

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 129: Childhood Cancer – Avoidance,
Treatment and Understanding the Odds with My
Kid Cures Cancer

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This podcast is brought to you by myobuddy. This thing is one of my daily go-to's for relaxation because it combines the benefits of infrared heat, percussive massage and vibrational therapy for what I can only describe as a mixture of deep tissue massage and myofascial release all in one device. It has really reduced my muscle tension and my need for massage and many people with conditions like MS, chronic fatigue, etc are using this for muscle relief. Also, many athletes use it for faster recovery. I personally find the biggest benefit for relaxation and for fascia work, but you can try it out at wellnessmama.com/go/myobuddy and make sure to check the show notes for a special discount.

This episode is brought you to by Joovv red light therapy, which has become an integral part of my daily routine and here's why. Joovv has red lights with specific wave lengths of red light that increase ATP, which is Adenosine Triphosphate Production, in the body by supporting the mitochondria. Now since ATP is responsible for not just your energy that you feel, but pretty much everything that happens in your body, this is a big deal. This therapy is also known as photobiomodulation and it has well documented benefits for skin health, for energy levels, for recovery after injury or surgery, for improving thyroid health (which is what I'm using it for), and even as an anti-aging device because it increases collagen production and hair growth and reduces hair loss. So lots of cool benefits. You can check it out, the one that I use, at wellnessmama.com/go/joovv. You can also check out the show notes for more information.

Katie: Hello and welcome to "The Healthy Moms Podcast." I am Katie from wellnessmama.com and I'm here today with an amazing power couple who I've met recently and just had to share their story. Ryan and Teddy Sternagel, I'm hope I'm saying that right, started My Kid Cures Cancer a year after their son Ryder was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma, which is a cancer of the nervous system, and I don't want to get too much into their story. I want to let them tell it, but basically, they have been on this incredible journey. Their son is now healthy and vibrant and amazing, and they now are inspiring many children and parents around the world to take their health seriously and to get healthier. So Ryan and Teddy, welcome and thanks for being here.

Ryan: Hey, Katie.

Teddy: Hey, thanks so much for having us.

Katie: I'm so excited. Like I said I get to meet you guys in person and you're just an amazing inspiration and your story is incredible, so I'd love to start there. If you can kind of just take us through the whole journey and how you ended up now with this amazing website called My Kid Cures Cancer and the sad story that led to that.

Teddy: Sure. Well, I guess it's been just over three years now, but just over three years ago our son Ryder, who was just about to turn one at that time, was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer, and it was...

Ryan: It's neuroblastoma.

Teddy: Neuroblastoma, right.

Ryan: It's cancer of the nervous system. So Teddy was...I don't know what, were you nursing him one day and

you just found a big lump sticking out of his back, or he had to be bent over in the right way but you could definitely feel it, and it was actually a lot of back and forth actually just trying to get the diagnosis. Yeah, yeah, pediatrician told us it's okay, the physician's assistant in the hospital told us okay, a doctor at the hospital told us it's okay, and finally kept pressing, kept pressing, and you know, finally he talked them in to getting an ultrasound, and sure enough there was a mass, and then that led to an MRI. And when we, you know, when we got the MRI it was supposed to take, what, like a half hour, and then like an hour goes by, an hour and a half goes by, and almost two hours later we definitely knew something was wrong. And the doctor and the nurse came into the room and they both had tears in their eyes and they said, "The lump you felt was just the tip of the iceberg, and he's got a massive tumor that's bigger than his kidneys inside of his spinal cord, there are secondary tumors, and they had all metastasized into his bones."

So that was not the greatest day of our lives but, you know, we had already been fairly health conscious and we're just interested in a lot of natural remedies, stuff like you write about and just, in general, had seen a lot of, you know, alternative or holistic approaches to dealing with cancer and that sort of thing. So we were...I don't know. When anyone gets diagnosed with cancer they definitely try to, you know, say you need to start on conventional treatment, chemotherapy, yesterday it's this very rushed thing, and we knew we wanted to have all the facts and we wanted to really understand everything and get second opinions and that sort of thing before rushing and everything. So we did...initially, we took him home, and it was a tough decision not to just jump right in but we did take him home and... But we agreed to get a line put in, like an essential line where they would do chemotherapy just in case, and we were gonna do, I don't know, there's alternative treatments like intravenous vitamin C and DMSO and good stuff like that, so that's kind of what we're planning on.

He ended up from that line getting a bloodstream infection, a staph infection in his blood, and that brought us right back to the hospital. And so we did...at that point, we were in the hospital and he had a massive tumor in his spine that was threatening to paralyze him at any minute, so we went through with chemotherapy one round, but in the meantime, we were implementing everything...do you want to say something, baby?

Teddy: Yeah, I mean just what you're saying. I mean, when we had to bring Ryder back to the hospital and even when we took him home, we had been doing research, even leading up to the diagnosis since it did take him so long to get diagnosed on what we could be doing at home to support his body and if it was cancer, the worst news that what we could be doing to actually fight the cancer and mitigate side effects from conventional treatments. So that's what we did, we started right away, and when we had the official diagnosis we found an amazing naturopathic oncologist in our area who supported us, and we were able to use the port that Ryder had for more than just chemotherapy. We were able to use it for IV DMSO and vitamin C, and he really did so well during treatment.

And one of the other things that we got right away for him was a feeding tube. So we were actually able to give him cold-press juices that we're making in our hospital room, which nobody was really ever doing, and tons of tons of supplements. So he did great, and that was really the inspiration for our website, mykidcurescancer.com. We just really felt the need to document what we were doing and to share it with other families who were in similar positions as we were and just get the message out that there's so much more than we can be doing than just the status quo conventional treatment in our kids. We cannot only help them thrive but just give them such, like, better success rates, and we'll get into just the success rate of childhood cancer too I'm sure later in the episode. But that was really the inspiration for our site and, you know, it's led to a much bigger movement than we imagine because now we're just reaching so many people

who just are taking matters into preventing cancer and just leading the healthiest life possible into their own hands. So it's been really powerful and really amazing for us and super therapeutic at the same time.

Katie: I bet. I mean that has to be obviously one of a parent's worst nightmares, is to have to go through that, but I love that you guys have taken it and shared your experience so that others are benefiting as well. And just to make sure to clarify, like Ryder is doing great now, right? He's thriving, he's healthy, he's amazing, and that's just an incredible testament to you guys. And I think the interesting part, especially that I'd love to delve deeper on, is how you figure out what you could do, especially with a child. Because I've seen a lot of alternative cancer treatment information out there, but you're right, none of it is geared towards children. So how did you guys navigate that and figure out what you could do with him and what you couldn't and how to do that with someone so young?

Teddy: It took a lot of research, just nonstop hours, I mean, we were up all night and so much trial and error. We were overnight shipping supplements to us and just really trying out so much on our own and having a naturopathic oncologist from pretty much day one supporting us, and we would bring him protocols that we put together and he would, you know, tweak them quite a bit and tell us what's actually going to be helpful during chemotherapy, what we should stop doing because some things don't mix well. And so it was definitely a lot of trial by fire. There was a lot of pressure on, and we just knew that we had to do something for him. We couldn't just sit and watch helplessly.

And like you said there's so much research out there on alternative treatments for adults, and that's really why we just knew that we had to actually put out the information for kids, too.

Ryan: Well, yeah, and the other thing is, you know, there's tons of alternative cancer blogs or natural cancer blogs and that sort of thing and they're all written in terms of adults. But in terms of research, it's actually interesting, you can get on to PubMed where they published just, you know, basically every scientific study that's ever been done, there's a lot of them, and start, you know, searching these things that you're finding out from the holistic or natural cancer world and in combination with the childhood cancer that you're dealing with and you actually get a lot of stuff. So I mean, like we said, intravenous vitamin C was a big thing early on. I've found a bunch of studies on, you know, ascorbic acid or vitamin C being toxic to neuroblastoma cells. And I don't know, say...

Teddy: Vitamin A?

Ryan: Yeah, juicing, you know, carrot juice is a big deal. You can look into the Gerson Therapy and there's a lot to it, but the main thing everyone knows it for is carrot juice and, yeah, beta-carotene. There are studies on beta-carotene killing neuroblastoma stem cells, and stem cells are like the worst type of cancer cell, the ones that you really want to get rid of. So yeah, that's what we always try to encourage parents is to just, you know, one, go to our site but then, two, I mean all the stuff you're reading about, you can dive into the research and start searching your specific cancer. And more likely than that you're gonna find some good stuff and that, you know, that was always really empowering to us. It's just knowing that there's actual published literature out there on what we're doing.

Katie: Yeah, that's great that you guys were able to find that and to find what works for him. And I'm curious, so what was his prognosis as far as the conventional treatment and then like what was, as far as the naturopathic oncologist, was there a difference in what they expected and were they surprised at his

recovery? Also I'm curious how long did it take for him to start showing improvement?

Teddy: So his prognosis was pretty good. He had at the highest risk level of...it's called intermediate-risk neuroblastoma, which is much better than high risk, believe it or not, and so his prognosis, I think, was in the 80% range.

Ryan: It was... So intermediate risk with conventional treatment, it's in the 80s to 90s percent. But the funny thing about neuroblastoma, in particular, is one of the big factors on how they stage it, the risk groups is age of diagnosis. And anything that gets diagnosed after one-year-old automatically jumps into the high-risk group, which those kids get a whole lot more conventional treatment and...

Teddy: And so Ryder was actually diagnosed 11 days before he turned one, so that's what put him into this intermediate risk group, which was a huge blessing. As like Ryan said, had he been diagnosed 11 days later his treatment plan would have been completely different. And as it was, we lacked a lot of choices, but we would have really been just stripped away from pretty much all choice in the matter. So, with Ryder, because he was in the intermediate group, his protocol was actually set for eight rounds and...

Ryan: Of chemotherapy.

Teddy: Of chemotherapy, and then they would do rescan and potential for more rounds as well. And we knew right away that we wanted to see if what we are doing in combination with the chemotherapy could get him less treatment. So we pushed really hard after two rounds to get an MRI and everything was shrinking so much faster than what was expected, so we actually tried to have the chemotherapy stopped after the second round because he had already experienced well over 50% reduction and the cancer from his bones had disappeared and the secondary tumors were pretty much gone at that point too. But we really didn't have a ton of choice so we went on to do two more rounds and we moved states and found another team to work with who was willing to take a wait and see approach with Ryder.

So halfway through the protocol, we made the decision to stop and we scanned him quite frequently for the first year, it was every three months of MRIs, just to make sure that everything was staying stable because the primary tumor was in the spinal cord and there was no room to grow with it. It was in a very life-threatening position, so it was definitely not an easy decision, but we felt that Ryder needed to have as little poison, pretty much that's what chemotherapy is, to a small body as possible. And if there was a way that we could kind of just get the best of both worlds, conventional and holistic, then that's what we needed to do for him. So he's doing great. I mean he's almost four and a half and he's running around. They didn't know if he'd ever be able to walk. He couldn't crawl at that time, he could barely sit up. So we never knew if he'd be able to walk, and it's a miracle that he's walking and jumping and being a little kid that he is today.

Katie: It's so incredible, and I think obviously the amazing miracle that he's doing so great now is its own wonderful thing, and then also I think what is a miracle really that you guys were able to navigate this alternative pathway and do this hand in hand with conventional treatment because, like you said, I've heard so many stories of parents who had a child diagnosed with cancer and they were never really able to do that. I know the medical system can have a lot of really strict rules when it comes to childhood cancer treatment. So I'd love to know, like, how did you navigate that path successfully. Did you ever run into any roadblocks or struggles? I know you move states so that's a big deal to change the treatment, but the fact that you were able to advocate for him like that is absolutely incredible. So maybe you can give some advice or encouragement to

other parents who may be navigating that same thing right now.

Ryan: Yeah. I mean at the end of the day, I don't know, we always like to use the phrase that you're the CEO of your child's health. Like, you might not have all the answers but you need to bring in all the appropriate people that do have the answers and come to the best, most well-formed decision you can. So, I mean, on the conventional side, yeah, you will get told, one, you don't have a lot of choice as to whether or not you're going to participate in the conventional medical system.

Teddy: And you will feel very threatened and very belittled and like your research doesn't even have a place and it is scary. And so for us moving states was a big deal. We moved to Utah where we had no friends and family at that time and we were leaving our family and friends. So it was a really big deal, but we knew that if we stayed, we weren't really seeing eye to eye, and the biggest thing was that at the time when Ryder started treatment we really thought it was going to be four rounds of chemotherapy, which was a really big deal to us, but we really came to find out that the road map was for double that. And so finding a team to work with that was able to be a little bit more transparent was really important to us. And instead of having a team of doctors, we found a situation where we were able to work a lot closer with our team, so we felt much better about it.

Ryan: Yeah. And I mean the other thing that we always...you know, I mean not every parent is going to be able to move and, you know, maybe like minimize treatment and all that, but the thing we always try to stress is it doesn't have to be one or the other either. I mean, that's like I was starting to say when you get into that, that world of conventional treatment, they will pretty much try to tell you not to do anything on the side, but then they'll also tell you to feed your kid whatever they want and it doesn't matter, nutrition doesn't matter whatsoever, just give them McDonalds, and whatever he wants to eat that's fine, milkshakes, anything, but we also try to tell people it doesn't have to be one or the other either. I mean we were literally, you know, we had a juicer in the hospital room, like Teddy said. We were, you know, shoving supplements down his tube. And at the end of the day, we took the advice of the conventional oncologist as far as starting out with their treatment but we also took the advice of our naturopathic oncologist who works hand in hand with people going through conventional treatment that does want to be doing everything they can on the side, and they've done a lot more research than, say, a conventional oncologist has in that regard, and so it's...

Teddy: And a naturopathic oncologist is still different than a naturopath, like their specialty is oncology. So just want to, you know, make clear that, you know, really important difference. If there is a parent of a child with cancer, that finding a naturopathic oncologist versus just a naturopath, I think, is just so key because they're really going to be able to tell you what's okay to do during conventional treatment, what's not, and have, like, the best anticancer strategies. And a lot of them will actually be able to work along with your conventional team if your conventional team is open to it. And we recently talked to another childhood cancer organization that had some great advice, that talks about the quality of life versus, "Hey, you know, I'm going to juice and it's going to fight the cancer." You know, and if you're talking about the quality of life that's something that everyone can really get behind.

Katie: That's a huge tip, yeah, to not like try to present it that it's gonna fix the cancer, but that is you're just doing it to help their body.

Teddy: Exactly.

Katie: To stay healthy and to feel good while they're going through it, that's a great key point. And I'd love for you to go into some of the statistics too, because I have a note from you guys about the statistics of conventional treatment as a whole as far as how they are for children versus adults, and I thought that was really surprising. I didn't even know that. So talk about that, how conventional treatments, even if you don't want to do them, can be more effective in children. Is that right?

Ryan: Yeah. So, I mean, it's just funny. When you start looking into alternative and holistic approaches to cancer, there's...you come across a lot of people, very strong anti-conventional treatment, whatsoever. And there's one study, in particular, they throw around, that they...and I don't know if it's true for adults or not, but there is a study that seems to indicate that chemotherapy as a whole is only effective in adults 2% to 3% at the time. And I'm not, you know, I'm not here to say whether or not that study is true of adults, but I certainly know it's not true of children. And I don't have, like, I don't have a hard fact and I don't think anybody does in terms of how exactly how effective chemotherapy is, but the success rates are a lot better with children as a whole than they are in adults.

But the other thing, though, is that I think a statistic that doesn't get enough attention in the conventional world is that somewhere around 95%, I've seen as low as two-thirds up to 95% of childhood cancer survivors will be dealing with a secondary chronic illness by the time they're 40, and the majority of those were actually another life-threatening illness, be it cancer or something else.

Teddy: So a lot of these are from the treatment side effects themselves, so that's really why it was so important for us knowing the statistics for Ryder to have as little conventional treatment as possible that, you know, enough to shrink the tumor and get him out of the woods, but not so much that we were just turning into another statistic for him. Because really just...it's so much more than survival. It's, you know, survival is you're alive in, what, five years?

Ryan: Five years.

Teddy: Five years, you know. And when you're dealing with kids that's not good enough for a parent.

Ryan: Yeah. So it's, one, minimizing the treatment, but, two, just making sure that he was just as nutrified as we could possibly make, and that's why we were just shoving all sorts of good stuff down that tube pretty much all day.

Teddy: And we still are.

Ryan: And yeah, except that he doesn't have a tube anymore, but yeah. I mean he gets the healthiest stuff possible.

Teddy: Same with his sister.

Ryan: Same with his sister. And then we're big on just detoxification in general. You know, I think a lot of times adults will...you know, people into holistic living, like I'm sure most of the people that listen to your show, will learn about detoxification and certain things they can be doing to clean themselves out, but don't necessarily think about it for their children. But I mean, for cancer survivors, in particular, that's...you know we need to get that whatever treatment he did get or any kid gets, we need to get a back out of them. And then, two, I

mean even for parents whose children, thank God, do not have cancer, the adult statistics are, what, one in two men and one in three women will develop cancer at some point their lifetime. You know, it's...I try to get across to everyone that just because your child doesn't have cancer now you do need to be doing everything you can to help them beat the odds in the future of never developing cancer.

Katie: Yeah, that's a huge point and I love that you guys are incorporating that with your daughter now as well, but let's delve into that. So take me through some of the things you guys do on a daily basis or even just one a regular basis to help make sure Ryder stays strong and healthy but also to help avoid any problems in the future with your daughter or for you guys.

Teddy: Right. So not everything has to be crazy pumping juices down the feeding tube and supplements and things like that. We've actually incorporated so many things that are fun for both of our kids. We have a rebounder, which both kids now do jumpings], just about 18 months. So she jumps on a trampoline and Ryder jumps on a trampoline, and then that's actually moving the lymph system around, and it's a really cheap, effective way to detox the body, and it's one of the best ways to move the lymph because to otherwise you're not really even moving it around. So that one is huge. The sauna, we have an infrared sauna which Ryan and Ryder have been sitting in since pretty much Ryder was diagnosed, and they'll go in there five or six nights a week for around an hour. And the sauna gets up to, I guess, it says 150 degrees but it's in our basement, so it's more like a 140 degrees, but he loves it. I mean this is something that kids can do, and adults are always shocked when they see Ryder in the sauna with Ryan, but they love it.

Ryan: Yeah, yeah. We, you know, play a lot of games in the sauna. Ryder can now read, or excuse me, he now like speak, he can count to 10 in multiple languages. He can count as high as you let him, and it's funny because it's just like that's our time to like learn stuff and sing along with songs and stuff like that, so it's fun. And then we also just, you know, try to preach living more of a lifestyle of detoxification rather than like, you know, thinking you have to have the ultimate detoxification protocol worked out. So we will just kind of...we'll always be thinking about just trying new things and not necessarily, so we will mess around with different herbal tinctures or mess around with different clays.

Teddy: And just start an overall diet, and our home environment, we just try to keep everything as healthy as possible.

Ryan: Baths as well.

Teddy: Oh, yeah, detox baths.

Ryan: We do Epsom salt baths and detox salt baths and...

Teddy: Which everybody..every kid gets a bath anyway, so I mean turning it into a detox bath from a regular both is actually pretty easy. You're just adding salts and letting the kids soak and have a good time. Oh, and while they're in the bath, Ryder actually does contrast showers too, which is something he is becoming very good at, so with ice cold water and then moving it to warm water as well.

Ryan: And yeah, that's... So that yeah, you get into the metabolism, which is kind of, you know, there's many different theories of cancer but one of them is you basically want the strongest mitochondria within your cells as you can, and that cellular metabolism of how your cells produce energy. And probably you don't have to

geek out on the science, but going back and forth from hot to cold or even just exposure to cold in general really goes a long way with building up your cellular metabolism. And so that's, I don't know, it definitely wasn't like, you know, something that he just naturally loved day one. I think there's actually a video on YouTube of like the first time we tried to do a contrast shower. It wasn't the prettiest but...

Teddy: But we keep trying because not everything is the prettiest on day one.

Ryan: Yeah, but, you know, and long story short, now he loves it. He'd actually looks forward to it.

Teddy: And the same goes with even foods, you know, that we give our kids too. Like, if they don't like something on day one we're not just giving up on them. So I think it just goes across the board with anything that we do. And they're still kids, so there's some days that Ryder just, flat out, doesn't want to do something, and we have to be okay with that.

Ryan: Yeah, it's also that having like options.

Teddy: Right.

Ryan: It's not like, okay, you're not gonna drink your green smoothie, here's some chicken nuggets. Yeah. It's, let's try salad or, you know, something like that.

Teddy: Exactly.

Katie: Yeah, that's great advice for all aspects of parents that I feel like. And the other thing that I'd love to hear you guys explain in-depth is what you're doing as far as your home environment. Because, obviously, you have exposure to different harmful toxins as contributor to cancer, you're trying to create as healthy of a home environment as possible, and I think that's a huge key for prevention as well, something I've written quite a bit about. So I'd love to hear your guys' take both on what you did to make your home environment healthy during that time and then what you're doing now to keep it that way.

Teddy: Sure, and we actually have a checklist too that we put together so we have it opened in front of us because it's really...

Ryan: There's a lot.

Teddy: There's so much, and it's something that we just give people right away when they opt-in on our mailing list at mykidcurescancer.com. Because it really, there's so much that you can be doing, and attacking the whole checklist is hard but we try to think of easy ways to do things, like we have a category about air. And so one of that easy thing that you can do right away is buy house plants, or Ryan just discovered \$5 HVAC vent filters, and we also have a nice air purifier, too. So I mean there's all different levels of air quality, and we're building a house out in the middle of the woods too. So we're going to have the next step up or, I guess, hopefully this is the highest step up where we're going to have an air exchange HVAC system. So basically we have a pretty small budget on the house, but on the things that we feel like are going to make the house healthier, that's where our whole budget is going.

Ryan: Where the money is going.

Teddy: Right. So we're very excited about that. And then we have a category on water. And again, when we're living...and the house that we're building will have more of a whole home filtration system. But in the meantime, we have an RO system underneath our sink which then adds minerals, and those systems aren't very expensive. They sound expensive but they're really...you can get a pretty decent one for a couple of hundred dollars, and shower filters are only between, like, \$50 to \$70 and...

Ryan: So our filters are big one that, I think, goes unnoticed or not recognized a lot, but I mean even if you're, you know, you got a really nice water filter that you're drinking out of, your skin is...you know, it detoxifies but it also absorbs stuff as well. And if you're in a nice hot shower and your pores are open nice and wide, that's chlorine and fluoride, and, you know, God knows what else is in the regular tap water that's going right into you, and you're actually inhaling that water as well. When you see the steam from a hot shower that's, you know, you're breathing that in, so you could very well be breathing in chlorine gas, which I don't think sounds like a good idea to anybody.

Teddy: Yeah. And we have EMFs too which, I think, now are getting more attention, the attention that they deserve, which is really good, electromagnetic frequent fields. And so basically this is something that's put off from your WiFi routers, smart meters, even your cell phones, and there's a lot of things that you can do to reduce your exposure to this radiation, which has been linked to cancer. And actually in France they've done away with WiFi in the schools for children because they know this. So here in the U.S., we're really far behind, but in our home, we've hardwired our internet. We don't have a smart meter. We're renting the house that we're in now. We've rented it for the last three years, but we actually picked it with a smart meter in our hand and we went through...

Ryan: We've.....

Teddy: Or not a smart meter. Sorry, what's it called?

Ryan: Electrosnog meter...

Teddy: Right.

Ryan: ...I guess would be the kind of the slang for it.

Teddy: To pick up EMFs.

Ryan: It measures EMFs.

Teddy: And EMF meters, right. So we looked kind of crazy going from home to home, but we finally found one that didn't have a reading. And so when we moved into it, we were able to keep it that way by just making decisions like hardwiring and keeping our phones on airplane mode. We don't let our kids play with tablets or phones and...

Ryan: And we keep the phones like, you know, at some corner of the house a lot of times.

Teddy: Right. And we don't sleep with them next to our head, which I think a lot of people, I know when I was

a teenager or I did even in college, so I don't think people realize the harm in that. So yeah, like I said, our list is huge, and it's something that we feel really strongly about, and there's so many easy things to do on it. So we just like to get that to people right away on our site.

Katie: Yeah, I'll make sure to include the links so people can find that and to sign up for your emails and get that.

This podcast is brought to you by myobuddy. This thing is one of my daily go-to's for relaxation because it combines the benefits of infrared heat, percussive massage and vibrational therapy for what I can only describe as a mixture of deep tissue massage and myofascial release all in one device. It has really reduced my muscle tension and my need for massage and many people with conditions like MS, chronic fatigue, etc are using this for muscle relief. Also, many athletes use it for faster recovery. I personally find the biggest benefit for relaxation and for fascia work, but you can try it out at wellnessmama.com/go/myobuddy and make sure to check the show notes for a special discount.

This episode is brought you to by Joovv red light therapy, which has become an integral part of my daily routine and here's why. Joovv has red lights with specific wave lengths of red light that increase ATP, which is Adenosine Triphosphate Production, in the body by supporting the mitochondria. Now since ATP is responsible for not just your energy that you feel, but pretty much everything that happens in your body, this is a big deal. This therapy is also known as photobiomodulation and it has well documented benefits for skin health, for energy levels, for recovery after injury or surgery, for improving thyroid health (which is what I'm using it for), and even as an anti-aging device because it increases collagen production and hair growth and reduces hair loss. So lots of cool benefits. You can check it out, the one that I use, at wellnessmama.com/go/joovv. You can also check out the show notes for more information.

Katie: You're right about the EMFs. I really believed that this is gonna be the next wave of research and we're gonna start finding so much more. Even when I was in Switzerland, they have natural medicine clinics there and they understand EMF toxicity so much more than we do and they even had what they called EMF refugees there, people who had gotten to the point that they were having grand mal seizures from EMF exposure, and so basically they then try to navigate how to recover from that.

So I think this is huge and not talked about nearly enough, and I love that you guys are raising awareness as well. And the phone thing, I think, is huge because that's the one part that almost nobody is willing to part with their phone, but at least at night like put it on airplane mode and then you're reducing half of your exposure right there. And also from the experts I've talked to, it's the dose makes the poison, and the further away you are from it the safer it is, obviously. So even if it's in the corner of the house and like 10 feet away from you, that's so much safer than in your pocket. So I think even those little things make a huge difference over time.

Ryan: Yeah. And just on the frequency note, it's kind of a closely related tangent to have a light, in general, is another thing we're getting pretty big into lately, and not being exposed to blue, you know, a white light bulb is blue light frequencies and...

Teddy: Well, even your devices like your phone at night.

Ryan: Yeah, but when you think about it, I mean we're made to only be taking in light when the sun goes down or, excuse me, when the sun is up but now we have this artificially lit environments 24 hours a day pretty

much from the minute we wake up to the minute we go to bed. And there's a lot of research from that, one, throwing your circadian rhythm in terms of just how good of a sleep you get, hormone production, especially melatonin, which is, you know, happens to be very anticancer. And if you're getting that, if you're getting that completely, you know, out of whack then that's a huge, you know, cancer protectant, natural cancer, yeah, cancer-producing...cancer-protecting hormone inside your body that you're just completely missing out on.

And, you know, the...what am I looking for? Mitochondria, again back to, you know, what you need to be very anti-cancer. When you get that light, when you get exposed to that light, when you're not supposed to, it's a bad thing. So we actually have red light bulbs that we use when the sun goes down. The red lights come on and, you know, we look crazy to the neighbors but we...

Teddy: And our special glasses too, because we're always up late after the kids go to bed just getting, you know, our articles and podcast up. So we have the special orange glasses that make us feel really cool, too. But the kids, they can't wear them, and that's why we did the red lights around the house.

Katie: Yeah, I'm right there with you with the...we have like the orange lights in the lamps at our house, and so the overhead lights are like bright daylight spectrums, and those go off at sunset, and then we just turn on the lamps which are with the orange hues only and I wear the blue blockers too. They actually do have some kids blue blockers now. I can put a link in the show notes, but it's hard to get kids to actually wear them because kids don't like to be still, but they do make them now.

Teddy: Yeah.

Ryan: Yeah. Well, our kids don't get a lot of screen time just for many reasons. So that's not a hard thing for us but...

Teddy: But we have the same setup as you.

Ryan: Yeah, the lamps, it's funny, that's like Ryder's job now is to...he goes around and...

Teddy: Just turns on all the lamps.

Ryan: He knows when it's time to turn on the lamps and turn off the overhead lights. Yeah, it's funny, it's exactly what we do.

Teddy: And it's such an easy way to do it. I mean it's like that way you have everything just ready to go. You're not switching light bulbs and, you know, you get the light that you need during that day and at night you've got your lamps already to go. So that's been the easiest way that we found too.

Katie: Yeah, and it's funny like people, I think it's easy to think like, "Oh, it's just light. It doesn't make that big of a difference," but I'm guessing you guys probably had a similar experience. It really does make a pretty drastic difference in how the kids sleep, and then also how like I get tired earlier at night and sleep better when I do it. And if I forget or if I'm at an event and there's this fluorescent lighting, I really do notice a big difference from it.

Ryan: Yeah. And it's funny like even, you know, if you're in your house when you have all the red lights on and

everything and you're just feeling nice and calm and then, I don't know, you open the fridge or something without your blue blockers on and it's like, "Ah," you know, you can...that's when you can really tell you're not supposed to be getting that stuff, is when you do get away from it that, yeah, it makes a big difference.

Katie: Yeah, and I think the flip side too with having the bright lights on in the house, but even more importantly and I know you guys are huge on outdoor time, is getting the kids outside in the bright light during the day because that's so critical for the signaling and the circadian rhythms and getting the melatonin production to go up when the lights go out. You have to have it right during the day. That's been huge. I'm like I'm very big on my kids are being outside as much as possible during the day because it really does make a difference in their sleep.

Teddy: Yeah, exactly. And we...it's funny, you know, so with parents that we work with going through cancer and what we did was we start...we made a schedule for ourselves with...because we're trying to get all these different supplements and juices and detoxification measures and infrared sauna and so on and so forth, and it's hard to remember, you know, to get all of that stuff in every day and, you know, nail your protocol day in and day out. And so, we started like writing out actual kind of minute by minute or I guess more like 15 or half hour minute increments with all the supplements and stuff like that, but then we started adding on, getting outdoors, getting...and we literally would have outside time kind of baked into our protocol and positive thoughts and affirmations and deep breaths. And so now Ryder...

Teddy: And on the getting outside note, we actually found an interesting Japanese study of forest bathing raising the...what was it, the killer...

Ryan: Natural...

Teddy: ...natural killer cells for cancer. So it's an extremely anticancer thing too just to get outside, and it's good for you and you're breathing the air and you're exercising. So yeah, we're huge on getting outside every single day.

Katie: I think that's such an important point that you guys just brought up too, about balancing it all, and how you even mentioned earlier that like there are days where he doesn't want to do all these stuff and you just do what you can. Because I know people especially starting off, that's a common feeling, is that there's so much to do, it's a huge echo battle, you're supposed to make all these changes overnight. And certainly, in a cancer diagnosis you do, you make those changes overnight, and you do what you have to do, but I think people who are just trying to slip into prevention and to making sure their kids are healthy over the long term, it's okay that to add things as it works and to, you know, adapt your lifestyle in a sustainable way. And I think that's a good balance point, is to do what you can and to make these changes that last and it stick without trying to overwhelm yourself and do it all in a week, and then burn out in two weeks, you know. So I think that's a great thing that you guys talk about so much on your site as well.

Teddy: Yeah, exactly. And I think just having the right perspective and just not looking at it like what I can't do, but it's just for us this has been so empowering. Because there's nothing more disempowering as being a parent and your child is diagnosed with a life-threatening disease that, you know, is literally threatening to take them away from you and you feel like you can't do anything. And then, you know, all of a sudden you realized, "Wow, there's so much that I can do and I see the difference, and he is thriving and he's radiating health," you know. And for us that's been just perspective has just been huge for us, and we try to just tell

people that really your perspective is so important in everything that you do. And even your kids feeling that off of you and their willingness to do it with you happily versus feeling like, you know, you're taking away fun things from them, but you're actually like giving them fun things. Because, I mean this isn't, you know, it's not meant to be a punishment, it's meant to be the greatest gift that we can give them as parents.

Ryan: Yeah, I mean it's, one, yeah, it's not...I don't think it's an accident that Ryder was always the best looking kid in the oncology ward, you know, he did...

Teddy: And Ryan doesn't mean like what's my...

Ryan: The handsome boy, yeah.

Teddy: Although we're bias, so we always.....

Ryan: Yes, he is pretty cute. But yeah, no it's just...I don't know, emphasizing that mindset thing is we always try to hammer in. It's not, you know, you're not depriving your kid of the things, that you're providing for your kid a healthy life.

Teddy: Yeah. Because we always hear like, you know, parents feel bad if they can't give their kids like McDonalds as a reward. Like, "Well, I'm taking that away from them, like they're going through this treatment and they feel terrible all the time and I just want to be able to do something nice for them, and that's what they love." But, if you just can kind of broaden your gaze into the future and just realize that maybe you just thought initial feeling good of getting, for the sake of the example, just this fast-food and then...but just knowing what that's actually doing to them later on, and that they're going to feel crappier for it. So you're really not punishing them like taking things away from them. You're actually like gifting them, you know, feeling better in the long run. And we're finding so many healthy treats too that our kids love. Like, our kids are not deprived from like a taste standpoint. They are huge foodies, eat a really frightening amount, but they like have a lot of healthy options.

Katie: Yeah, I think that what you just said is key to everyone and every aspect of life, is that when it comes to health, you're not ever depriving, it's never... And I think that mindset if we can only do one thing, if we can teach our kids that mindset, that will serve them so well in life. And I think you're right that...I mean culture tends to tell us to reward kids with fast-food or with sugar or with treats, but healthy food tastes great too, and health in and of itself is a reward. And I think like you guys have done, teaching that at such a young age, because you had to and now you do it because you can and you want too, and I think that's an incredible gift to give them. And what always struck me on your site is you have all these videos that explain all the different things that you've done, and he's so happy, Ryder is so happy in all these videos. You're certainly not like forcing him to dry brush or forcing him to rebound or all these things. He's like super excited about it and he's like a budding TV personality himself, he's amazing. So I think that alone is a great encouragement for all parents to just let the kids own it, let them be part of it, and teach the why, and don't feel like you're depriving them. And I think that's a huge point, it's just that alone. If your mindset is that, they're gonna feed off of how you feel and your interaction and they're gonna learn those healthy habits for their whole life.

Ryan: Yeah, and that's the other thing is, you know, you have to believe it and you have to be practicing it for yourself, you know. If you're in a fast-food and then trying to get your kid to eat healthy, even if like...even if they don't see you eating it, it's just gonna come off.

Teddy: Yeah.

Ryan: Like, you know, they're not dumb. They have to be seeing to do the same things that you're trying to get them to do.

Katie: Yeah, for sure. So I want to respect your guys' time, but I'd love for you to kind of end with any advice that you'd have for someone especially a parent who has a child who's struggling with cancer right now, but also just any words of encouragement you would have to any parent who's going through even a minor struggle with kids, whether it's just not wanting to eat healthy food or whatever it may be, because you guys have navigated this successfully, and I think you're such an inspiration there.

Teddy: For us, the biggest things are just keep going, and that there's always something new to try, and having that mindset and just knowing that there's always something else that you can try is very empowering. Because, if one thing doesn't seem like it's working, especially with cancer, if you're not seeing the results that you want, there's still...there's so much more that you can always tap into. And at the end of the day it just comes down to just not giving up, just keep going no matter what.

Ryan: Yeah, and on the flip side of that I'd say, you know, don't be afraid to just...to implement something and don't beat yourself up and feel like you have to have it all figured out and you have to like understand the signs behind everything and just have the ultimate protocol mapped out and completely just not knocked it out of the park day one. I mean at the end of the day, I guess the approach we always took was, if the oncologists aren't scared to pump a big bag of poison into our son to save our lives, we're not gonna be scared of maybe him getting a couple...too many vitamins and....

Teddy: Or too much carrot juice.

Ryan: Yeah.

Teddy: That he might turn orange but...

Ryan: He did turn orange actually.

Teddy: He did. He was very orange for actually almost two years but...

Ryan: But, yeah, it's, you know, on the one hand, there's always something new to try, and on the other hand it's don't be scared to just jump in and start going at it.

Teddy: Because there is, to Ryan's point, I mean there's so much fear mongering going on. And especially I'm not entirely sure why but, you know, if conventional medicine doesn't know about the efficacy of something, they'll typically just tell you not to do it and input fear into you. So we work with a lot of parents that are scared to give their kids juice that they make, and we have to like really kind of sit them down and say, "Hey, like, you're not scared of chemotherapy and the, you know, the 50 other prescriptions that are going to come with that." Like, "Please don't be scared of giving your kids too many fruits and vegetables."

Katie: Yeah, exactly, that's a great point. And I'd love for you guys to also let everyone know where they can

find you online. And, of course, I'll have links on the show notes at wellnessmama.fm but let people know where they can find you. Especially if they're just listening and can't click on the show notes, where can they learn more about your journey and find you guys?

Ryan: Yeah, mykidcurescancer.com is the home base and then mykidcurescancer.com/healthy-home is where you can get that checklist, but I think you can just get it on the main website there, too.

Teddy: And we also have a podcast. Ryan does a podcast himself. You can get it on iTunes and Stitcher. We're on Facebook, My Kid Cures Cancer. We just started an Instagram, which is a lot of fun, so that's more of the day to day stuff that we're doing, and we're also posting pictures of our home getting built to and kind of we're not at the point yet of like showing the super healthy things that we're doing, but we're close, I think, in the next week or so, and...

Ryan: You mentioned YouTube?

Teddy: And YouTube, oh yeah.

Ryan: Yeah, YouTube is like, yeah. We're, you know, you can find all the videos of Ryder and our daughter Channing doing all these healthy stuff and it's where we post the podcast too. And the podcast is My Kid Cures Cancer as well and that's... I mean the podcast is not specific to childhood cancer, it's I'm just interviewing all of these various, you know, health experts naturopathic oncologists, naturopathic doctors, clinic owners, just on the various ways to go about reversing cancer.

Katie: Thank you guys so much. This has been very informative and super inspiring, and all those links again will be in the show notes so that people can find them and find you. But thank you so much for your time and being here and for all the work you're doing not just for kids but for everybody.

Teddy: Thank you so much for having us, Katie.

Ryan: Really good to talk to you, Katie. Thanks.

Katie: You guys too, and thanks to all of you for listening, and I'll see you next time on "The Healthy Moms Podcast."

If you're enjoying these interviews, would you please take two minutes to leave a rating or review on iTunes for me? Doing this helps more people to find the podcast, which means even more moms and families could benefit from the information. I really appreciate your time, and thanks as always for listening.