



Boost Energy through Mitochondria

Guest: Susanne Bennett

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Dr. Mark Menolascino: Welcome to the Women's Heart Health Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Mark Menolascino, medical director of the Meno Clinic in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. This is your chance to hear from international world experts on how to achieve optimal health, optimal vitality, and prevent and reverse heart disease. We're joined today by one of my dear friends whom I respect tremendously, Dr. Susanne Bennett.

Dr. Susanne Bennett: Hey, there! It's so great to be here with you, Mark, for the Women's Health Solutions Summit. Thanks so much. I really appreciate being here together with you and having some fun.

Dr. Menolascino: It's going to be fun. Let me tell the viewers a little bit about you. Dr. Susanne Bennett is an internationally recognized integrative medicine and wellness expert with over 29 years of clinical experience in the fields of allergies, clinical nutrition, environmental medicine, and anti-aging medicine.

She's the author of the number one international bestseller *Mighty Mito: Power Up Your Mitochondria for Boundless Energy, Laser Sharp Mental Focus, and A Powerful, Vibrant Body* and *The 7 Day Allergy Makeover* and the soon-to-be-released *The Magic of the Kimchi Diet* which we'll talk about for sure.

Dr. Susanne is the talk show host of *Wellness for Life* on Radio MD and iHeart Radio and is devoted to sharing the best health strategies and providing easy-to-implement tips to improve your life and start feeling better today the all-natural way.

Dr. Susanne is really one of the mentors of all of us in functional integrative medicine. She sees patients. She does research. She's really on the cutting edge. And again, thank you so much for joining us today.

Dr. Bennett: Awesome! Thanks so much.

Dr. Menolascino: We've talk a lot this summit about mitochondria. And if you don't mind, let's just jump right into it because I don't think a lot of people understand really how important they are.

Dr. Bennett: Absolutely. You know what, Mark? First of all, I am a mitochondriac. I am obsessed. I love everything about mitochondria because it's about these little power cells that actually help power up our energy level, ATP production, in the cell pretty much. And if you think about it, what is our heart? It's just a huge muscle. It's this massive amount of muscle that takes a huge amount of ATP to work 24/7 every second of the day. It's a nonstop machine.

So what we want to do is make sure that these power plants, the mitochondria—and there's a huge amount of mitochondria in the myocardial cells, the cardiac myo cells. There are about 5000, sometimes even more. Per cell, you've got 5000 mitochondria in it because it's just pushing out the amount of ATP. And did you know that the mitochondria we use up in your heart about 15 to 35 pounds of ATP in the heart?

Dr. Menolascino: Wow!

Dr. Bennett: Now that's a huge amount. And that's 100 times more in weight than our body. So what you've got to think about it is it is constantly pushing it out. And of course, the heart is a skeletal muscle. And in the skeletal muscle, there is a lot of information regarding how much we've got to get the blood flow to it. We've got to make sure that it has oxygenation. We've got to make sure that it's clean and free of toxins so that we don't damage it. We're not having any problems with oxidative stress.

And then of course we've got to think about—if we want our mitochondria to be healthy, then we want to make sure that we know how to create robust

mitochondria, strengthen them, as well as get rid of the bad ones. Bad ones we don't want because those are going to actually cause more damage and can cause other types of mitochondrial DNA disruption. So there are many, many factors.

You've got to also think about, to me, when it comes to heart, 10% of our body mass is mitochondria. And a lot of that is in the heart. So there are thousands of studies of mitochondria. And I know a lot of your experts have talked about mitochondria. But I want to dive, really go into how is it that we can figure out how to clean it up and create robust ones. And then what do we use to get them to have longevity, live longer, and then strengthen it?

Dr. Menolascino: Yeah, and Susanne, you're really talking about those powerhouses, these mitochondria that help you take food to make energy out of. And so this is something that everyone needs to know about—how to protect them, how to make them more efficient, and how not to poison them. I know you're wearing red today for heart health month. Thank you.

And so let's help everybody have the most powerful mitochondria they could. What are some of the suggestions you have? Or tell us more about it.

Dr. Bennett: Absolutely. First of all, what I want people to know is how do you know if your mitochondria are not functioning well, they're sluggish, and you're in a dysfunctional state? The first thing that you see—you're tired. You're fatigued. Majority of this country, if not the world, are suffering from chronic fatigue, lack of energy. You have brain fog issues. You're in a lot of pain. Pain syndromes actually are mitochondrial dysfunction. Headaches, migraines—those are all related to mitochondrial dysfunction where you're not functioning up to the level where you're outputting the right amount of energy, the ATP which is the fuel currency for all of our cells.

We need energy to do everything so that you can eat and digest, so that you can produce neurotransmitters to feel better, so that you can have that fight/flight be ready for whenever you need it. You need it for digestion. You need it for muscle contraction. You need it for pretty much every function in your body.

Now, I'd like to share. If you have start to have heart symptoms—and most heart symptoms are as we get older, in the elderly. And I'd say that the majority of people feel it is in their 60s, sometimes 50s, 60s, and into the elderly years.

But the symptoms that are for mitochondrial heart dysfunction is that you actually feel fatigue and weakness. And then when you're walking up stairs and you're just exerting a little bit and you start to feel like, "I feel shortness of breath." That's a symptom of heart mitochondria dysfunction. If you've got swelling in your legs and swelling in your arms and then all of a sudden you gain 5 pounds of water weight, that's actually a sign of mitochondrial dysfunction in your heart. So then there's irregular heartbeats, of course, tachycardia, blood pressure issues, things like that. And then, of course, you can't exercise. And that's one of the first signs of heart mitochondrial dysfunction.

So you want to be able to see that, "You know what? I've got to go check this out." Get your heart checked out. And make sure that you're going to be okay.

Now, who are at risk?

Dr. Menolascino: Susanne, you're talking about this mitochondrial dysfunction. And you mentioned people with unrelated things like pain syndromes, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, headaches, migraines, shortness of breath. Those all could be related to the heart mitochondria not being optimal.

Dr. Bennett: Oh, absolutely.

Dr. Menolascino: Early signs.

Dr. Bennett: These are all early signs. And when it comes to heart disease, we call it the silent disease. We don't even know it's happening. And most of us when we're young, as long as it's beating and we're able to exercise and everything is pretty peachy keen, you don't feel anything is wrong. But there's actually a ticking bomb. And the reason, again, is that the mitochondria is not functioning properly. You're not getting the oxygen into the cell so that you can get rid of the toxicity, the buildup.

And of course, inflammation. Mitochondrial dysfunction is an inflammatory condition. And inflammation across the board is what affects all disease, and especially heart disease. In my practice I find that the inflammation is caused by a great deal of gut dysbiosis, gut issues, the leaky gut inflammation going into the bloodstream whether it's from toxicity from the gut, the lipopolysaccharides coming in from the gut due to the bacteria (the LPSs). And then of course, we're got to think about if you're eating toxic food and chemicals that are going in and you're exposed to all the chemicals, you can also have inflammation. And then that inflammation sets in.

I don't believe cholesterol is a big issue. That's not the big, bad guy. Mainstream doctors usually look at cholesterol and want to drive down the cholesterol level. I don't think it's cholesterol. I think it's inflammation. What do you think, Mark? Chronic inflammation—

Dr. Menolascino: Well, we know heart disease, like gut disease, like Alzheimer's is probably an inflammatory disorder. We know depression is inflammatory. Susanne, the first book I read of yours was on allergies. And that's something that's not well understood. And how do you see the relationship of allergies, inflammation, mitochondria? How do they all tie together?

Dr. Bennett: Oh, it's so intertwined. When you're allergic and you're having inflammatory reactions, it is inflammatory. It's an immune response. And people have allergies in different ranges. You can have the acute which is the IgE response. And you're in full blown. And of course, you can be in a state of anaphylaxis which is severe, severe stress level in your body. So you're having high levels of free radical damage in your system. And then of course, you've got to go to the hospital for that kind of issue.

But when it comes to chronic allergies, it usually starts stemming from the gut. It all comes from the gut. When you start having dysbiosis and you don't have the good bacteria in the gut, you end up having toxicity because you're eating the wrong foods. From the water you drink to the chemical exposure, from fungal infections, bacterial infections, you could have fungal intestinal bacterial overgrowth (FIBO) or SIBO, whatever you want to call it. It doesn't matter. It's a disruption in your gut. And that disruption means excess permeability. All the toxins and waste go into the bloodstream. And boom! You've got an immune response.

Your body is thinking something is foreign. And so you start having all these allergies to food, to chemicals going to multiple chemical sensitivity issues. You have all these skin allergies. And that's all linked to chronic inflammation.

Dr. Menolascino: And all that is energy that your body is having to take and to use that can't support all the good stuff in your body.

Dr. Bennett: Oh, absolutely! On top of that, your body is in flight/flight state. And Mark, I've never found an allergy person who is actually relaxed.

Dr. Menolascino: Interesting.

Dr. Bennett: Because they're all in this very hyper vigilant, sympathetic dominant state. And that, again, is high, high levels of free radical damage in our system. It burns out our mitochondria. And that, of course again, increases inflammation.

Interestingly, within the mitochondria, they have very, very fragile membrane. The outer, there's a bi-lipid membrane, these little mitochondria. And then inside has the mitochondria DNA. That's super fragile. It's much more fragile than our regular cellular DNA.

And when the mitochondria is making energy, it has to go through all these sequences and complexes so that you can produce energy. And during that process, you even create a lot of free radicals inside the mitochondria. And that's the reason why inside we have a lot of glutathione, catalase, and superoxide dismutase which quenches the fire inside naturally.

Dr. Menolascino: You mentioned glutathione. And I don't think a lot of people have heard about glutathione or its building block N-acetyl cysteine. Can you share with us?

Dr. Bennett: Absolutely. Glutathione is pretty much the super antioxidant that our own body produces. Our own body produces it. If you know a little bit about methylation, it goes through the CBS pathway. And this is the pathway from the methionine pathway to homocysteine, which actually is super important. Homocysteine is actually a marker. I don't know if anyone has talked about it—

Dr. Menolascino: We have.

Dr. Bennett: In this summit. But it's a marker for a cardiovascular disease and something that you should ask your doctors to check. Most doctors don't check on it.

Dr. Menolascino: Everyone should be tested for homocysteine. I agree.

Dr. Bennett: You've got it. You've got it. And I like it on the low end, below 10. Even if you can get it down to 7, 8.

Dr. Menolascino: We do 8.

Dr. Bennett: Right. 7, 8. So when it comes to that, the homocysteine naturally can make glutathione. But if you've got little glitches in your

enzymatic pathways, if you don't have the right nutrients to produce it such as NAC (N-acetyl cysteine) you just mentioned, then you've got trouble in quenching that fire within the mitochondria.

And you mentioned about kimchi. Brand new study this year. Brand new study that kimchi actually enhances glutathione production inside our body.

Dr. Menolascino: There are not many foods that do. I don't know of many foods that do. It's a hard thing to increase if you're low.

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, glutathione is a sulfur-based compound. Sulfur base. And I mentioned about the homocysteine. And a really good way to enhance glutathione production is through taking in protein. And the two proteins that make the glutathione are methionine and cysteine. So foods that are high in methionine and cysteine are the way you're going to be able to make glutathione naturally.

Dr. Menolascino: And what are those foods, Susanne? What do you recommend people should eat?

Dr. Bennett: Well, I did a lot of research. I did a lot of research on this because in my *Mighty Mito* book, I ended up wanting to talk about how do you produce more glutathione because I know glutathione is a mitochondria nutrient. So I found that vegan proteins do not have high levels of methionine or high levels of cysteine. It's really animal protein. Animal protein.

And I really loved eggs. Egg white. Egg yolk. If you don't want the cholesterol, if you don't want—I love egg yolk because there are a lot of benefits to it because of the vitamin Bs in it and whatnot. But again, in egg white, very high levels of cysteine and methionine. So you can take it as an egg white shake or an egg white omelet and have that a few times a week in fact.

Dr. Menolascino: We test for glutathione here. And we see most people are low. And anyone who comes in with a mood issue, dementia, heart disease, skin issues, autoimmune disease, if they have a health challenge, they're glutathione is almost universally low.

Dr. Bennett: That's right. That's right. I feel like the sublingual lipophilic ones that you can actually—liposomal, I should say. Liposomal. It is a lipophilic because it absorbs well with fats. And anyway, you want to take one that you can absorb really well. And orally, I use about 400, 500 mg per day,

sometimes twice a day. And then you can also in your practice—I don't know if you do this. But you can do it IV and IV push.

Dr. Menolascino: Yes. Well, you were talking about the liposomal. And a lot of theories of glutathione you have it wrapped in a fat bowl when you take it as a supplement because the digestive tract digests it.

And this where the experience of someone like Dr. Susanne is so powerful. Not all glutathione is the same. And not all gets absorbed. And not all works the same. So you have to be smart about your supplements. And like you talked about in your *Mighty Mito* book, you really look for the right kind for the right person.

And then do you feel like the level could be different for different people? Some people need a normal level, whereas some people may need a little more because of their health challenges.

Dr. Bennett: Oh, absolutely. Actually, it has to do with the fact that—are you able to digest it, first of all? Are you able to absorb it? But also, there are genetic patterns. Remember I said a little earlier that there are methylation. And you can have the enzymatic variants, these genes that don't make enough. If you don't have these right enzymes, you might only make 40%. You might make 60%. So it all depends on that level.

And getting it tested—and I know that there are a lot of labs out there now that are testing for glutathione levels—it's important.

Dr. Menolascino: So it's not one size fits all like we were taught in medical school, Susanne?

Dr. Bennett: That's right. It's not.

Dr. Menolascino: And probably the most misunderstood are the mitochondria in looking at the health. And you had mentioned kimchi and how it can work in so many different aspects. And I love when food is medicine. Tell us more about it.

Dr. Bennett: Okay. I'll tell you what. Kimchi. I've lived with kimchi my whole life because I'm from Korea, Mark. And it's the traditional, iconic fermented food of Korea. And it's been around for thousands of years.

And the reason it's been around for so long and still to this day it's one of the few countries that really use fermented food as part of their day-to-day diet. And it's because fermented foods, you can actually have it for many, many months. It's a way to preserve food so that when it's in the winter months, when vegetables, thousands of years ago, were sparse and of course it's not growing because Korea is loaded with snow. You can so much snow, just like where you're living right now. And then there's absolutely no vegetation. So they figure out a way to ferment it. Ferment food and then preserve that and have the benefits.

But I'm going to tell you. I just died what happened. About five years ago, I went to Korea. And what got me really interested in kimchi was the fact that in Korea, the obesity level is super low. I went there for the first time after 38 years of leaving my country to come to the United States, immigrate here. And what I noticed—of course, I was looking at all the cool places in Korea.

But the food culture there is really ridiculous. It's just sick. I love it. And everyone eats an enormous amount of carbohydrates. Enormous! And I don't mean 1000 calories of carbs at one sitting. I'm talking about 3000, 4000 calories. Big, huge bowls of noodles, white rice, of pastries, every corner. It's so much. And Korea is actually now a pretty rich country. So food is everywhere. There is western food, too. They love pizza. They love burgers.

But what I did notice is this. There's no obesity, even overweight people. Out of 194 countries in the world, when it comes to obesity, US is number one here. They're at 168. 168! They're way down. Their obesity level is very low. 33% here in the US. 5.8%. 33% in the US. 5.8%.

Dr. Menolascino: How are they processing all those carbohydrates?

Dr. Bennett: Hello! This is what I found out. It wasn't in the main dish. The magic was in the side dish that they were eating. Every meal—every meal—they eat kimchi. Even they're eating a burger? There's kimchi on the burger. When they're eating pizza, there's kimchi on the side. You can't believe how much kimchi we eat. Now, eat about half a cup of kimchi a day. That's a lot. Most people think, "Gosh. Geez!"

How much probiotics are in it? I'll tell you how much. In a half cup, there are over 250 billion bacteria. 250 billion in half a cup! Now, when you look at all the supplements that are out there, 5 billion per pill. And maybe even if you're lucky and you've got some that are really high potency, 50 billion, 100 billion. But look at the cost. Look at how much it costs.

And when you make kimchi, it doesn't cost that much. That's the best part. And you can make a ton of it. And you can have it for long periods of time, months, in your refrigerator. I've got right now in my kimchi refrigerator about 23, 24 containers at different stages of fermentation. And when you've got different stages, the studies show that you actually have different kinds of bacteria and diversity. Kimchi helps not only with obesity. You've heard of the *Firmicutes bacteroidetes*. Have you heard of that, the ratio of that?

Dr. Menolascino: So you're talking about these different bacteria in your gut that can take out different amounts of calories.

Dr. Bennett: That's right.

Dr. Menolascino: And they took the obese mice, took their gut bacteria and put them in skinny mice. And the skinny mice got fat. And the skinny mice bacteria into the fat mice made the fat mice skinny.

Dr. Bennett: That's right.

Dr. Menolascino: The different bugs take different calories. So it's not calories in equals calories out. It's what your gut does with them.

Dr. Bennett: That's exactly it. And that's the reason the obesity level is so low in Korea. On top of that, with the *Firmicutes* and the bacteria, what they found was that actually when you eat kimchi over time it'll change rapidly. Within eight weeks, within two months, if you eat kimchi regularly, it'll change that ratio so that you can start to lose weight.

Let's talk about heart disease. There is so much science. Kimchi-ology. There's so much kimchi-ology, which is the science of kimchi, regarding heart health, heart disease, cardiovascular, blood vessel health. You know what? There are articles. And this is all, of course, from Korea because Koreans are the ones that love to do the science. I was able to go there.

I did a big, self-funded research visit to Korea earlier this year because I wanted to get the research to write up my book *Magic of the Kimchi Diet*. And what they found was that at the World Institute of Kimchi where all the doctors—and they only study kimchi. They found that atherosclerosis went down with kimchi over time.

Dr. Menolascino: Wow.

Dr. Bennett: There are animal studies where they show that there are fatty streaks. And they found that in the aortic sinus these fatty streaks would literally reduce. It will disappear with kimchi. You would reduce inflammation for vascular inflammation.

Let's talk about the markers then. Biomarkers for heart disease that everyone looks at—triglycerides, cholesterol, lipid levels, the LDL levels. That changed, of course, reduced the bad cholesterol. And, I say, LDL. The triglycerides go down. And then insulin insensitivity, also that got better. Or I should say, insulin insensitivity. Then the insulin re-sensitivity in that sense. Even the A1c got better.

Dr. Menolascino: You're really talking about gross changes of physiology from one food. "Let food be your medicine."

Dr. Bennett: That's right.

Dr. Menolascino: Susanne, I think a lot of nutritionists will talk about pickled foods and talk about the prebiotic fiber effect and how they feed the probiotic. So you're saying you get both the pro and the prebiotic effect from one food source.

Dr. Bennett: That's right.

Dr. Menolascino: That's fantastic! And it lowers these inflammatory markers. That's so exciting!

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, if you lower it—this is something that everyone in the world can make. And that's what I want to do. I want to share this with everyone. I want to be the kimchi ambassador of the world, Mark.

Dr. Menolascino: How does somebody make it? Because I want to go home and make some. How do you make it?

Dr. Bennett: Okay. So there are only really three ingredients that you need. There are a couple extra that I'm going to tell you. But if you've got coarse sea salt—and it's got to be sea salt. Do not use the one with iodine in it because that's not good for you to have high levels of iodine. But you need coarse sea salt because sea salt has all the other minerals. I'm not talking about Himalayan either. I'm talking about coarse sea salt. That's called solar sea salt. The Koreans basically use the ocean and dry it a certain way. Take the bitterns out so that it doesn't taste bitter. But then you can also do Celtic sea

salt. And make sure that it's white in color. Otherwise, you change the color of the kimchi. But the second ingredient that you want is garlic.

Dr. Menolascino: That makes sense.

Dr. Bennett: The third ingredient is ginger. So what you're going to be having is you're going to create a salty ginger which is like a pungent. And then you're going to make it into a sour food. I also believe that if you put fruit in there—you don't need to put fruit. But you need food for the bacteria to grow. You need food for the lactic acid bacteria to grow.

And why do we need salt? You've got to brine the vegetable first. And when you brine it, you get rid of all the bad bacteria and parasites as well as fungi. And then the lactic acid bacteria, the magic of the fermentation occurs. And all that lactic acid starts to grow.

And that lactic acid bacteria, each week of fermentation, change and shift. And there are mainly three of the genera. And one is *Lactobacillus* which everyone knows. But there's *Weissella*. Nobody knows about *Weissella*. There are many different strains. You probably never even heard of it.

Dr. Menolascino: I've heard of it. I don't know much about it, though.

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, but they're very high in kimchi. *Leuconostoc*, another. *Leuconostoc* is another genus. And did you know in kimchi you can have 900 to 1000 different strains?

Dr. Menolascino: Everybody thinks about the *Acidophilus* in yogurt being so important. And that's really a myth. It's so much more complicated with all these different strains that you're sharing.

Dr. Bennett: The biggest factor, I'll say, that everyone has to really understand is not just number of probiotics. It's really diversity. The diversity. And I've done, oh, hundreds and hundreds of GI stool testing, looking at the diversity. And across the board, people in America are super low. Super low. And part of it is because of the type of foods we eat.

And we have a very high rate of C-section babies in this country. That was part of my son's problem. My allergy book was all about really my son, how he had a C-section. We had to do it because he was way too big in size. And he didn't get exposure to the healthy microbiome. My microbiome, which is, of course, his first inoculation. He didn't get it!

Dr. Menolascino: So you're talking about as the baby comes down the vaginal canal for a natural birth versus a C-section. I've seen the data that it's a different ecosystem that the child starts its life with.

Dr. Bennett: That's right. That's the most important, in fact, to start the health of the immunity of the outside skin which is the outer skin and the inside skin which is your entire gut system from mouth down all the way.

Dr. Menolascino: One of my midwife friends described it as the baby's ecosystem can start with the healthy vaginal flora of her mom, or she can start with the flora of the sterilized operating room. Which one do you think is a better way to start life? And that's a powerful statement. That's a very powerful—

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, very powerful. When I think about the work I'm doing now, my first love, of course, was for my son. And it was all about allergies and about how the gut and the microbiome was a huge impact on why he had allergies and his immune factors and why he was so hyper allergic and all that.

Then my second love and passion work was on mitochondria, my *Mighty Mito*. And did you know that mitochondria all come from our mother. Our mothers pass down our mitochondria. So that's another female.

And now, I'm into kimchi. And again, it's about the female lineage of where do we learn from how to do. I learned it from my mother. I learned how to make kimchi. So this is a tradition passed down from grandmothers, and great-grandmother to my grandmother, my mother, myself. And I actually pass it down to my son. So it is coming down through the mother's lineage. It's like this full circle of life! How crazy is that?

Dr. Menolascino: It is so crazy! I love the respect that you have for that heritage and for the wisdom of your mom and for the culture. Well, there aren't many doctors who talk about nutrition in the way that you're able to, Susanne. And it's great that you have such a passion for it. But you've also done your homework to figure out what really makes a big difference.

You were talking about salt earlier. Can I ask you? Sea salt, Himalayan, Celtic—how do you see them different? And how do you see one better than others at certain times?

Dr. Bennett: Oh, that's a great question. Absolutely. So sea salt, there are various types of sea salt. And you can find the ones that are in the Celtic. I use the Korean for my kimchi. There's Himalayan.

The difference is in the percentage of minerals in the salt. Himalayan is 95% sodium chloride. Sodium chloride 95%. Korean sea salt is about 65% sodium chloride. And what are the rest? We've got potassium. We've got calcium. We've got magnesium chloride in there, phosphorus. So there are other minerals in the sea salt. And that's what you want. A Celtic is also pretty high on minerals.

So that's why I say go for the solar sea salt, one that's dried in the sun, the one that is processed. Get rid of the bitters so that it doesn't taste bitter. And you can see it. It's actually very coarse. There's almost a wetness. There's almost a wetness to the salt.

And sodium to me is actually a good thing. One of the things that I was concerned about kimchi at first was because of hypertension. That's a cardiovascular disease. High blood pressure. It's very, very common in the country and around the world. And most people have to manage it with drug therapy, beta blockers, etc.

Well, I was concerned about supporting kimchi for high blood pressure cases. But they found—the studies show. There's a scientific study that shows that there's no change in blood pressure when you eat kimchi which is actually relatively high in salt.

Dr. Menolascino: Interesting.

Dr. Bennett: And the reason is kimchi has high levels of potassium to balance it out.

Dr. Menolascino: Well, that's another one of those urban legends we were taught in medical school, that you can't have sodium if you have high blood pressure. In my clinical practice, I don't really see that as an issue. And that's what the studies are showing, too.

Susanne, are there certain foods that you want to combine with things like kimchi to really augment their potential? What are some great augmenting foods that you can combine it with?

Dr. Bennett: Kimchi actually goes with everything. And like I said, you needed those three ingredients—salt, ginger, and garlic. And the reason why ginger and garlic is so that you can increase the level of the probiotics. There are bacteria in that.

And by the way, when you make kimchi, you've got to use your hands. Dig in there. The reason is, on our hands, that's where all the probiotic and lactic acid bacteria are, too. So you need extra help. Dig in there. Make it with your hands.

And when it comes to kimchi, you can use those prebiotic vegetables. And prebiotic are the ones that have high levels of fructooligosaccharides, or they're called FODMAP vegetables such as cabbage. You can use broccoli. I love cabbage. And you can use different types of ingredients.

I also like ones that are mustard green, cucumber. And the reason I recommend those is not everyone can eat those FODMAP foods right away. In my kimchi diet that I've created and have put hundreds of people on it, there's one kimchi that I ask everyone to do and make in the beginning, their first two weeks of starting the kimchi diet. And that's cucumber. And cucumber is lower in the FODMAP.

And when you're using too high of a FODMAP, you can get really gut-bloated and gassy. So some people will say, "You know what? I get too gassy when I eat kimchi." And they just say no to it right away. But I'll tell you what, if you use the cucumber kimchi, you start there, and you start building. And that's the whole idea in the kimchi diet that I've created. It's eight weeks of just build, of starting slowly. Which vegetable is next? I like mustard. I love radish and all that. And then the one that's the highest in FODMAP, I use that last.

Dr. Menolascino: So Susanne, you've seen thousands and thousands of people, written many books. How do you help someone understand this FODMAP concept? Because it's a word that we see a lot of people use. But I don't think a lot of our viewers know what is FODMAP. Is there an easy way you can share with us how you think of FODMAPs, how you implement it?

Dr. Bennett: Absolutely. FODMAP stands for all these fructooligosaccharides. It's the sugar that is in a lot of vegetables and food. And I'll tell you some of them. For instance, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus, apple, pear. What else? Anything that has a pit in it like—what is that? The cherries.

Dr. Menolascino: Apricot and peach.

Dr. Bennett: Apricots, peaches.

Dr. Menolascino: It's interesting because those are very different vegetables and fruits that are all in the same class.

Dr. Bennett: That's right.

Dr. Menolascino: I think that's what people have a hard time with. How's an apple and an asparagus related?

Dr. Bennett: Because they all have these fermentable carbohydrates. There are sugars in it that our bodies do not know how to break down. For instance, there are fructans. Wheat grains and gluten grains all have high fructans in it. And these are, again, sugars that our body doesn't break down. That's part of the reason it disrupts our gut. Dairy, lactose. Those are sugars, too.

So these are fermentable carbohydrates. What is the word fermentable? It ferments in our gut. Those are the foods that you don't want to eat if you've got a lot of bacterial overgrowth in your gut because, again, it's going to eat it up.

So the idea with kimchi and adding kimchi to your diet—by the way, the thing about kimchi diet is that you're not taking anything away. You're just adding it. What diet does that? All the diets in the world, "Take this away. Take that away." Nope, I am not telling you to take things away.

As a natural practitioner and someone who is all about longevity and health, we've got to get rid of the bad stuff—sugar, dairy, gluten. These are all inflammatory. But again, kimchi is to be added to reduce inflammation, clean up your skin, help you with your energy, brain fog, everything we're talking about. So we're adding kimchi into your diet.

And although when it comes to FODMAPs and the overgrowth of bacteria, there's going to be a time period that we're going to have a little fight in there. The kind of the hill. Who's going to be fighting? And who's going to win? And lactic acid bacteria always win. Always! So when you put that in, even if you've got the fermentation going on—have you ever heard of auto brewery, Mark?

Dr. Menolascino: Yes.

Dr. Bennett: Okay.

Dr. Menolascino: So tell us about that. That's a fascinating subject. It was actually on TV. One of my clients came in and said they heard about someone who was making alcohol from their yeast in their gut and got pulled over.

Dr. Bennett: That's right. If you've got a yeast overgrowth and if you eat a lot of yeast in bread products drink a lot of alcohol, wines, and beers; and you've got fungal infection in your gut. And a lot of people don't even realize that because fungal infections are rampant. But what ends up happening—you eat some fruit or some sugar or, for instance, FODMAP foods—one that is hard for our body to produce enzymes to break it down—then your gut and all the bugs in your gut are going to create that fermentation. And that's called auto brewery.

And what I call auto brewery, you get auto intoxication. You wonder why people can't wake up in the morning and they're tired and they feel like they've got a hangover? Hello! Auto brewery.

Dr. Menolascino: Tell us how you describe this because when people think of fungal infections, they think about a woman with a vaginal yeast infection or an oral thrush. But you're talking about a different type of yeast and a different type of presentation. How do you share that with your clients, Susanne?

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, so fungal infections. You can have it on the external and internal skin. So you could have yeast overgrowth, Candida overgrowths. Trichophyton—they're a dermatitis. They're skin. They're different types of yeast and fungus, like mold, mold spores.

For instance, we can have aspergillosis in the lung. If you have an environment that is high in mold content inside your house, you can breathe it in. And you can get a fungal infection in mucosal tissue. So mucosal tissue could be anywhere again—eyes, nose, mouth, all the way down, lungs, down your gut.

Now, what I've done, I've found some research saying that we all have yeast naturally. Of course, we do because it's part of our flora. But it's about 7%. 7. But it can actually go higher, though, depending on what you eat. If you have a high sugar diet, if you have birth control pills, that will increase the Candida load in the vagina and in the gut. If you had overuse of antibiotics, yeast is everywhere.

Eczema, atopic dermatitis. Atopic dermatitis or eczema, that is, to me, because I treated this many, many times, thousands because my son had it as well when he was a baby. This was one of his symptoms of gut problems— atopic dermatitis. That was also a fungal. Skin fungus. Yeast overgrowth in combination with excess bacteria. There's science about kimchi. 40% of your atopic dermatitis goes down when you eat kimchi.

Dr. Menolascino: So you're balancing the gut to fix the skin. And I know for you, when you see these skin conditions the first place you look is the gut, right?

Dr. Bennett: That's the fastest. Absolutely. I work on both levels, Mark. You've got to definitely work on the internal skin. But you've got to work on the external skin. The internal skin is, again, correcting the bacteria and the fungal content.

And sometimes I actually use antimicrobial agents. There are some really good products. Olive leaf is one of my favorite for fungus. I love berberine. I love oregano oil for excess bacteria overgrowth and sometimes even parasites. People don't like to talk about it. But I do a lot of parasite cleansing. And it doesn't mean that you're having worms in your gut. I'm talking about protozoans, amoeba that you can't see them.

Dr. Menolascino: Let's talk about parasites because that's something a lot of people throw around. But I don't think people realize how big of a problem it really is.

Dr. Bennett: 30% of my patients—30% because I do a lot of stool testing—it's from parasitic. One of the impacts of their poor health is parasites. Let me say it that way. Because parasites can impact many, many different areas. It can affect your heart. There's whipworm that actually can affect your heart. There are parasites that can affect your brain. *Ascaris lumbricoides* larvae can go into the brain. Allergies. *Ascaris lumbricoides* affect the lungs.

When it comes to protozoans in the gut, that can affect skin issues. Anxiety. Man, anxiety! I had actually even a case—this sounds really gross. But I'm going to have to tell you about it now that we're talking about it. I had a case who had severe clinical depression and severe enough that she was suicidal. Suicidal case. And she came to me because none of the drugs helped her. Gal in the mid30s at the time. And then I did a parasite cleanse on her.

And she told me—these was her words—that a little, shrimp-like thing came out of her. And you know what I said? I was like, “Did you save it? Because I want to see it. I want to know what it is.” But of course, she didn’t.

But she said after she expelled this thing, her depression just went away. It went completely. It was crazy. It was one of those, “I can’t believe it.” It’s anecdotal. But I know that parasites are linked to brain/mood disorders. And once they start cleaning up their gut and parasitic issues, they start feeling better. They’re less anxious, less overwhelmed. They can sleep better.

Dr. Menolascino: So you mentioned some of the big, scary parasites that people see on the internet and that type of thing. But you’re finding really some of the subtle parasites, correct?

Dr. Bennett: Oh yeah.

Dr. Menolascino: That are causing these imbalances, leading to multiple different disease issues.

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, absolutely. I see a lot of *Entamoeba histolytica*. *Entamoeba histolytica* in America, you get it in raw salads. And I love raw food. But I’ll tell you what? It’s really important that you clean your raw veggies. And those bags? Don’t believe that they’ve been washed three times. Wash it, man. Wash it!

Dr. Menolascino: Do you do anything special with your wash? Do you use a brine or salt?

Dr. Bennett: Actually, I do. Yeah, I use vitamin C crystals, vitamin C powder. I just soak my veggies.

Dr. Menolascino: Really?

Dr. Bennett: Yeah, for 15 minutes in a big, big bowl where you put your veggies in. and then I even soak my quinoa, my brown rice in it. And I put about a heaping teaspoon.

Dr. Menolascino: Why vitamin C, Susanne?

Dr. Bennett: Because it’s acidic. It’s acidic. You can use vinegar, too. But I don’t like the taste of vinegar to everything. And vitamin C. Pristine clean and clean food.

Dr. Menolascino: I like that.

Dr. Bennett: Now, again, I don't want the protozoans because I know protozoans can wreak havoc in the gut. Where you're located, there are a lot of beaver in your rivers and all that.

Dr. Menolascino: Giardia.

Dr. Bennett: Giardia and Crypto. I had those two about 12 years ago. And I'm telling you. I don't ever want that back. It was horrendous! And it was very difficult for me to get rid of them. And it took months. And I'd say it probably took me two years to get back my gut. Two years of working on it, working on it.

Dr. Menolascino: Well, just to clarify, Susanne, a lot of people when they think of a parasite, they think about people having diarrhea 20 times a day. And that's what most bad parasites do. But you could have no diarrhea and have a parasite. You could have a mood disorder like you mentioned or a skin disorder or some other disease.

And for everyone viewing, listening, if you've done everything right with your doctor and it has not worked, parasites are probably something you need to look at. And look at the gut. Do a stool test with someone like Dr. Susanne who's an expert. But really go the next level because if you've been doing everything right and nothing has worked, it's usually something else that your doctor is probably not going to be thinking of.

Dr. Bennett: That's right. You want to dig deeper, everyone. Dig deeper! Don't stop. Don't stop with, "Oh. Well, my doctor said the stool test is negative." I dig deeper by using different stool tests, looking for it.

There's also a thing that, you know what? Sometimes what I do is if I suspect it and the patient is really healthy, I will challenge it with a parasite formula because most parasites you can get rid of it naturally with herbs and nutrients. There are only a few parasites—like *Strongyloides*, I don't touch. I definitely get doctors to get drugs for ivermectin.

And there are other, like *Necator americanus* hookworms. That can be a little harder to get rid of. But there are specific parasites I know I'm going to send it out. Let's get together with the medical doctor who will prescribe the right drug for it.

Schistosomiasis. I don't know if you've ever heard of that. But that is another parasite. And *Leishmania*. These are things that are heavy duty. You get it in third world countries. And *Schistosomiasis* I've treated three times with medical doctors. And they all, actually interestingly, came from Israel. The patients stayed in Israel, came back. And that's when I got them as a patient.

Dr. Menolascino: And Dr. Susanne, do you think for some people, or maybe for many people—if someone drinks bad water while they're up in the mountains that a beaver was in, you're going to get Giardia. But for others, a lot of people get exposed. But their body is robust enough to clear it. And other people, they have a weak link in their gut or in their kimchi support, their prebiotics, or their ecosystem. And where normally your body would be able to clear it, they're unable to.

Dr. Bennett: That's right. Where it starts is in your stomach with hydrochloric acid. See, when we eat, our bodies, parietal cells in our stomachs produce HCL so that we can start breaking down and killing the bugs that we eat. The truth of the matter is I'm a big, big believer in the diversity. And you want to eat—when I talk about cleaning up the veggies, I'm talking about not all, everything do I wash so that it's aseptic. I don't mean that.

And the reason I say about specific veggies, right now we've got an *E. coli* scare from romaine lettuce. You heard that. So I'm talking about those types of situations. I'm a big believer. I don't ever use those Purell—you know what I'm talking about? When you're using these—

Dr. Menolascino: The hand sanitizers, yeah.

Dr. Bennett: Hand sanitizers. I don't believe that. And I'm a big believer in eating food and getting that diversity. You just don't want an overload.

Dr. Menolascino: So you mean we shouldn't be putting hand sanitizer on our kids' hands 15 times a day? And we actually should let them play in the dirt?

Dr. Bennett: Thank you. Yes. And the animals. Oh my god! Now, I don't tell people to kiss animals because you can get parasites from animals. But when you touch them, they're on your skin. They get on you. You can nuzzle them. But I'll tell you. When you've got more animals in your life and you're playing in the dirt and you're surrounding yourself in nature, that's where you're going to build your diversity because there's bacteria and good stuff in the air. Even when you're making kimchi, it's not just in your hand. Like I said, it's in the veggies. But it's in the air—

Dr. Menolascino: I like that.

Dr. Bennett: As you're making it. And it all creates a healthier biome. And that microbiome is what you want. You want to build and make a more robust, diverse microbiome. You just don't want a lot of parasites.

Dr. Menolascino: Yeah, and when you make something like kimchi, do you feel it's important to make it with intention that you're making something to help your ecosystem, your diversity, really put that intention really every time you make food or prepare food for yourself or your family?

Dr. Bennett: I love what you're saying, Mark, because this whole project about kimchi is really a love project for me. I love kimchi. I love my heritage. I love what it does for my family and for my body. And I really want to share this love with everyone. And that's the reason I'm talking about it so much.

Definitely when I'm making kimchi, I really put that energy of love. And the idea of it is to grow that healthy, optimal level of lactic acid bacteria because that's love going into me.

Dr. Menolascino: Absolutely.

Dr. Bennett: That's love that I'm feeding my body. It's awesome!

Dr. Menolascino: And that's why we need to take a walk with someone we care about or our dog, have meals with people we care about, and connect with people that we care about.

I always enjoy talking to you, Susanne. Last time we had dinner, it took me a week to come down from the high of being with you and all the excitement that you share with me. And you really inspire me. So thank you.

Dr. Bennett: You, too, man. I'm so excited for you. Thank you so much. And I'll tell you what. This whole area of heart health, women's heart health, and your book [*Heart Solution for Women*], is just the biggest thing.

Dr. Menolascino: Thank you.

Dr. Bennett: I congratulate you on everything that you're doing. Thank you for helping the world!

Dr. Menolascino: Thank you. I appreciate that. It's our pleasure to do it together. So Susanne, if people wanted to connect with you, how do they find you? What's the best way to connect with you on Facebook, Instagram, on the net?

Dr. Bennett: Well, gosh! My website, DrSusanne.com. And of course, Instagram. I've been playing with that. It's so much fun. And that's @DrSusanne. I actually even have recipes there to help people make your own kimchi.

And kimchi, I want you to know. It's not just red. Remember what I said earlier. You don't need the red pepper. It does change the quality of the kimchi and makes it last longer and change even the bacteria. But if you've got a problem with spiciness, you don't need it. So I share all that, that there are different kinds of kimchis. And I share that on Instagram.

I've got radio shows galore on Radio MD, iHeart Radio, and iTunes, of course. Where else can you find me? My books! All my books are on Amazon. And then my one that's going to be, it's on pre-sale at Amazon which is *The Magic of the Kimchi Diet*.

Dr. Menolascino: Well, I think I sent you a picture of this. But I was lecturing in Ireland and went into this very teeny town. In their bookstore was one of your books, right there front and center. So you're a worldwide expert, international teacher of teachers. And I thank you so much for joining us today.

Dr. Bennett: Thank you. Bye, Mark.