

GET OFF YOUR SUGAR — summit —



Advice From the Holistic Momma Doc

Guest: Dr. Elisa Song

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Dr. Bell: Welcome, one and all, to the Get Off Your Sugar Summit. My name is Robert Scott Bell, host of the *Robert Scott Bell Show*, which you can hear two hours a day, six days a week at RobertScottBell.com, *Natural News Radio* and more. I'm grateful to be here on behalf of my good buddy, Dr. Daryl Gioffre, and we're going to do a great summit interview, Get Off Your Sugar Summit.

And there's a lot of information that you'll have access to with our very special guest today holistic momma doc, Dr. Elisa Song. She's a medical doctor, a holistic pediatrician, functional medicine expert, and momma to two crazy, fun kids. In her integrative pediatric practice, Whole Family Wellness, you can find that at WholeFamilyWellness.org, she's helped thousands of kids to get to the root causes of their health concerns and help their parents understand how to help their children thrive, body, mind, and spirit, by integrating pediatrics with functional medicine, including homeopathy—my favorite—acupuncture, herbal medicine, and essential oils.

These health concerns have ranged from frequent colds, ear infections, asthma, and eczema, to autism, ADHD, PANS/PANDAS, anxiety, depression, and autoimmune illnesses.

Dr. Song created Healthy Kids, Happy Kids to share her advice and adventures as a holistic pediatrician and momma. Now, everyone can have their own virtual holistic pediatrician. You can follow her blog at Healthy Kids, Happy Kids, that's HealthyKidsHappyKids.com, and on Facebook, and

Instagram. Links will be up. And I'm grateful to have Elisa Song with us today. Welcome!

Thank you so much for having me. This is such an important topic, especially for kids. So I'm glad that you and Dr. Gioffre are tackling this issue.

Dr. Bell: Yeah, now, of course, the focus is on get off your sugar, but we almost can't limit it, but we will absolutely have to target the devastating impact of these refined sugars on these children's health. But as a holistically-inclined pediatrician, I'm sure, as you said, you've seen so much, so much. How much percentage wise? Can you lay a percentage on how much the impact of refined sugars on their normal, healthy state to what we have seen 54% or more kids being chronically ill now?

Dr. Song: Yeah, so, as you said, 54%, 55% of kids are chronically ill now. And that runs a gamut from things like eczema to asthma to anxiety, autism, ADD. I'm seeing so many kids with autoimmune illness now, it's really, really devastating. And at the rate we're going, that number, by 2025, is projected to be 80%.

And we can't really put a percentage on exactly how much sugar plays a role. But we know that inflammation is one of the factors that underlies all of these chronic illnesses for our kids, and even our neuropsychiatric symptoms. And one of the biggest drivers of inflammation is sugar. And, as you know, sugar is ubiquitous. Sugar is one of the most common food additives. The food industry has trained our taste buds and our kids' taste buds to prefer sugar and salt.

And so when I look at sugar intake with my kids, I challenge parents and kids to really find foods—these are packaged foods, when you're eating more processed foods—find foods that don't have added sugar. So we know that sugar has a lot, a lot of impact on pretty much every single body system of our kid. So their brain, absolutely can affect focus, concentration, mood.

Of course, sugar feeds the wrong things in our gut microbiome. So we can talk about that. And the gut microbiome is so important for our kids' developing gut/brain connection, developing gut/immune system connection, developing gut/hormone connection. The immune system impact is huge. Within about 20 minutes of eating refined sugar, the ability of our white blood cells to literally eat up germs is significantly reduced. And that impact can last for five hours or more.

And so it's no wonder that after birthday parties, with the sugar-laden treats and candy bowls, and cakes, and ice cream that our kids come home and the

next day, they have a fever or they have a cold or they have a cough. I can't tell you enough the impact on the long-term effects of our immune system.

Again, these are not just what we think of as inflammatory conditions like eczema and asthma, but neuropsychiatric symptoms. We are seeing an epidemic of anxiety in our kids and in our teenagers. And there are many, many factors that go into that. But sugary drinks are definitely playing a role in some of these chronic health outcomes.

And then, of course, there's obesity, and there's diabetes, and there's heart disease, and liver disease that we're seeing in younger and younger ages.

Dr. Bell: How much, as far as, when you look at the health of these children, which we acknowledge now over 50% of children are chronically ill, which is I consider that and I think, chronic illness is if we look back historically used to be what they considered diseases of old age—infirmity—you've been on the planet for decades, and decades, and decades—and now to see children coming into this world already in a state less than ideal, or what we might call perfect, or optimal health, the role of food therein.

Of course, we talked about refined sugars. Sugar is a naturally-occurring part of many foods. So it isn't that it's poison, in and of itself, it seems to be that when it's refined, in other words, things are taken out of the food, other things are added into the food, it is not in that whole balanced form or fashion that historically when we had food, it was food, it was whole, it had everything in it and chronic illnesses were the rarity, they were the exception, not the rule. So how are you going about communicating this? Because I don't even know, you tell me, in your medical education, how much of this was part of the curriculum even?

Dr. Song: Oh, well, as you know, nutrition is not really a big part of the medical school curriculum. And I graduated from medical school back in '97 and completed my residency at UCSF in 2000. And we paid lip service to food, "Sure you should eat healthily," but there really wasn't significant training. I think that's changed a bit, but it's still not enough.

And what I see and what I talk about with kids and families because, of course, when I see kids, it's typically with their parents, when they're teenagers, I often see them on their own, but I really talk to them about thinking about what they're eating. And in terms of sugar, helping to educate them that sugar is not just candy and soda, that sugar is also bread, crackers, pasta, all of those simple carbs that are going to get broken down and immediately converted into sugar in our bodies, and even too much fruits, unfortunately.

Again, the food industry has really tricked our taste buds into thinking that everything that we put into our mouth should be sweet. And so when we're thinking about five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables, I'll have some kids where they're eating five to nine servings of fruit, but not a single vegetable. And that's not good either. We don't want to say fruit is bad, because it's not, but you can definitely have too much of a good thing.

And the fruit, all that fructose in the sugar can absolutely contribute to nonalcoholic fatty liver disease that we're seeing and that I'm seeing in younger and younger kids, even in kids who aren't overweight. So this is really important.

I have kids who are athletic. They're active. They're thin. They look fit when you look at them. But then, when you measure their blood, they're not. They look like they have the blood work of an overweight, obese child or adult with signs of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease with signs of prediabetes, sometimes even outright diabetes with their hemoglobin A1C up, insulin up.

So it's really important, this is where education comes in because we're not going to get kids completely off of wanting treats. Adults want treats. For adults, our sugar may come in the form of wine. And we want to think of that as sugar. I should say fruit juices, fruit juices are probably the number one thing that if your kids are on fruit juices, I would take that out completely, out of the house, out of the fridge.

The occasional whole fruit and vegetable with added coconut oil, and avocado, and nuts and seeds, and spinach leaves, and making a really great yummy smoothie, add some protein powder in it, that's fine. But just having a glass of orange juice every morning at breakfast because maybe it's fortified with calcium or because you think it's healthy for you, that is one of the biggest fallacies. So I just want parents and children to be educated about that.

I had one kid, just recently, he was overweight, he was showing signs of prediabetes in his blood, and he was drinking—he and his father were going through maybe a carton of orange juice nearly every day. So we just made that one simple switch. It's just one step at a time. I'm not expecting kids to completely revamp their diet and for you to completely revamp your kitchen immediately overnight. But that one simple step of taking out the sugar, not even buying any orange juice, not in the house, and within the next month and a half, weight loss, more fit, more active, felt better. And his numbers, his blood work looked so much better.

Dr. Bell: I want to differentiate, and I think you had said that, as well, the distinction between perhaps a juicing or as you said making smoothies where you're taking whole plant material or vegetation and fruits, and you can mix them together, of course, that there is a distinction. Is it the presence of fibers? Is it the presence of other accompanying minerals that distinguish itself from isolated store-bought juices like orange juice or other things?

Dr. Song: It's all of the above because when I make a smoothie, I don't want kid... We in our household, usually Saturdays or Sundays are our smoothie day, where we'll just raid the fridge, and see what's there, and raid the pantry, and put together a smoothie. But we don't ever just put fruit in the smoothie. So we do use a base. Oftentimes, I'll use pea milk because that has a higher protein content. I'll throw in an avocado, as I mentioned, or coconut oil, lots and lots of nuts and seeds.

So we're pairing the fruit with tons of spinach and kale. And I love beets, frozen beets to put in it. We're pairing that fruit with healthy fat and protein because that is another really important thing for parents and children to understand is when they are on this sugar rollercoaster, that a lot of kids are on, that a lot of adults are on, but for kids it can be quite profound, they're not pairing their simple sugar with fat and protein.

When you just have the simple sugar, let's say a piece of fruit or juice, I should say, because if you have an apple that's much better, the fiber on the peel of the apple slows down how quickly that sugar is absorbed into your bloodstream.

Same thing with pairing, let's say an apple with almond butter, which is one of my favorite snacks, or having some carrots with hummus, so making sure that you're pairing these foods because fat and protein slow down how quickly that food is absorbed into your bloodstream and how quickly your blood sugar rises. And that's what we want, we want even blood sugar throughout the day. We don't want up and down and up and down.

Dr. Bell: Dr. Song, are you still encountering parents that are fat phobic trying to keep their kids away from any dietary fat? Because I found that to be another misunderstanding in terms of what is really the harmful aspect of a diet gone wrong as we talk more about sugar, refined sugars versus embracing, as you've mentioned, how important fat is for developing brain, nervous system, all kinds of tissue in the body.

Dr. Song: That's right. Not too much, but again, my practice is unique. And it tends to attract patients and parents who are already, I would say, a little bit more educated on the nutrition front. I do talk, when I give lectures out in the

community, at schools, and preschools, I do encounter fat phobia because, of course, I grew up in that fat phobia age where as long as it was fat-free, it was fine. You could plow through an entire box of Entenmann's fat-free mini chocolate cookies, and it was fine, or have the fat-free frozen yogurt, huge bowls of it. So that was my era.

And it does take a lot of undoing. But I tell parents that in that first year or two of life, especially that second year when we're trying to get in that good nutrition after kids have moved on with nursing or off of their formula, we really want to make sure that kids are getting at least 50% of their nutrition in their diet from healthy fats because the brain, that toddler brain that is making all of those amazing synapses and connections, the toddler brain actually has, I think, something like 10 times the synapses as an adult brain.

And so 50% or 60% of all of our body's cholesterol is in our brain. So we want those healthy egg yolks. We want all the healthy fat, all those avocados, and nuts and seeds. And nowadays, the recommendation is to introduce all of these foods, including nuts and seeds, and foods that used to be considered allergenic, and wait until 12 months of age, we want to get them all in, under a year of age, to reduce the risks of allergies.

And then we go to the next set of rapid brain development. And the teenage brain, that pubertal brain, is developing just as much as your toddler's brain. Now, there is a little bit of a difference because teenagers have a little bit more development in the prefrontal cortex. So they have the ability to make more rational decisions. It doesn't mean they always do because their limbic system, their amygdala's more developed.

And so they're driven a little bit more by that emotional brain. But they need to be fully invested. And we need to help educate teenagers so that they know what a good decision is. But your toddler years and your teenage years is where I think really, really teaching proper nutrition, healthy fats, reducing sugars is really, really key for their brain development that's going to take them on into adulthood.

Dr. Bell: Dr. Song, you went to an area where I wanted to go. And that's the developmental through puberty, the teenage brain, particularly in the boys because we see a lot of unfortunately certain violent outbursts and tendencies. And I've looked in my own practice and seen hypoglycemia being a big part where their brains are developing.

Of course, our brains need a lot of energy and they need a lot of sugar, in a sense. And I'm not talking refined sugar, but how metabolically we work with food and we deliver energy to cells in the brain and the nervous system. So if

we look at that age group, and if they are suffering with improper sugar metabolism, or they're getting too much in without the accompanying minerals, that they can end up in a place where you raised these wonderful children, and these young boys turning into young men, and they have seemingly lost control of their behavior.

Some of the worst stories we hear about can be pinpointed back to low blood sugar. So how have you addressed that? And what kind of experience have you had for our parents out there dealing with teenagers?

Dr. Song: Yeah. And I will say the stakes get higher when you're a teenager, especially as a teenage boy if you are exhibiting more aggressive tendencies, the amount of trouble you can get into is quite a bit higher. But we see the same in toddlers with rages, and aggression, and tantrums. I will say with girls, we'll probably see it on the other end where some of their low blood sugar may manifest more as anxiety, and depression, and isolation. So they just manifest a little bit differently, but it's quite significant.

And what you're describing is really, again, that same sugar rollercoaster where kids are eating these fast, simple carbs maybe a piece of like fruit juice or going to Bobo tea, those milk tea that are all the rage now with the kids, or those fancy secret Starbucks drinks that are just laden with, not just sugar, but artificial dyes, and colors, and preservatives, which is a whole other area that really is poison to the brain.

But when we're speaking just about sugar, these kids are getting in these sugar fixes. Most of them are not eating breakfast, especially our teenagers. And when you don't eat breakfast...Intermittent fasting is really not appropriate for teenagers and kids because they need a healthy well-rounded breakfast to start off that blood sugar rollercoaster on an even plane because then the next thing that they eat, if they haven't eaten breakfast, let's say it's a Frappuccino as a snack or maybe for their lunch, that spikes their blood sugar, right.

They might feel better temporarily, feel happy, feel good, then they're blood sugar starts to crash. And it's in those crashes, because what happens when you just have sugar in your system, is your insulin goes up. And for many kids that insulin response is inappropriate. Insulin chases the blood sugar. It goes up and then your blood sugar crashes.

And in that crash, we'll see really all of these different behaviors, these angry teenagers and kids, but they can be super aggressive and violent. They can be just completely almost out of their mind like confused, and angry, and not even aware sometimes of what they're doing. They can be weepy and just have huge meltdowns.

And so then instinctively, when you're a parent of a toddler, "I got to feed my kid, right," you have like your fruit rollups in your bag or like a little squeeze pouch of just some mango puree, which is another simple sugar. For teenagers, they may reach for another Frappuccino or for another coke. And then, that starts the whole cycle all over again. So this is really important.

And so for some kids, for my teenagers, especially, if I'm concerned about this...In fact, I just this week sent a teenager off to get a glucose tolerance test, a three-hour glucose tolerance test, which is hard to do in any case. And it's hard to do in teenagers. I'm not going to lie. But it's the same test that if you're a woman, and you've had children, it's what you did when you were pregnant to rule out gestational diabetes.

But sometimes, we can't know from one measure whether or not blood sugar swings up and down. For instance, the hemoglobin A1C is just an average of your blood sugar. So your kid may have high, high, highs and low, low, lows. And, hey, their hemoglobin A1C looks great. They're not at risk for prediabetes, but we don't know how much they're swinging.

So with the three-hour glucose tolerance test, I'll have kids go and have a fasting blood sugar, a fasting insulin. Take that sugary drink, and then an hour later, repeat, actually, one hour, two hours, or three hours later repeat the blood sugar and the insulin because I'm going to see are they both staying...How much is your blood sugar going up, and how much is it crashing, and how much is your insulin chasing that blood sugar?

Dr. Bell: Dr. Song?

Dr. Song: Mmm, hmm.

Dr. Bell: Another concern I have, in this regard, is that many physicians are referring out to psychiatrist M.D.'s, which end up giving them different kinds of psychotropic medications for something that could be resolved by what you're talking about in terms of changing the diet, altering the way they interact with food, and sugars, and things like that so that the over prescription of, whether it be the Ritalins all the way up the SSRIs in teenagers could be largely eliminated, I believe, in your experience in seeing behavioral shifts when you change diets in these kids.

Dr. Song: Oh, it's profound. Sugar is a part of it. It's getting kids off of the artificial flavors, and dyes, and preservatives is another. I had one kiddo who really was diagnosed, multiple diagnosis, ADD, ODD, OCD, all of these acronyms that are being thrown at kids right now, these labels.

But mom realized when she went off of refined sugar, and she used some healthier sugar substitutes, she started using more Stevia, more Xylitol, trying to pare down how much, even that sugary flavor was in the mouth, and even used a less-refined sugar called Sucanat, even that was much better, the kid did not fly off the handle when eating a sugary food.

And then, for some kids, literally just getting in some vegetables can make a huge difference. And that's where starting with your smoothies, making them a little sweeter at the outset, and then gradually increasing the proportion of your greens and vegetables compared with your fruits.

It's all connected like getting in healthy fats. You can't separate it out, but absolutely food is medicine. Food is powerful. Food has the power to heal and optimize your health. But food, for sure, has the power to damage, and harm, and create chronic health concerns.

Dr. Bell: Yeah.

Dr. Song: Yeah, for teenagers and even younger kids, they have a really fun time doing this. I just have them start reading labels. And I teach them that really for our toddlers and even for our teenagers, our goal is no more than 24, 25 grams of added sugar. I would say even less than that, but really that, you could just say because that's like the max we want to hit.

What does that equal? Four grams of sugar is one sugar cube, one little sugar cube, which is the same as a teaspoon. So I have a picture that I show kids. And then I just have them, "Look, okay, every time you pick up something that you're eating, you're going to have to change your diet right now. Just for two weeks do some investigation."

Look at that yogurt. That yummy yogurt that has a strawberry puree. How many grams of sugar is there? Some of those has literally—gosh, I just wrote down like some to show you—31 grams of sugar. That's about eight sugar cubes. You would never give your kid eight sugar cubes to pop in their mouth. So, as parents, we need to get educated, too, because it can be shocking.

I remember the first time I looked at the vanilla Greek yogurt I was feeding my kids because I thought, "Greek yogurt, lots of protein, probiotics, vanilla tastes good." And I looked and I'm like, "Oh, my, gosh, I'm giving them literally 25 grams of sugar to start off their day." So I swapped.

You can just swap that out with yogurt and whole crushed up strawberries that my kids love. So read the labels and just notice how much sugar is

sneaking into your diet. Even in that marinara sauce that you think has no added sugar, there could be quite a bit. And then try to make some healthier swaps.

Dr. Bell: Yeah. Now, another thing, and I think you mentioned it briefly earlier in our discussion, and once again I don't know how much of this came from medical school curricula, but the study into the microbiome and how sugar cravings can be impacted by the balance or imbalance, if you will, of what's going on in the gut. And one of the big culprits we see all too common in children and adults is anything in the family of what we call candida and their hunger for sugar. So yeah, let us know what you've encountered there and how you work to rebalance the microbiome for these kids or adults that come to see you.

Dr. Song: So I don't see adults, but when I do--

Dr. Bell: Okay, well, pretend adults, like adolescents getting there.

Dr. Song: Yes. However, I do indirectly see a lot of adults because, of course, many of our kids who have yeast dysbiosis in their gut, yeast overgrowth or candida overgrowth in their gut, have parents, oftentimes mothers, but sometimes fathers who have had yeast overgrowth.

And for moms, it often stems from even when they were teenagers, themselves, or they were in their 20s and 30s and while they were pregnant, they had this dysbiosis in their gut that then their kids were almost born with or perhaps they received antibiotics for Group B strep during pregnancy or perhaps your baby received antibiotics in the first, well, at any point in their life, and you just didn't know to give probiotics and fermented foods and restore the gut health.

And so that set them up for having this yeast that took hold. It's very, very common. And, of course, as most of your listeners know, yeast will make us crave sugar. Crave it. And this is for children and adults. If you have a kid who they become like wild animals when there's sugar around, and they can't get enough, or you find yourself hiding the sugar up above the fridge or up in cabinets, and somehow, they're still getting at it, that's the sign that, you know what? Maybe it's the bugs in your kid's gut that is literally talking to their brain and saying, "I need sugar." They do that. And then we crave sugar.

And so with yeast, again for parents and kids looking to see it's not just candy and sweets, as I mentioned before, but it's even if your kids are just carbaholics, all they want is toast, and pasta, and crackers, and pretzels, and fruit, fruit, fruit, like they're living on that. So with yeast dysbiosis, what I

have parents think about or older kids think about is what yeast can do to our brains because again that gut/brain connection is so intimate.

And yeast release these alcohol compounds called acid aldehydes that are very, very toxic and found in many chronic health conditions like autism and even Alzheimer's. And so when they release these acid aldehydes, and they're released into our bloodstream, they literally can make your kids act like they're drunk or tipsy. And so by the time we're an adult, most of us have had experience where we've witnessed friends being drunk or maybe we've been a little too tipsy ourselves.

And there are lots of different ways that kids can experience that. So you might have a kid who is really sad and weepy, and just wants to be alone. You might have a kid whose drunk behavior is to be angry, and violent, and be that aggressive drunk, tantruming. You might have a kid who's just super giddy, goofy, laughing uncontrollably at everything. And you're like, "What's so funny?" And they're just acting like they're just in outer space.

Or you might have the kid who's just zoned out. That brain fog, dull, sitting there, difficulty concentrating, you're trying to talk to them and it doesn't seem like they quite understand. And when I describe that to parents, a lot of parents are like, "Oh, my, gosh, all of that is my kid at different times." And then I know, alright, I am so suspicious of yeast.

And unfortunately, comprehensive stool analyses, even functional stool analyses aren't that great at picking up yeast. So if they pick up yeast, great, but otherwise, I'm going by the symptoms. And there are lots of different ways that I manage yeast. But one of the easiest supplements, antifungal supplements to give a child is going to be an MCT oil or caprylic acid because it doesn't have too much of a flavor.

Some of the other herbs against candida and yeast can be pretty bitter. So I might start with MCT oil. If the stool test did show some yeast and identifies what that yeast is sensitive to, then I'll go by that. If your child's yeast is sensitive to nystatin, which is a prescription medication, I'm not too hesitant about that. I do take pause when I'm recommending antibiotics for bacteria because that again is a set up for having imbalance of healthy bacteria, bad bacteria, yeast, and parasite.

And fluconazole, which is another yeast prescription, I have some pause with that because some kids need long-term yeast treatments because fluconazole can affect the liver. So I just know I'm going to check their liver enzymes. But nystatin only stays in the gut. It's not absorbed systemically. It doesn't kill

bacteria. So it's not going to set up the same dysbiosis that antibiotics can. It literally just kills the yeast.

So there is quite a bit of resistance to nystatin, though. But if they are sensitive, that's another one. Of course, lots of probiotics, there's Multi-Strain Probiotics. And I do incorporate a yeast, a beneficial yeast probiotic called *Saccharomyces boulardii*, does so much of restoring the gut. And many listeners and if you're a practitioner, you've heard of the 5R Program for restoring the gut.

When I trained in functional medicine years, and years, and years ago, there was only the 4R Program. But I think the fifth R that was added, to me, is probably the most important in, not just restoring gut balance, but maintaining health and a healthy gut balance. And that's the rebalance, the restoration of the body, mind, spirit connection that has to do with restoring the vagus nerve—mindfulness, meditation, breath work, connection, love, all of that, which so many of our kids are lacking the skills in.

And so that is a big part of my practice, as well, being focused, because I feel like that, no matter what chronic illness your kids are going through, oftentimes we can get them well, we can “heal” them, get them into remission, but then they keep sliding back. So if we really, really focus on the mindfulness and the vagus nerve, then we can keep them well.

Dr. Bell: So you mentioned that you do things, including homeopathy, and herbs, and essential oils, and acupuncture. And I love that. We need more of that kind of integration. And you mentioned some medications that I perceive to be last resorts, rather than first resorts, which is, I think, it sounds like that's where you're looking to go if you need to go there, you can. Are there some other things that you can do? I'll just throw out a couple of my favorite remedies that I always mention for hypoglycemia.

For instance, homeopathically, lycopodium and Iris are just very common and we can take some of the edge off of that, but it doesn't replace changing their diet and not binging on the sugars. The things we talked about today. What other holistically-inclined tips that people might be surprised to learn that you know about that you've been utilizing to help children in your practice?

Dr. Song: Yeah, so with homeopathic medicines the ideal way to choose the homeopathic medicine is going to be to individualize it to the child in front of me. So really getting an overall picture of who that child is. What their physical symptoms are? What their emotional symptoms are? Were there any triggers for their current symptoms or their current state of health? So it can vary.

I do find that Nux Vomica can be a really helpful one because that's the medicine of overindulgence of anything, whether it's too much sugar or too much wine or too much whatever. So that can be really helpful. As far as acupressure points and acupuncture points, I do acupuncture in the practice, but I teach parents acupressure points and really working on the spleen meridian. The spleen stomach meridian, there's one point that parents can look up. It's one of my favorite points. It's called Spleen 6. I would show you, except it's on my lower leg. It's hard to lift up my lower leg.

Dr. Bell: No worries.

Dr. Song: But it's on the inner part of your lower leg just behind the long bone. That fibula that you can feel. Maybe a few inches up from your ankle bone. But you can look up Spleen 6. Spleen 6 is a great point for regulating digestion, also really, really helpful in regulating the gut/brain connection. It's really useful for anxiety. It can help with sleep.

And when it comes to sugar, one of the most common symptoms, as an adult, that you might recognize when sugar's really affecting you is bloating, whether it's puffy hands and feet or bloated belly. And kids may not complain about that, but you might notice that they have a doughy texture to them, a little more puffy. And so Spleen 6 is another great one that I will either, when they're in the office, you can do acupuncture needles or laser acupuncture or electrostim.

But at home, you can just massage that point. And that's another really great point to use. So what I like to do is really teach parents and kids, themselves, to use these home remedies and home tools that are really amenable to doing any time they want. It enhances whatever they're doing.

Dr. Bell: Beautiful, yes. Now, one thing I want to bring up that's not directly, but maybe indirectly related to the sugar, and also even yeast overgrowth is the bioaccumulation of heavy metals due to environmental or medical or any number of ways that these are introduced, whether it may be cadmium, mercury, arsenic, lead, aluminum.

As a homeopath, I've been dealing, not only with my own body when I first started years ago, but children. It's amazing how much their bodies have. And they haven't been here that long, which means probably we're dealing with transgenerational accumulations, as well. And that, it's something that, I think, the physician community looks at.

First off, oftentimes, they're ostracized if they start talking heavy metals. And I think, "My, gosh, there's a whole litany of medical literature on the dangers to

metabolic function, cellular integrity, also the promotion of inflammation of any system, including liver, kidneys so your experience there, in terms of promoting detoxification of metals, as it relates to sugar and other things.

Dr. Song: Yes, so when I look at a child who has inflammation, then I really try to look at all the different things that can contribute to inflammation. And inflammation and toxicity are really the bottom line to the root of all chronic conditions. We just have to figure out for that child or for that patient, that adult in front of you, what are the toxic factors.

Sugar is absolutely one of them. With sugar, it's any...Add food, it's glyphosate, and artificial flavors, and dyes that I mentioned, artificial sweeteners. I would, as an aside, say artificial sweeteners are not a substitute for sugar. And, in fact, artificial sweeteners can sometimes exacerbate or contribute to worse insulin resistance than the actual sugar. So it's not a substitute if you're having a vitamin water with Splendor, that's not a good substitute. Okay.

But then, heavy metals for sure is something that I consider for kids—mycotoxins or mold toxicity—so I just look through. I think for our kids, because we're seeing chronic illness at such young ages, some literally seem like they're born with chronic...As you mentioned before, you said it so beautifully, they're just not born with that optimal health that they should be. We should have this brand-new baby who has this incredible potential for health in front of us.

And many kids come out not looking so great. We go, "Oh, what's going on there?" And I appreciate that you said that generational imprinting because sometimes it's not mom, sometimes it's stemming from the imprinting that happened when grandma was born and raised or great-grandma. So there's a lot of that.

So what I really like to have parents think about is how do we just live a lifestyle that helps to excrete and eliminate toxins every day in a more gentle way before chronic illness can take hold. And if they do have a diagnosis, if they do have autism, if they do have rheumatoid arthritis, or Crohn's disease, or debilitating anxiety, then we look at, "Well, what else is going on there? Do we need to do maybe a little bit of a deeper detoxification?"

But an everyday detox parents can do easily, getting in your greens is really important, drinking enough fluid. I always have my water here. But I sit and count with kids how much water they should be drinking at a minimum every day. Moving their bodies. Making sure they're eliminating because we get rid of our toxins through our pee, poop, and sweat.

And then adding things like minerals are really important when it comes to heavy metals. Heavy metals, they are minerals, they're just heavier minerals. When you look at the Periodic Table, that's why they're called "heavy metals" because they're on the lower end of the Periodic Table. But heavy metals will compete with minerals like magnesium, and zinc, and selenium to bind on to our cells.

And so if we have a ton of minerals onboard, then your cells are going to be surrounded by these minerals and heavy metals can't get in. It's a simplistic way of looking at it. But minerals, where do we get our minerals? We get those from our vegetables and our fruits. So that's again going back to food is medicine so, yeah.

And Epsom salt baths, Epsom salt baths are really for kids, and adults, and teenagers, getting those in because Epsom salt, not only is magnesium so important for most of us, most people have a deficiency of insufficiency of magnesium, but the Epsom, the sulfate will help enhance glutathione levels. And glutathione is our master antioxidant and master detoxification compound.

Dr. Bell: Mmm, hmm. And you mentioned selenium. I find that to be the most critical mineral deficiency and excretion pathway congestion, for instance. So I'm so glad you're aware of that. Figured you would be.

Dr. Elisa Song, amazing what you know and what you're sharing with us here today. And I'd love for people to take more time with you. You mentioned or I mentioned this, and you said this HealthyKidsHappyKids.com, the kind of information you're providing is so that anybody can tap in to this from wherever they are around the world?

Dr. Song: Absolutely, absolutely. I started Healthy Kids, Happy Kids, my online blog so it could really be a resource for parents wherever they are, a lot of practitioners, as well. So parents and practitioners who really don't have access to a lot of integrated pediatric information or maybe they do, but they want more. And so that site is always ever building with more content. It's just me. It's my labor of love and my passion.

But I do have a busy pediatric practice and my two young children who are absolutely my priority. But I [inaudible] as often as I can. And I do YouTube videos, and interviews, and really fun things to really educate and inform. And I would say, for parents and practitioners, who are really looking for a community of people to support themselves and educate themselves on

integrative pediatrics, from the two summits that I hosted back in 2016 and 2017, it was called The Thriving Child Summit, a Facebook group started.

I started a Facebook group for that summit, but it's just taken this beautiful life of its own. So it's on Facebook. It's The Thriving Child Community Facebook group. And literally we have parents and practitioners from, I think at this point now, like 50 countries around the world that are there to learn from each other. I pop in and support, as well.

And the knowledge is incredible because sometimes if you're in a town, even here in the Bay Area, San Francisco, where you'd think, "Oh, there are so many opportunities to have an integrative, holistic community of parents," not necessarily the case so you may feel very alone and not feel like you have enough other holistic mommas or holistic practitioners to really bounce ideas off of or get your support from. So that's a great place.

Dr. Bell: And that's the point even of this summit, as well, the Get Off Your Sugar Summit, is to establish more community, more access to information that you may not have found locally. And if you happen to be in the Bay Area, you've got Dr. Song. But again, you can access her from all over the world and links, as we've mentioned earlier, WholeFamilyWellness.org, as well. Dr. Song, I appreciate you participating the way you have and educating folks through this summit. Thank you so much.

Dr. Song: Oh, thanks for having me. I'm looking forward to sharing.

Dr. Bell: And on behalf of Dr. Daryl Gioffre and myself, Robert Scott Bell, we'll continue sharing this great information. You'll have access points to be able to get this, download this information, and watch it, and review it, and share it with others. And there's also information on the Get Off Your Sugar Summit through Instagram, through Facebook, and all of these different sites.

And I want to again thank Dr. Song for being here with us. And I hope you'll stay plugged in to all the great learnings that's happening here on this Get Off Your Sugar Summit. So thanks once again, Dr. Song, appreciate you so very much.

Dr. Song: Okay, thanks so much, Robert.