



Episode 242: Fighting Thyroid Disease With Food & Recipes for Thyroid Health From Dr. Izabella Wentz

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Katie: Hello, and welcome to the "Wellness Mama Podcast." I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com. And I'm here today with one of my favorite people in the world, Dr. Izabella Wentz, PharmD from thyroidpharmacist.com. She is a pioneering expert in lifestyle interventions for treating Hashimoto's thyroiditis, which I have. She was also diagnosed at age 27 and she drew on years of research, and has worked with thousands of patients plus her own experience to create her number one, New York Times bestseller, "Hashimoto's Protocol."

I know firsthand that she's so passionate about helping others with Hashimoto's, and she does help hundreds and thousands every year. She also, as a side note, loves small fluffy dogs, yoga, hiking, fashion and throwing out random witty sayings whenever she can get away with it, which is asked often because she's very good at it.

She just wrote a new book called "Hashimoto's Food Pharmacology: Nutrition Protocols and Healing Recipes to Take Charge of Your Thyroid Health," and it's awesome. It's a step-by-step guide for creating healthy habits and easy delicious recipes to revamp the immune system. And she has in there, a proven nutritional plan that's Hashimoto's safe, plus a bunch of recipes and meal plans. You guys have to check it out. We'll talk about it a little bit today. But Izabella, welcome, and thanks for being here.

Izabella: Hi, Katie. Thank you so much for having me. It's always so great to connect with you.

Katie: Oh, likewise. I could talk to you all day. To get started, I'd love if we could just establish some base terms. I think most people are familiar with the term by now. But in case there is anyone who isn't, can you just give us a primer on what Hashimoto's thyroiditis is, and why you think it's so prevalent right now.

Izabella: Wow. So Hashimoto's is the most common autoimmune condition in the world, and definitely in the United States. It's one of those conditions that sounds really exotic, but it's actually very, very common. So, as many as 20% of us might have it. What it is, is basically the immune system starts to recognize the thyroid gland as the foreign invader, starts to attack the thyroid gland, which eventually results in us not making enough thyroid hormone.

And so, Hashimoto's is the leading cause of hypothyroidism or a sluggish thyroid as some people might say, and it's the leading cause by people get prescribed the medication, Synthroid. What I think an always interesting little tidbit as a pharmacist that Synthroid is...has been in the top selling drug category for the last five years, usually top one, top two, or top three. So this is a very, very common condition, and many of us are affected. Some of us might not even know it.

Katie: Wow, I know that was me for years. And I'd love to hear a little bit about your story as well as long with, what are some of the symptoms that people can look for? Because I know in my own experience, I had definitely some of the symptoms that lined up with the classic hypothyroidism. But then I had some other random symptoms and things were kind of across the board. So, what would someone look for to know if they might be struggling with this?

Izabella: Some of the most common symptoms that people are gonna have are gonna be fatigue. There are gonna be challenges with weight. A lot of times people will have weight gain, some people might have weight loss, that's not welcome as well, though, and then we're gonna have issues with, I would say, the brain. So this might be something like brain fog, this might be something like anxiety or even depression. Any of those symptoms would signal that somebody had an issue with their thyroid.

For what a lot of women, what's interesting, it's actually something quite, I guess, you know, I laugh at, to say it's a bit superficial, because this was one of the first symptoms for me, was hair loss. Where I was in my 20s and I just thought, "Okay, maybe being tired is normal, maybe gaining weight is normal. But why am I losing so much hair, this just should not be happening?" So loss of hair as well as a loss of the eyebrows, dry skin, these are some of the big telltale signs that you might have a thyroid condition. And I know for a lot of women, this is gonna be the very first thing that we might notice. And sometimes I'll laugh because it'll be the hairdresser's that "diagnose us" instead of our doctors.

Katie: That is funny.

Izabella: Yeah, with me, with my story is I was chronically fatigued for almost a decade. So I would basically go to work in the mornings. I'd drag myself out of bed, and I'd come home and I'd be exhausted, and then I'd fall asleep around 9:00 p.m. And basically, I would sleep for anywhere from 10 to 12 hours and still feel exhausted every day. And then I went on to have more symptoms like irritable bowel syndrome, carpal tunnel syndrome, I had hair loss, I had panic attacks, I had cold intolerance, which is another cardinal symptom where I was wearing two sweaters in Southern California. And all of these things were just sort of happening.

I felt like I wasn't, "seriously sick." All the doctors were saying everything was normal, but yet I felt like my body was breaking itself apart. This was like, as I mentioned in my 20s, a lot of times people might get diagnosed when they're a bit older, usually after they have babies or even during perimenopause, pregnancy, puberty and perimenopause are some of the most common times when women get diagnosed.

And so, I was just walking around not knowing what was going on. I was very forgetful. And, finally I got some testing done that revealed I had Hashimoto's. And at that point I decided to see if there was anything I can do to get myself better. I started on medications which was great. As a pharmacist, I thought they would be, the thing that cured me, and would be the one answer, the one solution, but unfortunately, the medications helped me feel a little bit better. I went from sleeping 11 hours to like 10 hours a night. So that was a huge improvement for me. But at the same time I wanted to figure out if there was anything I can do to get myself to feel better as well as potentially figure out what was causing or exacerbating the condition. And that's kind of how I became a Hashimoto's experts/human guinea pig, was trying to find my own health with the root cause approach and trying to figure out what my triggers were, and if there were lifestyle changes that I could utilize to make myself better.

Katie: I know your work has been so helpful to me and so many others. What are some of the common triggers that you see that can...that are just a really prevalent in Hashimoto?

Izabella: Some of the biggest triggers are gonna be food sensitivities, and there are gonna be nutrient-deficiencies, there are gonna be impairability to handle stress, impairability to handle toxins. A lot of times, we might also see things like chronic infections as well as issues with gut. So these might be things like impaired digestion, a lack of digestive enzymes as well as intestinal permeability or a leaky gut. And we could go into a little bit more details on all those if you'd like.

Katie: Yeah, I'd love to specifically talk a little bit about the gut connection, because I know that was a key for me, is realizing not just only what I ate was so important, but my gut health in general really impacted my thyroid. So can you talk about that connection?

Izabella: Wow. Yeah, so what's kind of interesting is that the gut and thyroid, they share the same fetal origin. So they sort of develop all together. And a lot of the things we do that improve our gut health are gonna also improve the health of our thyroid gland.

We're looking at some of the research on autoimmune disease in general, which states that basically every single person with an autoimmune condition is gonna have three things present. And those are gonna be the genetic predisposition, some sort of a trigger that initiated or perpetuated the condition and then intestinal permeability or a leaky gut.

And when we have this leaky gut our immune system doesn't function properly, and we don't digest our foods properly. And our body may actually make antibodies against the foods that we're eating on a common basis. It could make antibodies against things that are normally present in our physiology. And so, what we'll see a lot of times is a person will have multiple food sensitivities when they have Hashimoto's. There's one particular antibody known as IGG, where people will have antibodies to their thyroid and the foods that they're eating with Hashimoto's. And a lot of times whatever foods they're eating that are IGG-reactive will cause a reaction for them within their thyroid as well.

Some of the other things we see are gonna be commonly, very commonly are gonna be nutrient or digestive enzyme deficiencies, specifically in digestive enzymes that the breakdown acids or that break down fats and proteins. This is gonna be very commonly seen in people with Hashimotos, and that kind of contributes to the vicious cycle of poor digestion and then we're not extracting nutrients from our food properly. Then we're also gonna be, I already alluded to that, we're gonna have nutrient deficiencies, and a lot of these nutrients are gonna be required for proper thyroid function as well as for proper gut function.

And another big thing is gonna be an imbalance of the gut flora. So people with Hashimoto, about half of them might have a condition known as SIBO, small intestinal bacterial overgrowth, where they have too much of bacteria in one part of their intestines. They might have an imbalance of good bacteria versus bad bacteria in their gut and that can perpetuate the autoimmunity, the leaky gut, and in some cases, they might even have different types of infections within their gut. Parasitic infections, they sound really rare and exotic living in the United States. Unfortunately, they're very, very common. I've been testing the gut health of people with thyroid issues for many, many years and will tell you that majority of them will have some sort of a gut infection, that is if they don't improve on just nutritional protocols alone.

Katie: Yeah, I definitely noticed that in my experience. And it was not an overnight process for sure. I think any of us who are in this know that Hashimoto's is an ongoing journey, not just a quick fix. And I love that you really address that so deeply in your "Hashimoto's Protocol" and also in your new book, which I want to talk

about a little bit because your first book, "Hashimoto's Protocol," your previous book is a 90-day plan for reversing symptoms and working with the root cause.

And the new book I thought was so fascinating because you...it's got like a...it's a cookbook in a way, it has a lot of recipes but it's so much more than that because Hashimoto's Food Pharmacology basically talks about using food as medicine in the same way that you could use pharmaceuticals to change your biology and how powerful that can be. So, I'd love to hear how you came up with this idea and what that concept looks like.

Izabella: Sure. So when I was in pharmacy school I learned about how tiny substances can impact our physiology. And at first, I mean, I thought it was just drugs. I thought, like, if food could do this, then I would have surely learned about it. And even things like lactose intolerance, I was almost skeptical of them. I was like, "Oh, well, it's just a tiny bit of lactose, what can it really do?" Where really, food can be a very powerful ally, to our healing. Food, medicine, pharmaceuticals, herbs, all of these different substances, they send tiny messages to our body. And they'll give our body messages to, for example, to our gut, it'll say, "Seal yourself, right, and keep all this stuff in or make yourself leaky." And this can be just on a day-to-day basis messages that we get.

Now, a lot of times people in the modern world, they expect that one pharmaceutical will be there cure all, and this is something that I expected. I thought, "I'll just take thyroid medications and everything will be fixed," but Hashimoto's is more than just the thyroid condition, it's a whole body condition. And so, we need a lot of these positive healing messages to be sent to our bodies to tell our bodies that it's...that they're safe and that it's time to heal. One of the things that can be particularly problematic for people with Hashimoto's is gluten. So whenever we eat gluten, this can cross react with our thyroid and so our body will say, "Gluten is a foreign invader, we're gonna attack it, and then there's a part of the thyroid gland, it looks like gluten as well, we're gonna attack that." And so every time we're eating that, that's sending a negative message to our body saying, "Hey, let's launch an attack against thyroid gland."

That said, there's also positive substances. And whenever we take those in the body gets messages of, "Hey, this is great. We have enough you know, let's say, we have enough L-glutamine. That means we can start repairing things. Let's start repairing the gut. Let's start repairing the thyroid gland." And this is what the food pharmacology was based on, is, figuring out which foods are gonna be adding to our overall health and which foods are gonna be taking away from it.

And I did go a little bit deeper with that, where I wanted to look at what were the most common reasons why people fail with diet. I know a lot of times, Katie, you and I are in the nutrition world and it's so controversial, because one person will say, like, "This is the best diet in the whole entire world." And then another person will say, "I almost died on that diet or this...I felt horrible," and there are these nutrition wars going about.

And one other really big reasons, in my opinion, in my experience, why people fail on certain diets is because they are either, A, deficient in nutrients. So anytime we take on a restrictive diet and anytime we have gut issues, we're gonna be deficient in nutrients. Whether we're not extracting them from our foods properly, or perhaps they're just not present in our food. One example would be the vegan diet, when we, and I think a lot

of people are familiar with that, where, it just doesn't contain B12. And so what we need to do is supplement with B12 when we're on this type of diet. Same goes for autoimmune diets, paleo diets, for people with thyroid conditions, we're not gonna be extracting nutrients properly. So, one of the big things I do is I talked about which nutrients you need to get on board when you're eating a healthy diet to complement yourself.

And the other thing I also talked about is digestive enzymes. We know, or research shows that people with thyroid conditions, having an underactive thyroid alone is gonna cause a depletion in various digestive enzymes, and also potentially the nutrition protocols that we're eating, the gut infections that we have on board, all the imbalances are gonna contribute as well. And so, another big part I talk about is digestive enzymes. Which ones should you utilize when you have a thyroid condition, and how do you know which ones you need, and how do you know how to take them? And that really, to me, is a whole picture of nutrition, a whole picture of the food pharmacology, is trying to figure out how do we best serve our bodies rather than just trying a diet that maybe worked perfectly for somebody else and our unique bodies we're tailoring this approach to ourselves.

Katie: I love that you brought that up, because that's something that's been on my mind so much recently. And I've become much less dogmatic in my own work, in my own writing. Because I've realized, I think you can learn a lot from almost any method. And I think at the end of the day, so many of us have found what works so well for us.

And, it does, and it works great for us but it may not work for everyone else. I think the future of health is very much gonna be in personalization and variation. And I feel like that's what you have really conquered in this book, is getting from people the tools to figure that out. As a quick follow up, I'd love to know just to kind of overview of what are some of the nutrients that those with Hashimoto's need to be really cognizant of making sure we're getting enough of through diet and supplements.

Izabella: One of the really big ones is gonna be vitamin D. And this is gonna be challenging to get through diet. A lot of times what I recommend is going to on a beach vacation, whenever possible. But that's not always possible for everybody. So we can take a supplement. Vitamin D as a supplement anywhere from 5,000 to 10,000. I use maybe as much as we need in the winter time. I always recommend testing for it first, before we supplement and then testing three months later, because vitamin D is something that can build up into the body.

Another big thing is gonna be selenium. Selenium is gonna be commonly deficient in thyroid conditions. It's not gonna be very commonly found in our soils. A food that's rich in selenium is Brazil nuts. However, depending on what region of the world they came from, some of them might have not enough selenium to meet our daily needs and some of them might have too much where it could even become borderline, toxic. So a lot of times, I'll recommend a selenium supplement, around 200 micrograms per day of selenium methionine, has been clinically shown to reduce thyroid antibodies. So these are the markers of the attack on the thyroid. The more we have, the more aggressive the attack is, and they've also shown to reduce anxiety and hair loss in people with thyroid conditions.

Another one that I commonly see that not a lot of people talk about is thiamine. This is vitamin B1. And interestingly, this is gonna be deficient in gluten-free and grain-free diets. This is something that can cause fatigue, low blood pressure, adrenal issues, carbohydrate intolerance. It could cause pain in the body. And what I found is, right around 600 milligrams per day seems to be the magic dose for most people with thyroid conditions to help restore their fatigue levels. What's been amazing, I've had people who have reached out to me that were on disability because of their, you know, serious fatigue levels, and they've started taking thiamine within three days, they'll start getting more energy. And within a couple of weeks to a few months, they'll be able to go back into the real world and start working again. This is not generally something you can necessarily test for on a lab test, but it is something that is water soluble and safe. So you can purchase the supplement and try it for yourself and see if it works. About three to five days, you'll be able to tell the difference.

Magnesium is another common nutrient that's gonna be deficient. Some of the common signs and symptoms are gonna be headaches, constipation, pain, muscle cramps, period cramps are a really big kind of symptom that tells us we might have a magnesium deficiency, anxiety as well as reflux. Interestingly, research has shown that taking a magnesium supplement not right away but over the course of a few years can normalize the appearance of a thyroid gland on a thyroid ultrasound. So it does contribute to some of that, some of our body's own healing.

The other one that I commonly recommend, and this is gonna be tested is gonna be ferritin. This is the iron storage protein. This is very commonly gonna be deficient in people with thyroid conditions. Some of the symptoms we're gonna see are gonna be fatigue, hair loss, breathlessness, anemia, mood swings, restless leg syndrome, and insomnia are also gonna be common with this deficiency but not a lot of people are aware of that. And this is something we're gonna see on a test. So we need to request ferritin specifically. We don't wanna just take iron willy-nilly, because it can build up in the body and can be toxic.

And then the last one, and I already mentioned this was B12. So this is, we know that this is gonna be deficient on a vegan diets, sometimes on a vegetarian diet. And, generally, we think that if we're paleo or gluten-free, that we would not might not be deficient in this. However, there's also a condition that causes us to be deficient in B12 because our body's not absorbing it properly. This could be also caused by something like SIBO or H. pylori. So, a lot of times I'll recommend testing for B12. And some of the deficiency signs are gonna be fatigue, depression, neurological issues, tingling extremities, brain fog, nerve damage, anemia, seizures can also be a very advanced symptom of that.

So these are some of the, I like to call the big six of nutrient deficiencies that I recommend. And there's also other ones that I talked about in the book like zinc, omega 3s, foliate, B vitamins, and vitamin C.

Katie: That was a super comprehensive analysis. Thank you. And so back to the food side a little bit, I think pretty much a lot of us now are aware that, you know, normal American diet is not good for us, and especially those of us with health condition, realize or are starting to realize that we can use food to benefit our bodies.

But even in those cases, I feel like I hear from so many people, where changing eating habits can be really difficult. Like, even if we know it's gonna really be beneficial for us, it's hard to make those changes. And it's hard to resist the call of daily bread or some process food that we have a tie to. So I'm curious if you have any tools for helping people overcome that part of the challenge? Sometimes it seems like that's the hardest part.

Izabella: Yeah, sometimes I feel like we get in our own ways or sometimes we have people in our lives that get in our ways. And a lot of it is creating new habits.

So, going through and making it super easy on yourself to eat this way. And so that's a big part of food pharmacology, is, you know, how do we really make it simple for people so that it just becomes natural, it becomes a habit, it becomes easier to eat this way than it does to eat the way that we used to eat.

It does take some time. It does take a lot of courage, it does take a lot of experimenting. So I've tried to really make it easy for people where we go through how to get started. We have meal plans, we have recipes, we talked about what to do when you're eating out, how to properly transition. So, using different kind of journaling, how to keep things simple.

There's also a big thing that I recommend is, really looking at the people in your life, making sure that they're supportive of you and sharing with them that this is something that you may wanna do. A lot of times, unfortunately, I'll see that people's efforts may be sabotaged by their loved ones, or people who maybe aren't the best friends that they could have.

And really about appreciating yourself and really being kind to yourself sometimes starts with letting other people in your life know that you have these boundaries, and that you need their support with it. A lot of times, it's as simple as saying, like, "Hey, I would really love your support with this diet that I'm on. And can you be there for me, I would really appreciate it," and that works a lot of times.

A lot of other times, we might have people in our lives that are...some people call them vampires, right? I had one lady that shared, she had a friend who didn't believe that she was sensitive to various foods. And this "friend" invited her over for dinner and told her that her meal would be gluten-free and dairy free. And as soon as the woman started eating it, she started becoming sick. And this was because the friend was "testing her." So she just snuck in a bunch of these foods in there to try to see if she was gonna react. And I feel like a lot of times, like, that we can do without friends like that. I'll say that inflammatory foods, removing them from our lives is gonna be hugely beneficial, and removing inflammatory people can be even more so beneficial a lot of times.

Katie: Yeah, it's unbelievable to hear those kind of stories. And I've heard those even with kids in school who had friends with peanut allergies, trying to put peanuts in their lunch, like sneak peanuts in which I just, I can't even fathom that. It's beyond me. But so take us through the practical side. What are some of the foods that you have found are especially beneficial for those with Hashimoto's?

Izabella: So I'll give you two foods that people can get started on right away in their own homes. And one of them is gonna be green smoothies and the other one's can be bone broth. So with green smoothies, 60% of people have found green smoothies to be helpful when they have thyroid condition. So, I should add, I did a little bit of... I have an outcomes research background.

So I went through, and the reason why I created these specific foods and recipes and meal plans is, looking at what works for most people with Hashimoto's based on my client work as well as later on doing some outcome research with a lot of my readers. Eighty-two percent of people said that the smoothies gave them more energy, 60% claim that they improve mood, and 40% noticed benefits for weight.

So, one of the reasons why smoothies works so well is that they are a great way to increase nutritious food into our systems without the digestive stress. So, we have all of these different foods that are gonna be chopped up. So they're gonna be easier to digest, even if we lacked digestive enzymes. And then that way that frees up some of our energy in our body, so it's not so focused on trying to digest.

And then we're also gonna be able to give these ingredients, make them much easier to absorb that way. I love to recommend green smoothies for breakfast and snacks. One big caveat is that you don't put a ton of fruit and call it a green smoothie. So we wanna look at maybe doing like one serving of fruit and the other servings four to six servings of vegetables. So these are gonna be things like carrots, avocados, celery, you can add some coconut milk in there to boost up the fat. And then I also like to use hypoallergenic protein source, such as hydrolyzed beef protein or pea protein. And you can have that first thing in the morning and later on as a snack.

The other thing that is really fantastic and can be really, really easy to make as bone broth. Bone broth has collagen and nutrients to support our gut lining, our skin, and 70% of people with Hashimoto's will say that they found it beneficial. One of the really big benefits is gonna be an increase in energy and increase improvement in mood as well as skin texture, hair and reducing some of the joint pains that people oftentimes have. One of the things I like to do is just throw in some chicken legs, throw in some chicken drumsticks, some celery, onion, and carrots, a little bit of apple cider vinegar, top it off with water and put that into a slow cooker or a pressure cooker and let it do its work.

Katie: Yeah, thank goodness for pressure cookers. They definitely simplify bone broth making for sure. I know one question we're probably gonna get, so I'd rather just address it is, what about cruciferous vegetables? Because I feel like they are a controversial topic for those with any kind of thyroid condition. Can those go in smoothies? Can they be eaten raw? Should they be eaten at all? What's your take on those?

Izabella: That's such a great question. And it's one of those things that I spent a lot of time looking into because there was all this information out there how, if you had a thyroid condition, that broccoli was like the most evil thing that you could possibly have in your life. And looking at all the research into goitrogens, which is really a broad term.

Goitrogen means something that interferes with thyroid function. And, a lot of times, cruciferous back in the olden days were classified as goitrogens because they interfered with thyroid function in a specific way. And this was because they blocked iodine absorption to the thyroid gland. Now, what we know nowadays is that, most cases of thyroid disorders are due to Hashimoto's, and this is an autoimmune attack on the thyroid gland. Back in the day, most cases of thyroid disease were caused by iodine deficiency. And so, of course, things like that would block iodine absorption into the thyroid gland could potentially make that worse. But now we know that most of us with Hashimoto's, I would say probably 90% of us are not gonna be iodine deficient. And in fact, research has shown that too much iodine can actually bring on Hashimoto's.

And so for most of us foods like broccoli, foods like cauliflower, all these wonderful cruciferous are gonna be perfectly safe. For a small percentage of us, they may interfere with iodine absorption into the thyroid gland. And I would say, those people need to be on a low dose iodine supplements anyway. And, another thing you could do is, you can either ferment them or you could boil, steam or cook the vegetables and that will break down the goitrogenic iodine blocking effect of them.

And I would say, just probably about 10% of people need to do that. So, go ahead and eat your cruciferous, have your broccoli, it's excellent for detoxifying your liver. It's great for your hormones, and it'll help support your thyroid as well.

Katie: Okay, and even those people could just stick to like you mentioned avocado, celery, cucumbers, things like that, non-goitrogenic vegetables and smoothies and still be fine.

Izabella: Absolutely. I will say there is if people have sulfur issues, so they have trouble breaking down sulfur foods, that may come in, that may be a problem with some of these vegetables that are high in sulfur. And some people that have issues with SIBO, they may have a hard time breaking down some of the components.

But generally, I would say, you really want to look at the person as a whole. You don't want to just keep restricting more and more foods until you're down to ice chips and saying, "Well, this reacts, this reacts," let's look at the whole body. If you have iodine deficiency, then you should be taking an iodine supplement in low doses and you should be eating, adding in more foods that are balanced in that. If you have SIBO, then you should be addressing that, if you have sulfur issues then you should be working on your detoxification systems to get rid of sulfur rather than eliminating more and more foods.

Katie: That makes sense. And what about foods to avoid? Are there any universal ones for Hashimoto's, any gray area foods?

Izabella: I would say the universal ones are gonna be gluten, dairy and soy. What I found is that a big percentage of people, so over 80% of people feel better gluten-free and dairy-free when they have Hashimoto's. And these two foods seem to be very reactive for people with Hashimoto's and potentially there

might be some cross reactivity with the thyroid gland, with the gluten, with dairy. We're not quite sure how the mechanism is working.

But again, I would say 88% of people with Hashimoto's, are gonna say that they feel better on a gluten-free diet. And then 80% of people feel significantly better on a dairy-free diet. With soy, we're looking at about 63% of people feeling better, but it's very remarkable in how much of a difference they see in their thyroid antibodies when they eliminate that food as well.

So, this is generally a starting point for most people. And I would say long term gluten and soy are gonna be off limits. Some people are able to reintroduce dairy successfully without problems.

Katie: Got it. Are there good substitutes for these I know you talk about it in the cookbook but what do you recommend because I know those are very much comfort foods for a lot of people, so are there substitutes that we can use instead?

Izabella: Yeah, of course. Depending on you know whatever types of foods are working for your body or not. I like for gluten, you can have rice or buckwheat as an option if you're avoiding grains. Flours made of coconut, almonds, cassava, tapioca, tiger nut are great options. I personally really like cassava flour. I find that I can use it in a lot of different baked goods, and it works really, really well in a little different types of breads and in pies. For dairy, almond milk and coconut milk are gonna be two potential go-to's if you're doing smoothies. If you want milk, these are wonderful alternatives, and they can both be made into yogurts.

Cashews can be made into spreads that are like cream cheese. I also really like to utilize...there's different types of cheeses, like diet cheese can be utilized. I try not to recommend too many processed foosd. But there's different ways to kind of meet your cravings. For proteins, I like hydrolyzed beef protein. I know I used to start my days with whey protein in the morning. And that was very, very inflammatory for me because I had a whey sensitivity but you can get away with doing pea protein or hydrolyzed beef protein, those are generally gonna be hypoallergenic for a lot of people. And then, you know, with soy, a lot of times this soy is a processed food so I don't feel like we need to necessarily look for a lot of substitutes for it. Potentially, if you were doing soy milk, you can just utilize coconut milk and almond milk. That will serve you just as well.

Katie: Perfect. And so pretty much like any then foods not on that list, like any kinds of meats that are from clean sourcing, vegetables, fruits, those are all considered good?

Izabella: You know, absolutely, depending... For most people, they're able to tolerate every type of meat, majority of vegetables, and then majority of fruit. And a lot of times, you know, I would say people usually have one primary food sensitivity or maybe two or three primary food sensitivities at max.

And once we do a lot of these healing and restoring, we're gonna be able to add in a lot of these foods back. So for short-term, I might recommend a diet like the autoimmune paleo diet or the paleo diet with the goal of

eventually reintroducing a lot of the different foods back. And the "Hashimoto's Food Pharmacology" cookbook actually has three different types of template protocols.

They're based on the intro diet, which is gluten free, dairy free, soy free. And then we have the paleo-type protocol, and then we have the more autoimmune paleo-type protocol. And it's really meant for people to go back and forth between these protocols depending on what they need, where they need to start off. Sometimes they may want to start off with more of their restrictive diet and work their way back up to more and more foods.

Sometimes they may start off with just the intro diet and remove more foods to see where their healing is. My goal for the cookbook was that, it had a ton of different recipes that could be modified back and forth. So you don't have to be like, "Oh, no, now I'm paleo. Now, I have to buy 17 cookbooks for that." I mean, you still can, and you still show it if you that's what you enjoy. But the book is really meant to support a person throughout their entire healing journey.

Katie: Gotcha. And that was my experience as well. I know early on, for me, certain foods, I can now add dairy back in and I do fine with that but all dairy was out at first for me, as well as some random ones like green beans and eggs which I know can be reactive for a lot of people with Hashimoto's, at least in that initial inflammatory phase as well.

This episode is sponsored by Just Thrive probiotics. I found this company when searching for the most research backed and effective probiotic available and I was blown away at the difference in their products! They offer two cornerstone products that are both clinically studied and highly effective. The first is their probiotic, which has been studied to help with leaky gut and to survive up to 1,000 times as much as other probiotics or the beneficial organisms in something like Greek yogurt for instance. The difference is, their spore-based strains work completely differently than other types of probiotics. Also, this probiotic is vegan, dairy free, histamine free, non-GMO, and is made WITHOUT soy, dairy, sugar, salt, corn, tree nuts or gluten—so it's safe for practically everyone...I even sprinkle it in my kid's food and bake it in to products since it can survive at high temperatures. Their probiotic contains a patented strain called *Bacillus Indicus HU36*[®], which produces antioxidants in the digestive system – where they can be easily absorbed by body. Their other product is a K2-7, and this nutrient—you may have heard of it—is known as the "Activator X," the super-nutrient that Weston A. Price—a dentist known primarily for his theories on the relationship between nutrition, good health, bone development and oral health. He found this prevalent in foods in the healthiest communities in the world. Their K2 is the only pharmaceutical grade, all-natural supplement with published safety studies. Like the probiotic, this is also, gluten, dairy, soy, nut and GMO free. Both are best taken with food so I keep both on the kitchen table. My dad has trouble remembering to take supplements so he taped them to the pepper shaker, which he uses daily, and they're now on his daily list as well. Check them out at thriveprobiotic.com/wellnessmama and use the code `wellnessmama15` to save 15%!

This podcast is brought to you by the best CBD I've ever tried and the one I feel is truly the best out there. It is called Ojai Energetics and here's why I love it... First, it's over 20 times more absorbable than most CBD, which makes it an incredible value. Over 99% of Ojai CBD gets where it needs to go in your body because of their patented colloidal technology (it is not liposomal) like 90% of the CBD on the market. In fact, 90% of the CBD

in these oils don't even make it past the gut and liver and into the blood. This is called, "The First Pass Effect". Then 90% of the CBD that does make it through, isn't available to the cells that need it. Ojai solves this problem with their colloidal system. I was skeptical and the first time I tried it, I felt a noticeable effect in about 15 seconds which is so much faster than the 20-30 minutes with other brands I've used! So now whenever I feel any stress or anxiety or have problems sleeping, I use their CBD oil. Their CBD is derived from completely organic ingredients and batch tested by 3rd Party Vendors for Heavy Metals, VOC'S, Pesticides, Herbicides, Microbes, and for the content of Terpenes and Cannabinoids. Because this version absorbs faster, you also can know if you're getting the right dose as too much is not optimal. Here's how: Because Ojai works so rapidly, it causes your body's cannabinoid receptors in the tongue to modulate. The taste will be bitter when your body needs more CBD, but will change to sweet when you have had enough. To test this, just take a ¼ dropper, wait 30 seconds, then feel if it's bitter or sweet. If it is bitter, then repeat until sweet. Ojai is also a certified B corp and they operate their servers off of wind power, they use completely recyclable packaging, work to build relationships with the farmers who grow the ingredients they use, ensuring fair trade wages, and only supporting regenerative farming practices. Find out more about them and get a special gift at ojaienergetics.com/wellnessmama.

Katie: I'd love to for you to weigh in a little bit more on fruit, because I feel like it's gotten a bad rep lately, especially with keto diets on board now. And even within some realms of paleo, and people are avoiding fruit. What do you think about fruit and its whole form, unsweetened just natural fruit?

Izabella: I love fruit. I think fruit is fantastic. It's delicious. It's like nature's desert. In some cases, people, when their initial healing journeys when they have a lot of blood sugar issues, they may need to limit fruit. So they might have to have one to two servings a day because of the blood sugar issues. Once we get all of our nutrients addressed, though, for example, thiamine can help with tolerating fruit better.

And once we're eating more of a healthy...healthy is a tricky word but more of a whole foods diet where we're getting plenty of those fats and proteins into our system, we're gonna become more balanced. And at that point we will need to restrict fruit. I really think a lot of what we need to do with nutrition has come back into balance and get our bodies into more of a resilient state.

And that's what I hope to do with this "Hashimoto's Food Pharmacology," is to teach people how to use food as medicine and follow their own body's intuition into what works best for them. So sometimes they may benefit from eating a lot more fruit, like in the summers or when they're dehydrated. And other times they may benefit from limiting their fruits such in times like the winters or when their blood sugar is running all over the place. And, I guess, my answer is, it depends on the person, right, and depends on where you are on your healing journey.

Katie: I love that reminder though, that this is not a normal state that we can recover from a lot of this. And, if we stay within the boundaries that our body's giving us and figure out what works for us, most of us are able to regain most foods. And I love that you said resilient because, I think so often it's easy to focus on the disease and to become fixated on that. But truly, we should be focused on the health side and moving toward health versus just being stuck in disease.

And, one thing that really struck me about your new book is that, it's so versatile and the recipes are amazing. And it's, I think it's often when you think you're going into a restrictive diet for a specific health condition, people often anticipate a pretty bland, very basic diet, and it's not like that at all. So can you just give us a few examples of recipes in the book that you loved or that your family specifically loves?

Izabella: Sure. So a lot of the recipes are gonna be based on a lot of a lot of my culture. So I'm from Poland, there's gonna be a lot of traditional Polish fair in there. So a lot of the recipes that I think are gonna be new to people in the Paleo world, such as stuffed cabbage rolls, these could be actually made, they're naturally gonna be gluten-free. But you can also make them paleo when you use rice, cauliflower instead of rice. There's gonna be a hunter stew recipe that includes basically everything you have in your kitchen and you slow cooker and it's quite delicious. And I have lots of pies that were modified to be even autoimmune friendly, that were coming from my Polish culture.

And a lot of the different foods I have, I tried to really make them straightforward and easy. So 80% of the recipes can be made on a weeknight. A lot of them are pressure cooker, and slow cooker recipes that you don't have to spend, you know, your entire life in the kitchen cooking up. And then I've got about 20% recipes that are gonna be more fancy for dinner parties or for the weekends if you wanna follow multiple steps. And if you enjoy that kind of thing, there's gonna be some fun for you to experiment with there.

I have a lot of different types of cuisines that I personally like. So we've got Mexican inspirations. We've got Italian inspirations. We've got Thai inspiration, as well as some of that Eastern European. So, I think there's gonna be something that just about everybody can find in the book to suit their needs. Whether that's gonna be a shepherd's pie that's made paleo, whether that's gonna be a special kind of hash. My hubby has made some killer carnitas that are gonna be paleo and gluten-free that most people seem to really, really enjoy, especially me.

And I really, I really hope that people enjoy these recipes. I feel like we've spent a lot of times eating the same things over and over again and we don't realize that just because we're not eating gluten, dairy, and soy that we can eat very, just a very, very tasty diet. And a lot of it is pulling on various types of cultures.

Katie: Yeah, I'm a huge fan of foods from around the world as well. I'd love also just to quickly get your take on two foods that seem kind of like semi-controversial and gray area in most of these types of diets, which are potatoes and corn. So, you mentioned shepherd's pie. And I know there's ways to make it without potatoes. But I'm curious, what your thoughts are for people who are not sensitive to those foods?

Izabella: And so shepherd's pie that we have the recipes for, we actually use sweet potatoes or we can use the white sweet potatoes as well that give more of a flavor closer to regular potatoes. And, I think initially, for most people, potatoes are gonna be fine but there are some people that have nightshade sensitivities where potatoes, maybe reactive and then also people with severe blood sugar issues, they may need to restrict some of their potatoes initially.

I know, they're kind of controversial in the paleo world, right, because they can be, "You know, are they paleo? Or are they not paleo?" And a lot of times, we'll see that people in the initial stages of healing may need to eliminate them. And then as they heal their guts more and heal their bodies, they're gonna be able to reintroduce them back in.

Corn is another interesting food. One of the challenges with corn is that is that it's gonna be genetically modified. So if you are gonna be looking for corn, make sure you eat the organic pine. The other issue is gonna be that it's very high in sugar. And so, we might have problems with it if we have blood sugar issues. And then another thing is, the proteins in corn unfortunately, are gonna be reactive for some people. So, corn is gonna be one of the top foods, one of the top grains that's gonna be reactive for people with Hashimoto's.

A lot of times will say, let's eliminate it if we haven't gotten the results that we need with the intro diet, let's try to eliminate corn and some grains to see if that gets rid of additional symptoms. It is something that can be reintroduced back. I know I used to have a lot of problems with corn. I would look 18 months pregnant whenever I had just like a corn chip. And eventually, I was able to introduce that without any kind of issues now, where I can work. Of course, I'll always choose the organic kinds, but I can eat corn without any issues now.

So, I hope that answers the questions that your listeners might have. And I just, I apologize if it sounds a little bit confusing. And that that's really why I wrote the book, is to help you figure out what, what's gonna be right for you, where we go through different types of symptom assessments.

For example, if you have joint pain, a lot of times this may be related to corn or this may be related to potatoes and other types of night shades. So, you'll know based on your symptoms on how to modify things for yourself. We're speaking to the general person, you don't want to necessarily eat the diet that everybody eats, you wanna eat the diet that's right for you.

Katie: Yeah, I think above all that such an important point. And I think books like yours and your work are really helping to raise awareness about that, and not just raise awareness, but also give people the tools to figure out what that actually looks like. And you go deep on individualization and figuring out your own body and all the nutrients we talked about. And I think that's so key.

I know firsthand how well it works because I went through your first book and your previous book, and I've gone through all of these books and seeing the changes in my own life. So I definitely would encourage people to check it out especially if anyone's feeling like I was in those early stages of just, in that kind of brain fog and kind of helplessness of not knowing what to do next. And between finding your work and our mutual friend, Dr. Alan Christianson, it was totally life-changing for me.

So I appreciate so much for what you do. And, one question I love to ask toward the end of interviews, my recommendation before I asked you for a book that changed my life is your new cookbook because it is so good. But I'd love to hear if there is a book or books that have been really influential in your life as a whole and why.

Izabella: Well, one of the books that was really influential was "The Body Ecology Diet" by Donna Gates. So, this was a book that came out many decades ago. And now it's an it's updated version and it just really goes through focusing on the health of your gut, to restore the health of your body and using food as medicine and nutrition.

And that's been one of the books that's really inspired a lot of my work. It's helped me tremendously in my own healing journey. And, I'm just so grateful that I can help others, especially wonderful to hear that I've been able to help you on your healing journey as well. It's such an honor.

Katie: Oh, thank you. And lastly, if there is a single piece of advice that you could spread far and wide, what would it be and why?

Izabella: One of the really big pieces of advice I would just say to women and men listening is, really trust yourself and trust your body, trust your intuition. And a lot of times your body will tell you things that your doctor might not, a book might not, and trying to tune in and listening to what your own inner wisdom is saying is gonna be such a key component to healing, to becoming the truest, most happiest version of yourself.

I really do hope I can do that with food pharmacology by giving you some of the tools and some of the ways to interpret your body subtle messages. And I hope that you continue to do that and continue to work on tuning into yourself. I really think that's where a lot of our wisdom and healing and power comes from.

Katie: So beautiful and so important. And there will be links in the show notes for all of you listening at wellnessmama.fm. So everything we've talked about, Izabella's books and some supporting blog articles from both of our sites about some of these topics. Make sure to check those out. Don't worry about writing them down if you're jogging or driving just check out the show notes, wellnessmama.com.

And Izabella, thank you as always. I can't leave our time has flown by already. I could talk to you all day long. And I know that we can also talk about motherhood since you have a sweet, new baby and would love to do it again sometime soon.

Izabella: Thank you so much. Thank you so much for your work and your friendship, and I appreciate everything you do.

Katie: And thank you to all of you for listening and sharing your most valuable asset of your time with us. We're very grateful for you and that you chose to do that, and I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of the "Wellness Mama Podcast."

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