Episode 683: The Real Story About Castor Oil for Beauty, Hormones, and Health
With Marisol Teijeiro
Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This podcast is brought to you by Purity Woods, which is one of the best skin care formulas I have found. I’ve struggled for years with trying to find the right skin care for me. And as I’ve said before, with formulating my own products, I feel that non-toxic should be the absolute bare minimum baseline, but also because our skin is one of our largest organs, it’s also a great chance to put beneficial things in. And this is exactly what Purity Woods does.

They have skin care products that effectively combat aging and wrinkles and help restore the appearance of my skin. And it’s one of the first products I have tried that really makes a noticeable difference. I know we’ve all experienced skin care products that are labeled as clean and organic only to find out that there’s other unsavory ingredients in there. And Purity Woods is the opposite of that. They are on a mission to provide the cleanest and most effective anti-aging and longevity products available. And everything is certified organic, non-GMO, and free of everything toxic. They use amazing revolutionary ingredients, including one called maple leaf extract, which contains an anti-inflammatory antioxidant, which helps with the hydrating properties of the skin, and it can really soothe skin while also brightening and nourishing the skin. Their age-defying cream is a game changer. It definitely makes you feel like you’re going back in time and reduces things like fine lines, wrinkles, and age spots. These were formulated by skin care chemists at the top of their field to create products that really support collagen and elastin production without any irritation or drying of the skin or hormone-disrupting ingredients. Turn back the appearance of your skin with Purity Woods Age-Defying Dream Cream. Go to puritywoods.com/mama10 and enter the code MAMA10 at checkout to save 10% on your first order.

This episode is sponsored by Hiya Health, which is my go-to source for multivitamins, especially for my younger kids, before they can swallow pills. Typical children's vitamins are basically candy in disguise, filled with unsavory ingredients and things you would not give to your children otherwise. Most brands on store shelves are filled with sugar, unhealthy chemicals and other gummy junk that growing kids, or frankly, anyone should never eat. And this is why I'm so glad I found Hiya Health. Hiya makes children's vitamins with zero sugar and zero gummy junk and unsavory ingredients. Yet they taste great, and they are perfect for picky eaters. They're also nostalgic and remind me of the children's vitamins I took as a kid, though I probably wouldn't love those ingredients. Hiya is unique because it fills the most common gaps in modern children's diets to provide full body nourishment for our kids, with a yummy taste that they will love and you will not have to fight them over. They manufacture in the USA with globally sourced ingredients that are each selected for optimal bioavailability and absorption. And the best part? They arrive straight to your door on a pediatrician recommended schedule, so you never have to worry about running out. Your first month comes with a reusable glass bottle that your kids can personalize with stickers. So in the case of my kids, with six of them, they never get them confused. And then every month after, Hiya sends a no plastic, eco friendly refill pouch of fresh vitamins. Which means that Hiya isn't just good for your kids, it's also great for the environment as well. So you as a mom no longer have to worry about running out of vitamins, and they will automatically arrive when you need them. You can check them out and get them for your kids by going to Hiyahealth.com/wellnessmama. And you'll also save 50% on your first month.
Katie: Hello and welcome to the Wellness Mama podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com, and this episode is all about the real story about castor oil and if and how to use it for beauty, hormones, health, and so much more. And I'm here with my dear friend Marisol, who is definitely a world expert in this topic. She's an author and founder of something called Queen of Thrones, which makes heatless, less-mess, reusable castor oil packs. And in this episode, we go deep into the benefits of castor oil and how to use this for so many different things. We talk about what makes it unique from a health perspective. Why it can be the number one thing in a home pharmacy or beauty cabinet. Why it's considered the master carrier oil. How castor oil can transport things into deeper levels of skin than other oils. How can it can improve collagen and elasticity of skin, increase nitric oxide production, break down biofilms, improve the eyes at night and eyelashes for thicker, stronger hair. How to combine it with essential oils for different uses. How to wash your face and do lymphatic massage with castor oil, some simple home remedies you can make involving castor oil to help with everything from bug bites to sunburn, what castor oil packs are and how to use these for hormones, liver injuries and a lot more, what wet-dry brushing is and how to do this, how to use it for scars, post tattoo care, and so much more. It's always such a fun time learning from Marisol. So without further ado, let's talk about castor oil. Marisol, welcome back.

Marisol: Thank you so much, Katie. I just love chatting with you and all the Wellness Mama Darlings out there.

Katie: I'm excited to chat again and I think this is very timely conversation because Castor Oil is certainly gaining a lot of traction. I see it on social media all the time and I feel like there's some important caveats we're going to get to delve into when you're using Castor Oil. But before we get to that topic, I also have a note from your bio that you have a mild health retreat addiction and I want to hear about this and also what's the most impactful one you've ever been to?

Marisol: Awesome. Yeah, I've been over the past couple of years actually, since COVID I've been exploring the retreat world simply because for me, Castor Oil Packs, I got into Castor oil packs, because Castor Oil Packs were what shifted stress for me. And I realized that in our busy day-to-day life, it's pretty intense and it's hard to sometimes do what you need to do in order to and learn the practices and adopt them into a daily regular ritual.

And I found that the adoption of going to retreats actually really helps to do that because you say take a week or even up to four days, I think you need a minimum of three to four days to go on a pretty decent retreat. But you go. And then what ends up happening is you learn all these new skills and you practice them day-in and day-out. But then when you come back into your normal day-to-day crazy kids running around, driving, all that shebang that we have to do as mom, and then we get back into the swing of things. But we now are in the swing of things with these new adopted health practices. And even as a naturopathic doctor, I'm not perfect either and I fall off the bandwagon all the time and I got to get back to it. So I just find my scheduling in my retreats on a regular quarterly basis just really helps me to be able to just reset and get back into my regular practice and routine that is so essential for staying healthy in the long run.
Katie: I love it. I went on a women's health retreat a couple of years ago and it was such a fun experience. I feel like for me at least, having good relationships with women has always been a little bit of a struggle. Like, I have a few very close friends, but I've been more reserved in groups of women and so it was such an amazing group and the curator did an amazing job with that. But there were also all the health aspects involved and we even one night made drums with goat skin and got to weave the goat skin to make these drums. And it was such a cool, meditative thing that I would have never thought to do. But to your point, I feel like it was a great reset. And so now I'm a big fan of even if you're not going to go to a health retreat, like curate that experience with local friends or like a group of women friends, because I think that time is so valuable.

Marisol: It's just getting back to yourself. Right. And for me, the best one that you asked me was one in Puerto Vallarta. It was actually a girlfriend of mine and I've had a similar life where it's been challenging to connect with women. But I'm working on that. That's kind of one of my goals is to get better women friends. So that way I have an awesome network and it was a girlfriend who I'd met on a retreat who set up a retreat and one of the ceremonies was cacao. And so it was a heart opening ceremony and it was just beautiful. And we got to open up our hearts with the delicious cacao that we made from scratch and then we danced and moved the music of all the different chakras. So again, it's about bonding with our fellow women who are also within the industry or magical because we just have such power as women. I find we really are the earth maidens of the world and we can bring so much to the world when we tune in. When we tune in.

Katie: I agree. And I said that so many times in different ways on this podcast of I believe moms especially, are such a force of nature and we have so much impact in the way we're interacting with the next generation. Also with the way that we have so much purchasing power within society and that really nurturing that connection can be such an impactful tool for women, especially.

Marisol: A million percent. Yeah, I'm right on board there with you, Katie. For sure, 100%.

Katie: I love it. Well, I also am really excited to learn more from you about the topic of castor oil. Like I said, this seems to be having a huge explosion on social media right now and with good reason. And to start broad, I would guess most people by now have at least heard of it because it's getting so popular. But can you walk us through what it is and what makes it so unique from a health perspective?

Marisol: Awesome. Well, castor oil for me. I guess the best way that I can explain this I was really thinking about this, and I've always thought about this is there was a movie back, I think, in the 90s or the early 2000s, which was My Big Fat Greek Wedding. And the father would go and take windex and spray windex on every health boo boo. Or, like, whatever the problem was, spray windex on it. So castor oil, when I first got introduced to it, it was about 20 years ago when I was working in the natural health industry. I was going to health food store, to health food store, doctor's office, to doctor's office. And I was working with a natural pharmaceutical company then, and I got introduced to castor oil, and it was at the bottom of every single health food store shelf. And I was like, what does this stuff do? I see it everywhere, but I see it dusty, I see it sometimes, I see it a little bit higher, but it was always there no matter what.
And then people started telling me about things like castor oil packs or even just using castor oil. And then I got the phrase which really stuck to me was that someone in a health food store told me that it was the number one thing that you want to have in your at-home natural pharmacy cabinet. For any kind of sprains, strains, boo-boos or injuries or sunburns, mosquito bites during the summertime. Really like scrapes on the knees, anything like that. Dry skin. And then cosmetically as well too. So it was both good for pharmaceutical, for your pharmacy, like your natural herbal pharmacy, and your beauty cabinet at home. And that to me was like, wow, that's really cool. Because most things are like, they do one thing, but castor oil does so many different things that it actually when I was told about what it actually did do, I actually felt it was a little bit unbelievable. I'm like, wow, anything that does like jack of all trades, master of none.

But the reality is with castor oil is it just really is that kind of an oil. It has so many healing beneficial properties, and it's most well-known in the conventional medical field for a laxative. So it was originally prescribed by many doctors in the 1900 as a laxative. And it would be taking like one teaspoon to two teaspoons, up to like four tablespoons to go to the bathroom better, and then also midwives and doulas would use it. I'm sure many of the moms out here have experience with taking a couple of spoonful of castor oil to induce labor or maybe making a delicious shake with mango or peanut butter or something, or frying, I've even heard like, people frying eggs with castor oil to induce labor.

So it was always known as that. It's an oil that helps to move through muscle, move the bowels, move the uterus, and prepare for birth. But back in the day, back in Hippocrates, in the old, old medical texts and back in ancient Egypt, Cleopatra was using it for all her cosmetic needs. So she was known for her beautiful eyes and the whites of her eyes and her gorgeous hair and eyebrows. And that was all attributed to castor oil. So that was the very first use of castor oil cosmetically. And then Hippocrates on the Greek islands, he was recommending castor oil for overall general wellness, like a terrain medicine, we would say, to help everything that you do in your natural, healthy lifestyle, work better.

And then fast forward. We've got even the traditional Chinese medical doctors back in the dynasties using castor oil for joint pains and inflammation as a castor oil pack. And then we've got Pliny the Elder, who was treating the Empresses. And with the Empresses, he was mainly specifically treating ovarian problems, uterine problems, fibroid cysts with these castor oil packs. So we've just got such a huge history, and people really don't even recognize that past. When they hear castor oil pack, they think of Edgar Cayce, who's like the modern prophet or one of the first Herbal Natural Medical Doctors of America, but he was known as a sleeping prophet. And he's a bit debatable because some camps think that he might have been a little bit into witchery or doing a little bit of things off of the books. But nevertheless, he really promoted the use of castor oil plaques regularly. And I think that that was the key to castor oil.

So understanding that castor oil has multiple uses as an oil all on its own, but also as these wonderful health promoting castor oil packs, which tend to take it much more than just like a laxative or a carrier oil, these health promoting packs are terrain medicine, so ancient medicine at its best.
Katie: It's so fascinating, and I didn't even realize it had such a long history. What are some of the properties of castor oil like compounds found within it? Or what makes it so able to do all of these different things?

Marisol: So great. Such a great question. Castor oil is I mean, it's magical. I look at the testimonies on our website and people just say, wow, this is a game changer. This is magical. And it's because of all of its properties. So, number one, I think this is the most important to highlight is it's the master carrier oil. So as a carrier oil, compared to anything else, if you're using, say, essential oils, I'm sure lots of Wellness Mama's love is using their essential oils. They're most often told to use things like sweet almond, jojoba oil as a carrier oil. But castor oil, I'm surprised when more people aren't recommending castor oil because castor oil is the master carrier oil and gets the essential oils deeper into the dermis.

All other oils keep it on the top layer of the skin. But within the dermis, you're getting into the circulation, you're getting into the Lymphatic system, and you're getting into the place where you actually can be changing how the body is functioning because you've got that matrix that connective tissue in that area where the collagen is, right and where the collagen is. That's why castor oil helps with cosmetically improving collagen, improving the tissue underneath, like plumping it up, so cosmetically you can use it to plump up your tissues, your skin, your lips, your eyes. When you start to notice, like, dark circles under your eyes, you can use Castor Oil there to plump it up.

Other activities of the oil, it's a natural anti-inflammatory, which is great, but I mean, lots of things are anti-inflammatory, right? So that's not the only thing. It's rich in antioxidants and the antioxidants that it's rich in are Quercetin. Quercetin is a wonderful, wonderful polyphenol from the Vitamin C family. And this really helps, I love it because it helps with healing of the gut. And again, anything that has to do with Vitamin C helps with collagen formation. So that's adding to that effect there.

It also supports nitric oxide production. Nitric oxide is in food found in beets and beet greens. Now, nitric oxide, why people love it, is because it helps with oxygenation to the tissues and wherever there is more oxygenation, there is healthier cells, there's less aging. So it supports that process and that is not only cosmetic, but also self-care wise, right? Because if we have better oxygenation to our digestive tract, better oxygenation to our fingers, our toes, our nerves, our heart, our lungs, well, everything within our brain, everything within our body will just simply work better. So nitric oxide promoting.

On top of it, it recycles glutathione. Glutathione is a super expensive supplement that many take in order to anti-age to improve their liver detoxification, cleansing drainage. But it's expensive, it's not very highly bioavailable, which means it's hard to absorb. But in castor oil packs and castor oil, it helps to recycle your naturally produced glutathione, which is one of the best ways, what better way to get better detoxification than by recycling what you naturally are already producing? So that's amazing.

The oil, when you put it on your skin topically, you actually also promote dopamine, which is a feel good neurotransmitter. So I mean, the list keeps on going on. I'm not done. This is what I'm telling you. It seemed to
me the first time that I heard what castor oil did, I was like, what? Like really? All that? That's a lot! On top of it, it is a well-known, and this is all researched, a well-known microbiome balancer. It actually breaks down something known as biofilm. And biofilm is that nasty layer, like a protective layer, that bad bacteria, bad yeasts, parasites that may be within our intestine or our mucosal membranes that they basically create as a protective mechanism so that they don't get taken out of the intestine and replaced by good and healthy bacteria that make us feel better. So Castor Oil is one of the very few natural biofilm breakdown things that break down biofilm, which is awesome. So that's major about it. I think that kind of covers it.

So natural anti-inflammatory rich. In antioxidants, we got the biofilm balancer. It helps to move smooth muscle to help induce pregnancy or labor sorry. And move those bowels and get our stools moving. It also moves your circulation and your Lymphatic system and it's the master carrier so those are truly, in a nutshell, all of the main activities of just castor oil on itself on its own.

Katie: And I'd love to delve into some of the specific use-cases within knowing those benefits because like I said, this is now popular. I've seen it mentioned for so many different uses and I would love like a confirm or deny, truth versus myth kind of breakdown of all these different things and also to talk about if there's any risk or benefits that aren't talked about widely on social media. So the first being, I've seen people recommend putting this, for instance, on our eyelids or eyelashes at night, both for eyelash growth. But I even saw an optometrist explaining that this can help promote the natural tears of the eyes and the wetness when you blink and all these things that are supposed to happen. So confirm urgent eye, is this good or bad? And tips for actually doing that.

Marisol: Awesome. Confirmed. It is good. Again, it has to do with the physiology going underneath of improving our hair growth so you can even extend it to eyebrows and the hair on the head, castor oil will improve circulation to the area, that's the nitric oxide effect. And then with the circulation improved to the area, what's it going to do, it's going to bring more nutrients to the area so you can feed the hair follicle and that's how the growth will happen. But beyond that, it also helps with drainage. Lymphatic drainage, you can bring all the nutrients you want to an area, but if you're not draining what's toxic in the area, there's no good flow. And without good flow, you can't grow anything you need to have that nice and natural balance. And that's what happens with castor oil in the eye area placed on the eyelashes. So I just place it directly on the eyelashes with a mascara brush we actually have coming up very soon, a beautiful mascara brush in glass, always in glass and it just makes it a lot easier and done on the eyebrows as well, too. So just to keep it really simple and clean and easy.

In the hair, you can definitely put in the hair. It's different because you don't want to soak castor oil all on your hair because you could knot your hair up because it is such a thick oil. With the hair, all you do is you basically split up the areas and you apply castor oil on the roots and then you do the same on the ends in order to nourish the dry ends. And then I love to wrap it in like a turbine. We have a specially designed one that goes specifically with castor oil so the castor oil doesn't get anywhere and so that it actually heats up the castor oil on your scalp. Because if you remember back in the day, those hot oil hair treatments, do you remember those, those Vo5 hot oil hair treatments?
Katie: Oh, yeah, those were big when I was in high school.

Marisol: Right? Me too. Me too. So castor oil will do the exact same thing. Like, literally, it's like a Vo5, but natural, not chemical. And it's awesome for your hair. And you do it with a turbine. So after you place the castor oil in the roots and on the ends, you basically wrap up your hair with this awesome turbine. You basically stuff it all in there and you sit with it for an hour. And then it's amazingly how effective it helps, because I know for me, that my hair I was always challenged to grow my hair past my shoulders. Now I choose to do it because I just like my look. But before, I could never grow my hair long without it splitting and cracking. And with doing that regular routine at least once a week, it was very, very effective for my hair growth.

On the eyebrows and eyelashes, this is truly a nighttime routine. So before you go to bed, put on the mascara, put it on the eyebrows, and if you want to follow it up, for best effect is to actually just place an eye mask over top of it as well, because then again, you get that same effect of the heat. And whenever you have that natural heat with the castor oil, it penetrates deeper and it possibly activates the castor oil. I still have not been able to find what the heat does, but I'm sure eventually I'll find it. I mean, probably another 20 years it'll take me to find out all the little detail. But it has an effect that improves. It greater than just only putting on the castor oil. So that's why we have compresses for absolutely everything.

Now, you said about the optometrist, the meibomian gland, they call that meibomian gland dysfunction, where meibomian glands or any glands on the eyes get blocked. I mean, clinically for me, I've used castor oils with patients, the minute a stye starts to appear in the eye. So if they get a stye, apply castor oil immediately on it. This stye might not even evolve completely because it'll just dissolve. It's pretty fascinating. And then again, you can put it into the corners of the eyes and around the eyes, always with the eyes closed for any kind of glandular dysfunction. And there is potentially an effect as well, too, that it could help with recycling of the glutathione in the eye, which is key because the tissue of the eye, the eyeball, is highly saturated in glutathione, and as we age, our glutathione levels decrease, and that's why our eyesight reduces. So it is super beneficial for the eyes. I like this game.

Katie: Well, that's fascinating. And the hair one specific was my next one to ask about. And it sounds like you wouldn't want to use it, like you said on all of your hair, but it does seem like a lot of people have had good results using it for increasing hair growth and reducing hair fall. And so the tip there would be to use it on the scalp only or the ends. What about adding I've seen the tips to add like a teeny bit of rosemary or peppermint oil to it to kind of stimulate blood flow to the scalp. Is that helpful as well?

Marisol: I love it. There's seven well known essential oils. I don't know if I remember them off the top of my head, but I know ylang-ylang, peppermint, rosemary, lavender, and I believe there's a lemon one and a couple more that are excellent. We have if anyone wants it, we can connect them. A little recipe, but it is exceptional. And I mean, again, castor oil being that master carrier oil, rosemary is, in specific, very effective for women.
who have Hashimoto's, because rosmarinic acid helps to unblock an enzyme that is attacking the hair follicles. And so this goes not only for the scalp of the hair, for those with thyroid problems, and they find that they're losing their hair on their head, but also if they find that they're having the typical thyroid sign, which is a lateral eyebrow is starting to become thin, thin, thin, thin, thin. Same deal. Using a mix of castor oil with rosmarinic acid on the eyebrows can really, really help. Just be careful to not apply essential oils near the eye because they could burn. So always just be cautious on that one. But within the hair, the scalp, the eyebrows, it is awesome to combine the medicines. I mean, I love it when people suggest that, because that's what our medicine is about. It's about combining for synergy that makes it even work greater than it does on its own.

Katie: And I have that experience with my eyebrows. I don't have thyroid issues anymore, but from overplucking and thyroid issues, I felt like they were going away entirely. And now I feel like I actually have to cut them because they grow so much. So I will second that, that it actually really does work. And it would seem like this makes it beneficial for guys who have hair loss as well, because that same enzyme is connected to male pattern baldness, I think.

Marisol: You got it. You got it. So a great recipe for men is just simple castor oil with rosemary essential oil because of that rosmarinic acid. And I've even had male patients use it as gel, like they have short hair anyways because they're going bald. So they shave it all down and they literally every day, just to work, they'll wear their castor oil with a bit of rosemary oil, and it leaves a nice shine and it's a natural option or that or go to bed with it. But again, whenever you go to bed with it, you probably want to either wrap it or because it will messy castor oil. The thing with Castor Oil is, it's messy. And that's why we love Queen of the Thrones pack, because it just keeps that mess controlled. Never perfect, but controlled.

Katie: What about I've done this before and I've seen this now floating around social media using castor oil by itself or in combination with other oils as a facial cleanser at night with like an oil cleansing method.

Marisol: Yeah. This I love. So I just do it simply with castor oil, just because I find castor oil truly like, for me, it's just an affordable oil. And you need so little when you just use castor oil and you combine with water and steam. So I'll take a nice, beautiful cloth, organic, ideally an organic cotton cloth. I'll turn on my tap, pour hot water on it, steam it, and then I'll put that on my face and I'll blot it and gently wipe. So then that way I take a little bit of the dirt that may be there from the day, because truly, water is the universal solvent. So you start with that and then you use castor oil. You take a little dime size of castor oil, a dime to a quarter, and you blot it within your palms and you literally blot this on your face like that. That's all you do. It is so, so simple. So you blot the oil and the oil, oil attracts oil. So anything that's oily that needs to come out that is in excess or balancing, if you have like, dry areas of your skin, then you take that same cloth that you steamed, you put it on the water, you steam it again, and then you wipe off with your face. And that's it. It is so, so fast for a beauty routine and cleanser.

Katie: Yeah, that's definitely a simple one. And it seems like it even works for teenagers who are acne prone because of that oil attracts oil principle.
Marisol: Exactly. It is excellent. I've switched so many patients from different over the counter, like, pharmaceutical brand face washes and just got them on this. And it's just so simple. It's affordable. The oil lasts a long time. They get into the practice. And the best part, after getting into the practice of it, your skin feels so soft at times, you don't even need a moisturizer anymore. Like you wouldn't need a nighttime moisturizer, even a daytime moisturizer, because your face literally feels like a baby's bottom with that oil washing technique. It's great.

Katie: That makes sense. And it's also used often as a natural remedy. And you touched on this a little bit. I live in a place with lots and lots of bugs, so I have learned that this really is helpful on bug bites. And I think also it's helpful when kids want something as a remedy for a bug bite or for a boo-boo of some sort. And you don't want to put something like that's toxic on them. And often just the mental putting something on it. I feel like is 80% of the battle with kids. And so that is really helpful and we know it's safe, but is there any actual backing confirm or to deny for things like bug bites or rashes or burns?

Marisol: Confirm. And you do them. You make it in different ways so it actually works great. You can use it on its own if you're in a tight spot and you haven't been able to make a little formula that I'm going to teach you guys how to make right now. But with dry skin, you can go just castor oil on it. Sunburns, just castor oil as it is. They work great when it comes to any kind of injuries or like scrapes or you want rapid healing or bug bites, what you want to do is you want to make castor oil into your very own at home natural pomade. So you mix baking soda one to one with castor oil. It should come out like a thick paste, like a little bit of a thicker paste. And you can put it I mean, I put it in all kinds of little jars and then I carry it around with me. I have one in one of those silicone travel tubes for when I travel and that mixture heals rapidly. Bug bites, boo-boos, cuts, scrapes. Whether has to do the castor oil, all the benefits of castor oil is an anti-inflammatory, nutrient rich, all those great, that great stuff that Castor oil does. But also the baking soda alkalinizing the area. So then that way all the healing factors can work better because a lot of times if the tissue is too acidic and it's highly injured and highly inflamed, the body can't heal it and things don't respond and they don't work. But if you can alkalinize the tissues and then use the castor oil with it, it works fantastic. It is my go-to. I always have it with me. I never leave home without my little mixture of baking soda. One to one with castor oil. Super simple.

Katie: Yeah, that might be the easiest DIY recipe ever.

Marisol: It is. And so functional. I call it like the Save the Day salve. It literally saves the day whenever you need it.

Katie: That's a great tip. I'm putting that in the show notes for you guys listening. You also mentioned castor oil packs a couple of times. And I know we talked about this in our other interview. I'll make sure I link to that one as well. But walk us through what a castor oil pack is and some of the use-cases of who might want to try this.
Marisol: Awesome. So castor oil packs are great for the entire family, except if you're actively pregnant and you're not ready to pop it out. So if you're pregnant, you can't use castor oil packs, but after pregnancy you absolutely can. So that's a great thing, especially postpartum.

So castor oil packs, if you look to the. Side of me, or for those who are listening, who can't see. The castor oil pack is basically an organic cotton cloth that is shaped in a certain way in order to be worn over the liver or over the pelvic region. It can be worn over the thyroid, over the eyes. It's used all over the body, over the lower back, on the hips, for sciatic, just basically the knees, joints, you name it. Any place on the body, you can use the castor oil pack.

The most famous is the castor oil liver pack. And the castor oil liver pack, I mean, again, goes back, way back to the old, the first medical doctors, Hippocrates and all them using the pack to help with terrain. So the concept of terrain is that how do you help the whole body to do its function better? And biggest issue with our health and our healing is that we're so stressed, our body can't heal. When our body is stressed, no matter what you give it, what supplements you give it, great food you give it, medicines, everything, they simply just don't work very well, you don't absorb them very well, you don't digest them very well, and your body has no ability to be able to utilize them the way that they're supposed to be utilized.

So, castor oil pack is very grassroots medicine and it is terrain medicine, which means it helps everything that you're doing work better and then some. So you put on a pack by simply placing one to two tablespoons of castor oil, organic castor oil, always in glass, on a pack, on our organic cotton flannel or organic cotton wool. And you place it on the liver and you ideally do that for at least 1 hour to overnight. And it'll help with cleansing, which means helping your bowels to move better, it'll help with lymphatic drainage. So getting all of the congestion that might be in your tissues, bloatedness, any type of even excessive weight sometimes that you're carrying, this helps with lymphatic drainage, water retention, all of that.

And then it also helps with liver detoxifying. So helping to balance your hormones, balance your sleep cycle, balance all the aspects of our body that are really, truly the most important. People, our most common testimonial, which I find is just amazing that everyone uses the same words, is that people call the castor oil pack a game changer. I mean, we have hundreds of testimonials where people are like, I've been doing all the supplements, all the routines, all of this and all of that. And what changed the game for me was starting a castor oil pack.

And the most common words that people say is it helped me to sleep better, it helped me to poop better, and it helped me to feel better because it balances your mood, your hormones, all of these different things. So it is truly probably one of the most foundational practices like exercising, trying to eat better, getting a good night's rest. And it helps with all of those things too, taking your supplements. So it's so, so foundational. And I use it across the board with every single patient, especially when I was in clinical practice in pediatrics or with children. I would use it if they were stressed, if they were not sleeping well, if any children that were on the
spectrum because it helped to calm them down, I would use it. If they had any tummy aches in the summertime or indigestion, that was one of the most common things that kids would come to my clinical practice with, that they would be eating foods and it would cause them stomach upset. So getting into a practice early on of doing these castor oil packs would be great for kids.

And now my children are grown. I mean, I've been in castor oil medicine for over 20 years. My kids are 20 and 22 now. And so my kids very much grew up with castor oil and castor oil packs. So now whenever my kids I remember my daughter, her first year of University, I was telling you how she's super independent and she wanted to go away from home right away. And my daughter is so funny. The first week she's in her indoctrination of college and they go out drinking one night and she overdoes it. And normally she has a pretty good diet because she grew up with me, but she overdid it. And she called me the first thing in the morning. She's like, Mom, I forgot my castor oil pack. It's the first thing, the only thing I forgot, because she would use it all the time whenever she wouldn't feel well, it'd be the first thing that she'd put on.

And I love teaching kids that early on, because if they know that early on, they're set for life because castor oil pack it's that go-to to help you feel better in your body all the time and then postpartum it works well, let's go before that.

Fertility problems, castor oil packs can be used for fertility problems. I've had patients improve their fertility over a period of couple of months in conjunction with fertility treatments with their conventional doctor. If they're doing IVF or whatever they're doing, it helps everything to work better in that realm, too, which is great because IVF can be so, so expensive. And then postpartum using castor oil packs not on the liver, but actually on the pelvic region to help to reset all the organs. If a mama has had like a Caesarean scar, it can help with healing of the Caesarean scar. If organs are all displaced after being pregnant, just to set things back rapidly. And then, of course, helping us to breastfeed better by doing castor oil pack over the pelvic region is key because again, it's going to help your ovaries to reset themselves in a nice, healthy manner. And that hypothalamic adrenal ovarian access that gets disbalanced during pregnancy and after pregnancy. And that's one of the leading causes of postpartum depression. If we can get a mama to put the pack on pretty immediately after the scar is healed on the pelvic region, she's going to rock it and she'll do really well. She won't be as much at risk for postpartum depression. She'll breastfeed great and it'll really help her transition into her years after post baby. So really great along the spectrum of life and then women in menopause or transitioning, right? Hot flashes, night sweats, those that do castor oil packs have less severity of menopausal symptoms, which is nice because Castor Oil Packs helps them to cleanse better. And when you move into that stage of life, you stop having one of the ways that you cleanse and detox, which is through a menstrual period.

Katie: That makes sense. And it's a good reminder to get back to them regularly. And I'm glad you mentioned they can be used overnight because that makes it less work. You just put it on and forget about it.

This podcast is brought to you by Purity Woods, which is one of the best skin care formulas I have found. I've struggled for years with trying to find the right skin care for me. And as I've said before, with formulating my own products, I feel that non-toxic should be the absolute bare minimum baseline, but also because our skin is
one of our largest organs, it’s also a great chance to put beneficial things in. And this is exactly what Purity Woods does.

They have skin care products that effectively combat aging and wrinkles and help restore the appearance of my skin. And it’s one of the first products I have tried that really makes a noticeable difference. I know we’ve all experienced skin care products that are labeled as clean and organic only to find out that there’s other unsavory ingredients in there. And Purity Woods is the opposite of that. They are on a mission to provide the cleanest and most effective anti-aging and longevity products available. And everything is certified organic, non-GMO, and free of everything toxic. They use amazing revolutionary ingredients, including one called maple leaf extract, which contains an anti-inflammatory antioxidant, which helps with the hydrating properties of the skin, and it can really soothe skin while also brightening and nourishing the skin. Their age-defying cream is a game changer. It definitely makes you feel like you’re going back in time and reduces things like fine lines, wrinkles, and age spots. These were formulated by skin care chemists at the top of their field to create products that really support collagen and elastin production without any irritation or drying of the skin or hormone-disrupting ingredients. Turn back the appearance of your skin with Purity Woods Age-Defying Dream Cream. Go to puritywoods.com/mama10 and enter the code MAMA10 at checkout to save 10% on your first order.

This episode is sponsored by Hiya Health, which is my go-to source for multivitamins, especially for my younger kids, before they can swallow pills. Typical children's vitamins are basically candy in disguise, filled with unsavory ingredients and things you would not give to your children otherwise. Most brands on store shelves are filled with sugar, unhealthy chemicals and other gummy junk that growing kids, or frankly, anyone should never eat. And this is why I'm so glad I found Hiya Health. Hiya makes children's vitamins with zero sugar and zero gummy junk and unsavory ingredients. Yet they taste great, and they are perfect for picky eaters. They're also nostalgic and remind me of the children's vitamins I took as a kid, though I probably wouldn't love those ingredients. Hiya is unique because it fills the most common gaps in modern children's diets to provide full body nourishment for our kids, with a yummy taste that they will love and you will not have to fight them over. They manufacture in the USA with globally sourced ingredients that are each selected for optimal bioavailability and absorption. And the best part? They arrive straight to your door on a pediatrician recommended schedule, so you never have to worry about running out. Your first month comes with a reusable glass bottle that your kids can personalize with stickers. So in the case of my kids, with six of them, they never get them confused. And then every month after, Hiya sends a no plastic, eco friendly refill pouch of fresh vitamins. Which means that Hiya isn't just good for your kids, it's also great for the environment as well. So you as a mom no longer have to worry about running out of vitamins, and they will automatically arrive when you need them. You can check them out and get them for your kids by going to Hiyahealth.com/wellnessmama. And you'll also save 50% on your first month.

Katie: Can essential oils be combined with it at night or is it recommended to use on its own?
Marisol: I love that. Confirm! I love it when people put essential oils. And that really is going to be dependent on what your conditions are, what you're dealing with. If you want more liver support or if you have a lot of inflammation in your body, maybe you would go for like frankincense, a little bit of buzzword that goes a long way. Or if you stress is your thing. For me, stress has always been a challenge. And so what I always combined it with was things like lavender or lemon or lemon just to calm me down and clear my mind. And that would always help me to sleep better. So absolutely. If you're a little essential oil maven, get those essential oils mixed with your pack and wear it overnight.

Katie: Great to know. And also, I would guess because of its ability, you mentioned nitric oxide and blood flow, that it could be used on sites of like, soreness or injury after workout as well. I'm asking somewhat self-centeredly because my daughter has shin splints from doing a lot of workouts, and I'm wondering if at night this could help her shin splints just by the nature of bringing more awareness and blood flow to her legs.

Marisol: You got it. Absolutely. Like, I would be rubbing in and massaging it. We have actually a massage roller that we use with castor oil. This massage roller works really effectively to just help the fibers break through. A great little hack with her shin splints is I would be looking at her underneath her sole and doing massages of the bottom of her foot and then back into her calf muscle because there's some trigger points in there that you can with the massage roller ball really effectively get in with castor oil. And then I would be definitely including some frankincense oil. With the castor oil all mixed in together, it makes an awesome, awesome little protocol.

Katie: I love it. And so, speaking of massage, and we've mentioned Lymphatic drainage quite a bit. I've also seen this combined with people using like gulsha on the face for Lymphatic. And I love doing this when I wash my face because my face already has the oil on it and so there's no friction on the skin. But I would guess then it could be done in a whole body Lymphatic massage type situation. But do you recommend this?

Marisol: Yes. So I love it. So for sure, cosmetically with gulsha, absolutely. Even with cups, anyone using the cosmetic cups, they can use that as well too. Like the traditional do the cupping therapy for facial and cosmetic. The way that I love to use it for general Lymphatic is actually something known as wet-dry brushing. So it is using a dry brush. So we sell a kit as well too, because we have it all, make it easy for people to get all the access to the tools.

So what you do is you do the typical Lymphatic opening movement. So you start by opening up the Lymphatic zones. So again, that is like right here at the collarbone, on top of the collarbone, in behind of the ears, you're looking at the edge of the mandible. So right at the bottom of the chin, underneath the armpits into the pectoral region. Then you go underneath the stomach and you pump and you literally just tap the area. You could put a little bit of castor oil on your hands when you're rubbing and massaging those areas. Then again, stomach into the pelvic region called the Inguinal canal by your pubic area. And then in behind in the knees.
So you start by just gently pumping with a little bit of castor oil on your hands. And then you do what's called a wet brush. Wet brushing is just brushing with your hands. And again, you take like a quarter size amount of castor oil. Less is more with castor oil. There's no need to go like crazy and saturate. Less is always more. So quarter size, again, you do the same kind of thing that you did with your facial washing is you rub it between your hands and then you start from the inside, going outward. So with your arm, you would start like at the shoulder and you brush with the castor oil upwards towards your heart. And you do this first with castor oil and you do this all over your body.

And then you follow it up with the dry brushing part. So you take your dry brush and you do the exact same thing. So then you dry brush internally. And this number one makes dry brushing more tolerable because it feels better on your skin. Your skin feels smoother afterwards and it just supports your skin. Like, again, replacing body moisturizer. Like with castor oil, you can get rid of so many different things in your cabinet that you don't really need anymore. Right? Because castor oil can replace it, which is nice, or you can use it in combination. Say you have a favorite body cream that has like amazing essential oils. You can just put it in combination with that and then you get the best of both worlds.

Katie: And are there any risk or things to be aware of with castor oil contraindications or times that should not be used other than we mentioned pregnancy. But like for instance, does it make you more sensitive to the sun? Do people with certain conditions need to avoid it? Any special concerns?

Marisol: I love that. So like all oils, if you're going to be baking out in the sun, of course you know it's going to reflect and it could cause to have a little burn. So it'd be better to use castor oil post-sun care and not pre-sun care. The other caution, there would be radiation treatment. So for those who might be using castor oil to lymphatic drain around the breast area, I'd be cautious with using castor oil or any kind of oil for that matter before radiation. So that would be a little contraindication there.

And again in pregnancy, any open wounds? We don't typically use castor oil over open wounds. Also, say if a mama has had a caesarean section, we just wait until that heals nicely and then is the time. And we do totally want to use castor oil for scars because it helps to prevent keloids. The more inflamed that a mother is or a woman is, the more likelihood with any kind of scar she can create a keloid. And keloids become very unattractive and they're just really uncomfortable too, and they block energetics as well too of your body. So the minute that we have any kind of surgery, even if it's a microscopic, a small surgery, anything applying castor oil post surgery, it could be also like a breast reduction or removing your breast implants, or getting breast implants for that matter, whatever may be your fancy. I'm not here to judge what you choose in your life. But any kind of surgery, applying castor oil can just help with lymphatic flow and healing of any scars afterwards. So that's a great little hack as well too.

Katie: Makes sense. And not to use it until it's actually the skin is closed because I would guess it also because it's so powerful, could for instance, dissolve surgical glue or something like that. So you wouldn't want to use it.
Marisol: Okay, yeah, you got it. It is so powerful. I think maybe it's because of the name of castor oil. Castor oil is called the palm of Christ oil. I just find that to be probably very telling of what castor oil does. Like, it's just superbly powerful.

Katie: And I'm also a big fan of habit stacking so one thing I've done in the past, but you might tell me this is not a good idea, is to combine castor oil with red light, with meditation. Like anything I can do all at once and maximize the time, good or bad, to use castor oil with red light.

Marisol: I like using castor oil with red light. I don't think it's a bad thing. I think you want to be careful with using packs in the sauna, I would use, say if you did a sauna, use it, put the pack on afterwards and with red light I would put the castor oil on red light and then afterwards put the pack simply because there is an outside plastic layer on it is the healthiest version of plastic that we can find. But nonetheless, in order to make the packs less messy, we've got to put something on the outside. What's touching your skin is organic cotton, which is very important. But I just don't want to have any risk. We're not sure if the plastic could go through if you're heating it up and such. So ideally you do the red light therapy with castor oil and then after the therapy, plop on the pack and go to bed and make it simple.

And meditation. I could not meditate for the life of me because stress again back in the day was what was challenging my health time and time again. And it wasn't until I did my first castor oil pack that I finally knew what relaxation was. And then I was finally able to get into a meditation and not go crazy and have a panic attack when I was trying to do a meditation. So it was one of the best things for me to again, and I love habit stacking too, so that helped me enormously. So if anyone out there has been challenged with meditation, this can be one of the ways to facilitate and make it simple.

Katie: Great to know. And then I know that there's also important quality concerns when it comes to castor oil. And just like all of these benefits can be so helpful if you aren't using a good source, it seems like there's actually some potential risk attached. So if someone is going to try these things, what things do they need to look for in a castor oil to make sure they're getting a safe one?

Marisol: Perfect. I've studied castor oil and castor oil packs for over 20 years and we're actively researching and studying and seeing and making sure that we're using the best quality. And I know that Queen of the thrones is the highest quality and best source of oil and pack. And the reason being is that we do it with your health in mind because the oil number one, you can find it on Amazon or on all these different places bottled in plastic. But the problem with castor oil and plastic is that castor oil, remember, is that magical, the very best carrier oil that exists. So it carries everything into the body. And if you're packaging castor oil in plastic in any portion of the supply chain, ours oil never touches plastic. That's my guarantee. I mean, we go to the supply chain, we're even going to be starting to actually grow castor oil in order to control it even further. Because I use castor oil so much in my life, for me, for my friends, for my family, and for all of your friends and your family. We're good friends. I don't want to ever do anything that isn't good for people.
So it absolutely requires to be in glass at all points in time, even if you're using a mascara tube. Like, don't go put castor oil in glass and then put it into a plastic mascara tube, because again, it's going to be absorbing that. And then that's what you're going to be absorbing is more of the plastic than actually getting the benefits of the castor oil and plastic and castor oil, the reason it's no good is because plastic are hormone disruptors. Plastic typically is combined with phthalates, which are well known hormone disruptors. And when it comes to the castor oil pack, the tool, the pack itself, we've got to be careful because there's so many on the market that use organic bamboo, which sounds like it would be really good for you, but organic bamboo is actually pretty toxic if you look at the manufacturing of organic bamboo. Organic bamboo is organic, right? Like, it is wonderful because it's a plant and it grows, and that's what makes it organic.

But to take that plant that is bamboo is used in heavy construction because it's as strong as steel. And so in order to break down steel, imagine what kind of chemicals you got to use in order to break down steel. And because bamboo is eco-friendly, they use less water to wash it. So you can imagine that bamboo now is going to be having chemicals with it. And then most of the time, bamboo isn't just bamboo fibers. The cellulose from bamboo, it's actually bamboo fibers mixed with rayon, which is plastic and rayon. In order to make it softer, they use phthalate sprayed on it. So it can become a real toxic load that you're going to be absorbing. By doing a castor oil pack with bamboo, it absolutely requires the layer that is next to your skin, absolutely must be organic cotton. There is no doubt about it.

And you're looking for flannel. You don't want a velour because organic cotton velour is blended with, again, plastic fibers. There's so many things when it comes to material, so it absolutely must be organic cotton, flannel, like, no doubt about it. And organic castor oil in glass, always. And processing of castor oil needs to be expeller, pressed, and hexane free and pure. You don't want anything mixed in with your castor oil, just simple castor oil. That's it.

Katie: And with castor oil packs using all of these things, like we just talked about, how often does it need to be washed and are there any special considerations for that? Can it be used multiple times before washing or is this in every single use you need to wash it?

Marisol: I love that. So you can use it multiple times without washing it. And ideally, you replace the castor oil pack after about two months of regular usage. So if you’re using it every day so 60 treatments, you want to get a new pack. It still is very affordable compared to many of the supplements on the market, but because I don’t think people are very used to getting rid of a piece of cloth or material, but you do need to because we're not sure. Again, castor oil carries things in and out, so there's a potential that castor oil might carry stuff from the body into the pack. So we just want to make sure that we don't do that.

The other thing too is that I can get away if you use the pack properly and only use two tablespoons the first time and then one tablespoon of castor oil every time after that. I mean, I use my pack for at least a month without having to do anything with it and sometimes I go two months because as long as you keep it in the
center of the pack, it's meant to be able to do that. But not everyone is able to do that. So if you have to, you
can wash it and then you simply wash it with hot soak it in hot water and baking soda overnight and then rinse
it with nice clean soap and lay it flat to dry. You can also put it into your dishwasher. I do a little hack where I
put mine into my dishwasher and I do that with like clean dish soap and then that's a quick, easy way to clean
it out as well too. It's never perfect though, after you wash it and eventually you’re going to want to replace it.
So that's probably the best thing to know.

And then the one other side note on that is if you are doing like a hormone protocol. Hormone protocols
would be like where you do a liver pack from bleed from menstruation to your ovulation and then you're
switching over to a pelvic pack over your ovaries. Don't use a liver pack over your ovaries because again, the
liver is processing a lot of different things and you want to kind of keep it for each area and it's also
scientifically designed to fit the area and to deal with the dermatomes and the visceral reflexes that are
coming from the skin. So there are packs for that, for each different location of the body.

Katie: Good to know. And I know you have resources, explain in depth all of these different things beyond
what we can cover in a 1 hour podcast episode. So I will link to some of my favorite content you have related
to that, as well as to all these specifics of where to find everything. But in the interest of time, I always love to
ask a few questions at the end of interviews. The first being if there is a book or number of books that have
profoundly impacted your life and if so, what they are and why life.

Marisol: Oh wow, there's so many books, we would be here forever. But I'm going to start with probably the
most important when I was a patient, sorry, not a patient, when I was in my first year of clinical practice, one
of my patients came and she was a lovely lady who looked like she was about 20, but she was actually like 60.
And she said to me, I owe it to castor oil, which was I already loved her right off the bat, but she had told me
that everything that you need to know about health and healing is in the Bible. And at the time I wasn't very
religious and wasn't really reading the Bible, but she encouraged me to read the Bible and truly I found it to be
a very big inspiration for healing and protocols and all different things like Genesis is a great seven day
cleanse. There's so many different amazing things that you can reap out of the Bible, including excellent things
to live by, like reap what you sow, all those different wonderful metaphors that you get in the Bible.

After that I would say Lao Tzu and the Tao Te Ching. It's just again, ancient, old principles from traditional
Chinese back in the day of the Chinese empires and just understanding the philosophies like be like water to
flow, that impacted me greatly. And another book would be The Game of Life by Florence Scovel Shinn. Again,
it's early 19th century. She was a wonderful woman. Probably one of the first woman metaphysicians, which
means that she would work within the word and within the healing, because our word heals our body and our
soul and our mind. And so much that we say what we say has magic and power. And she was probably one of
the first women to really bring it to life outside of spiritual circles. So I really love her book, The Game of Life.
It's an excellent read and I've read it in every language, as with the Bible, Spanish, Italian, French, German and
now I'm working on learning some Portuguese.
Katie: I forget this from our last episode. You are very multi-lingual as well. That's incredible and impressive. I will link to those as well in the show notes for you guys listening. Everything is at wellnessmama.fm. And lastly, any parting advice for the listeners that could be related to castor oil or could be unrelated life advice that's been helpful to you.

Marisol: Awesome. I think probably the most important thing to say is just to remind people that you've got to use a pack to do a castor oil pack. In my profession, so many practitioners are sometimes just recommending to just rub the oil on the body to get the effect. It won't be the same thing. The castor oil pack is just like a bandaid. When your kid has a boo-boo, you put a bandaid on it to put attention and draw the attention there and get the body its own healing and vital force working. So I think that's probably the most important thing about the castor oil packs.

And then secondly, as with everything, it's just practice and about being gentle with yourself while you're practicing. Because if I look back to myself, earlier on in my life, I was so critical. I was just so mean to myself. The things that I would say to myself, I wouldn't even say to a best friend. I wouldn't say that to anybody, but I was saying it to myself. And I realized that the more that I was just like, love and acceptance and joy and coming from my heart and speaking my truth, the more that I journeyed in those beautiful, kind words and the more that I said those words to myself. And the more that I practiced it, the better that I felt and the better that I got in my health.

So whatever it is that you're going to take on, I do hope it is a castor oil pack in your practice is just to do so. And do so with the intent to practice and the intent to be gentle with oneself. Because at the end of the day, you are your best friend and it starts when you have that relationship with yourself. Then from there, I think, like we said at the beginning of this podcast, I do believe that we can make better friends outside of ourselves because ultimately it's the relationship that we have with ourselves that can grow outside.

Katie: I love it. I think that's a perfect place to wrap up for today. Marisol, as always, it's a pleasure. Thank you for sharing so many tips and such rapid succession and thank you for your time and being here.

Marisol: Awesome. Thanks so much too, Katie. I can't wait till we get to hang out again soon.

Katie: And thanks, as always to all of you for listening and sharing your most valuable resources, your time, your energy and your attention with us today. We're both so grateful that you did, and I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of The Wellness Mama Podcast.

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