Lyme disease can happen pretty quickly. The first thing is just get the tick off of you. And if you can prevent having them, there's actually clothing...I'm trying to remember, I feel like the name is Perma-something, where you can, they actually like soak the clothing in it, and then you can like wear the socks with it on and even pants on. I'm sure if you can, you Google "Lyme disease preventative like clothing", there's a few manufacturers out there. At least I've seen a few of them at some different conferences and things. But that might be a really good thing, I would definitely stress the tick removal device.

And then there's companies actually where you can send the tick in, to see if the tick actually has any bacteria or co-infection of Lyme disease. That you can do. I honestly though, would just go homeopathic route. And this is just my personal belief, so the medical world, and I think there's a place for antibiotics in acute Lyme. You know, so if you get stung by a tick, you get a bulls-eye rash you can take Doxycyclin for you know, two to four weeks and, you know, probably blast that away. I just, as much as I can lean away from that, I do. And I love homeopathy for any...there was an expert Joette Calabrese I had on the Chronic Lyme Disease Summit Number Two, and she's been in the homeopathic world for years, and just brilliant.

And she's like, any type of sting, bug sting, there's a homeopath called Ledum palustre that you can use, and it's the same thing for Lyme. So if you have, you know, if I was gonna say, you know, 'Health Cabinet Preventative', I'd have a tick removal device, I'd have the homeopathic, and they're maybe like eight bucks, you can get them typically at a health food store, Whole Foods or yeah Whole Foods. Or even online you know, Amazon, the Ledum. I would have the Ledum and I would have a tick-removal device as kind of the bare minimum. And then, you know, if you have some type of like pathogen-killing essential oil, once you remove the tick you can put that on as well too. I think those are probably the most important things as far as like prevention, and not letting it go, you know, nuts in the body if you will.

Katie: Yeah, that's really helpful. That was gonna be one of my next questions, was whether there is a time

and a place for antibiotics. That seems to be the conventional medical answer but it's good to know there are also alternatives. And also kind of like what you would do, what your first course of action would be.

Katie: This podcast is brought to you by Four Sigmatic. If you follow me on Instagram, you've probably seen me mention them because I have been using and loving and Instagramming their products for years. They have an amazing instant mushroom coffee. Hear me out before you think it's weird. I know, mushroom coffee doesn't sound good. It's not only the best instant coffee I've ever tried, it's also pretty high up on the list of best coffee I've tried. It's cheaper than coffee shop coffee and it's so convenient because it's so portable and it tastes so much better. But it isn't just ordinary coffee. It has super food mushrooms like Lion's Mane, Cordyceps, and Chaga mushrooms. And these mushrooms have some big health benefits, and especially immune benefits. I personally, especially love them for the energy and the mental clarity without the jitters from traditional coffee. And did I mention how good it tastes? So I always take these instant coffee packets with me when I travel, and I also always drink it at home these days now that they have a big tin that lasts about a month so I don't have to open a little packet every day.

Some friends of ours recently traveled for three months carrying only the backpacks on their backs, and they brought an entire three months supply of this instant coffee in their bag that had limited space. In other words, this coffee beat out a pair of jeans for how important it was to make it in the bag. It's that good. And, of course, if you aren't a caffeine person, they also have a variety of mushroom tea and other products that don't have the coffee so you can get the benefits without the caffeine. And I love them so much that I reached out and they agreed to give a discount to my listeners. So go to foursigmatic.com/wellnessmama and use the code "WELLNESSMAMA" to get 10% off. That's Four Sigmatic, F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/wellnessmama.

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Katie: Do you feel like there's a lot of misconceptions regarding Lyme disease, and what do you see as one of the bigger ones?

Jay: Oh yeah, well, I'm just thinking of the acute versus chronic. I interviewed a couple of times Dr. Kenneth Stoller. He's in the San Francisco area, a medical doctor for 30 plus years. And one of his, I think just adds to the controversy of Lyme. But he said that if somebody actually gets a bulls-eye rash, that means they already have Lyme, and now they're reactivating it. Because it's an IGG response. So, it gets a little gray as to how do you know if somebody's actually acute or if it's been in the body for a while and just re-aggravating, and you know, being chronic. I definitely think there's a place for antibiotics, for those that are more comfortable using that. But I really would stress the acute phase, and then once it's out of the "acute phase" after six or eight weeks, then, you know, I don't know, I've just seen too many clients that have went that route, and had a lot

of issues.

Because the antibiotics, most people know it damages the gut, bacteria and things. But it actually damages the mitochondria, and more and more research is pouring out on mitochondria that they're the ATP factories of your cells and they make energy. If you damage those, well then you're gonna be...you know, you're not gonna have cellular energy. So especially somebody with chronic fatigue and adrenal fatigue, and just struggling even to get up. I mean, that would just be a word of caution that I would look at.

So misconception of acute versus chronic? I'd say there's definitely some arguments there. Man, there's just so many. I think another, I believe another one is that Lyme is only in certain areas. There's Dr. Ray Stricker, that's through research and he's found that migratory birds actually will carry ticks, which has been a big contributor to why Lyme disease is worldwide right now, it's been found on every continent except for Antarctica. So I think that's a big misconception is, Oh you have to be in, you know, New York or Connecticut or Minnesota", you know, to get Lyme disease. And another one actually, there's different types of Borrelia. So Borrelia Burgdorferi is a specific like strain and species, and that's what's been known to cause Lyme. But now they've identified there's another one called 'Borrelia mayonii' that causes Lyme. The Mayo Clinic actually discovered that, so they kind named it after themselves, Mayonii.

And then there was another one discovered called 'Miyamotoi', so Borrelia miyamotoi that causes Lyme. Misconceptions that it's only Borrelia Burgdorferi, which I believe is some of the issue with the testing is that you're, you know the test for the most part, most testing will look for just one strain. Like the DNA Connections that urine PCR I believe looks right now for three different Borrelia strains, but there's over 100 different Borrelia strains in the US. There's over 300 across the world. So now it's just, it's just not straightforward, which can be frustrating but the more you understand about it, the easier it is to guide and get the body well.

Katie: That makes sense. I've always wondered if maybe you have some insight on this, is there an immune component to Lyme as well? We see the kind of overlap between auto-immune disease, and other problems and Lyme disease. Do you think it's possible that some people with a strong enough immune system may be more resistant to contracting Lyme? Or, what do you think is the immune role there?

Jay: Yeah, if you're susceptible, like, if your immune system is not functioning at an optimal level, you're gonna be susceptible to having, getting chronic Lyme and not being able to get over it. You know, the overall body status, super important. Lyme, I don't know if this is answering your question, but Lyme over time will create auto-immune issues in the body. Lyme will literally like go inside the cell, so after it's been in the body a little bit, it'll actually go inside of our cells and kind of look like our cells. But it will shift our immune system to something called Th2 dominance, and Th1 dominance will drive things into the cell. Th2 kind of drives things out from a basic immune standpoint.

So Lyme when it goes inside the cells, it shifts the immune system into a Th2 dominance, which creates auto-immunity. And I believe that's part of its protective mechanism, is to kind of keep the immune system out of the cell where it's hiding and pretending to be. And then, the body knows like, "Wait a minute, this doesn't seem right", and it goes after its' own cells that it thinks Lyme is inside, and then, you know, can mistake other cells that don't have Lyme in them, and it can start attacking itself. So, there's been some good clinical evidence of even like co-infections like Bartonella, triggering Hashimotos and thyroid issues. I have a good friend, Dr. Evan Hirsch, that's seen amazing healing testimonies of people like... he's a medical doctor in the

Northwest, literally being able to get off of thyroid meds when they addressed infections like Bartonella for existence, which is a co-infection of Lyme.

So, the...does that answer your question? Or were you asking something else?

Katie: No, that absolutely does. Are there any... on a practical level, are there any things that can help with those infections and also with Lyme that you use often with your patients?

Jay: Yeah so, there's tons of protocols online, and it can definitely get overwhelming. The Cowden Protocol, the Zhang, looks like Zhang Protocol. Byron White Protocol. Yeah I just...I don't think there's a can protocol, because it can be so different among people's bodies and what's...what the other bugs are. There's definitely been a good amount of people that have gotten well from all those protocols. But then there's been a good amount of people that haven't too. So I think customization, especially with someone in a challenging position is like, ideal is how do you customize what they need?

And then, even more importantly in that is in what order. Because there's certain times where like, for instance, if you have...let's just say you have three co-infections or three bugs. You have Borrelia which is Lyme, you have Babesia which is a co-infection, and Bartonella. Well, there's times where they'll pick like, "Okay, Borrelia you get to run the show, we'll tag along". Well then you kind of knock the Borrelia down, and then it's like, "Oh wait, we got the Babesia and Bartonella. Okay Bartonella, you get to run the show now'." There's a thing in the bug world called Quorum sensing. It essentially just means like the bugs have cell phones, and they can communicate throughout the body. So they've shown in research like when you take an antibiotic, that a Lyme's spirochete, within 20 minutes will literally change into that cyst ball, because it's like a thousand times stronger against antibiotics in the cyst ball formation. You know, that it literally can communicate throughout the body. And bugs do this synonymously.

So, understanding like you can definitely look at symptomatology. You know, if somebody has like night sweats or heart palpitations, Babesia is probably, you know, gonna be top of the list. If somebody suffers more with like headaches, you know, like brain tension, swelling, muscle spasms and the calves, the bottom of the feet hurt, that could be more of a Bartonella thing. And that's commonly found with people that have been around cats. They call it 'Cat Scratch Fever' the Bartonella. So if you have cats, you can maybe assume Bartonella might be a part of that.

Lyme disease like we mentioned, kind of wax and waning pain, moving arthritis. You know, sore sternum, those kind of symptoms. So you can kind of look from a clinical symptom standpoint and say, "Okay, what are the most important ones...or what seems to be kind of running the show now and go after those?" And there's, you know, there's pretty good formulas like Bryon White has formulas specifically for Bartonella, for Borrelia or Lyme, and Babesia. But they're very...they're also very strong too. So if somebody's struggling with Lyme... I love when people learn and move forward on their own, but I would always recommend having somebody to help guide you.

Because, there's also that it's complex, but there's also the emotional side. We kind of get lost in our emotions, and can get tunnel vision and we just wanna make sure that we're seeing the whole picture. Because health is, well as you know Katie, it's just so important. So...

Katie: Yeah, that's great advice, I think you're absolutely right. And I always love to ask toward the end of the

interview also, both as a practitioner and as someone who is focused on being healthy. Are there any things you do, in your day-to-day life, or as part of your routine that you feel have the biggest impact on your health or your mental or physical well-being?

Jay: Yeah, I love that question. So it's been...it's been a big shift. I'm definitely that workaholic type guy. So, you know, we moved from Wisconsin to San Diego and bought a 1200 square foot house. Tiny, compared to what we had in Wisconsin. And I had my office in the third bedroom, which was like 15 feet from the living room, so I'd always kind of wander out there. And then my wife's like, "No, this isn't cool. This is like family time." So we built this little...little building in the backyard, and it's kinda my office where I'm at now. So in order for me to work like I have to actually physically like leave the house. And you know, walk in the backyard to get to it, and then come back. You know, and to create separation. But, in the last year, I've really been focusing on the health side of looking at my life and saying, "Okay, does what I do right now, does this, build my energy up or take it down?" And, really trying to put more of my effort into things that help to build my energy up.

So for instance, right now when we're doing this interview, I'm standing at my desk. I've got one of those IKEA, you know, stand-sit desks. I pretty much always leave it standing now. And then I'm standing on a yoga mat, that on top of the yoga mat because it's like a hardwood floor, the yoga mat's on the hardwood floor, and then I have an earthing mat on top of that. So I'm kinda grounded...I'm standing, I've got a Blublocker, or like a blue light program in my computer called Iris. There's f.lux, and then actually on the new Macs or Apples, they have Night Shift already built into them, but that pulls blue light out, so not you know, not trying to strain my eyes.

So, I think a big thing in my life is just really evaluating what do I do, and how do I minimize stress?. So that way, when I'm done working for the day, I, you know, I'm hanging out with my daughter and wife. I'm energized and I'm there, and I'm not just like, "I'm so wiped out, I can't do anything." So, I think that's probably one of the biggest things from a lifestyle standpoint.

Katie: That's definitely great advice that anyone can benefit from as well. The being present, and being there. And also where can people find you? Especially anyone who may worry that after hearing that list of symptoms that they might have Lyme. Where can people find you online?

Jay: Yeah, easiest place is just my main website, it's drjaydavidson. So Dr. is D-R., Jay is J-A-Y. And then Davidson, like the motorcycle Harley-Davidson. Just unfortunately, no relationship. So drjaydavidson.com is the best spot.

Katie: Awesome, and I'll make sure to link to that, and to your book in the show notes as well. Thank you so much for all of your research in this area and for also taking the time to share with us today.

Jay: Aw thank you for all you do Katie, you are a life-changing life-saver as well.

Katie: Aw thank you so much. Thank you for listening, I'll see you next time on The Healthy Mom's Podcast.

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