

Ep 45: The link between skin health and nutrition

MERYL: Hello everyone. And welcome back to the Rebel Nutritionist podcast today. I am so excited to have Dr. Marianna Blyumin Karasic on.

She is a board certified dermatologist, co-founder of Precision Skin Institute. And the founder of Stamina Cosmetics. Welcome Marianna

MARIANNA: Thank you, Meryl. It's a pleasure to be here. It's wonderful.

MERYL: I'm really looking forward to our talk.

We met a little more than a month ago, I guess, officially right when we had our holiday party. And we just got into the best discussion, and I want you to tell your story about how you've **incorporated the model of holistic wellness and integrative wellness in to the work that you do into this cosmetic line**, which I can't wait to talk about and try the product. So I'm going to let you take it away and tell us a little bit about Stamina Cosmetics, and kind of where your work has taken you.

MARIANNA: Oh, thank you so much. And I'm so grateful to have met you at the party.

It was such a beautiful party, lovely atmosphere and the energy was right. And I guess it was the right space and time for us to meet. And this is when I was going through that self exploration journey and it's just continuing on. And I guess fate brought us together and that's all part of life and it's fun that we can meet at this type of space and time and then develop friendships and then move forward in the future with continuing on a passion of education and

care. Cause we're both healers, we're both providers where ultimately **our Dharma is to serve others and spread goodness**. And the best way that we can do that is **really understanding the transition and transformation of how medicine is really moving in a very balanced way in a holistic way, in a direction that is very uplifting for a lot of people**. And you understand that because this is really your niche as an integrative medicine, you have all the knowledge even more than me, but this is something that I came to around about two years ago, right during COVID.

So for me as a **traditional medical doctor, dermatologist and as a specialist**, I was hyper-focused having that tunnel vision, all the science behind it has to have scientific studies. It has to have the clinical data. I'm going to take care of my patient exactly the way that I was trained in medical school and all of a sudden COVID hit. And you know, we all hit this kind of a strange moment of pause and fear and it overtakes you and then you start incorporating and start processing and it's almost like this the world started changing and the wheels started turning and you have aha moments. So for me, this aha moment was in my clinic where I kept seeing a lot of my patients that were coming in initially were front liners. And then it was essential workers. I know everyone else wearing a mask and having these horrible facial dermatosis. They had acne folliculitis, eczema, psoriasis that were underlying or new conditions that were getting worse due to wearing a mask.

And you know, in layperson's terms we call it 'maskne'. **We have to wear it to protect ourselves against COVID** and we're still wearing them because we're still going through the COVID up and down. This ripple effects and up and down would go. **But this mask is really detrimental to the skin health and quality**.

So you know, it was **breakouts, it was blemishes, it was rashes** and I was trying to figure out the best treatment that based on medical treatments that I knew that could help my patients. And so I started doing a lot of research about this maskne condition, and that's how I kind of came upon **an ingredient called hypochlorous acid**.

That is a key ingredient in my skincare line, this Stamina Cosmetics. So hypochlorous acid is unique because it's something, our body naturally, when it's encounters a stressor or a microbe and our immune system when encounters, **it releases the hypochlorous acid to destroy the, the micro, but also to reduce inflammation around it**.

And to help regenerate the tissue. So heal the tissue. **So it has a healing capacity. It has anti-inflammatory effects and it has this wide scientific basis** data behind that helps to moderate the presence of various microsphere by always bacterial fungus. So this was like, wow, this is the magical ingredient that we need in order to suit the friction irritation of the mask, as well as reduce all these breakouts and blemishes.

So I decided to incorporate it into the skincare line called Stamina Cosmetics. One of the main reasons is that I felt that I needed to have more farther outreach besides my clinic, in order to help patients with their skin, all the skin issues that we're having.

I'm limited. I'm one person and not a lot of patients have access to healthcare based on insurance. So they're afraid to come in to see me. So I wanted to have a product that someone could look up and easily, for maskne, Neo mask irritation dermatosis and I say, okay, well, this is it. So I'm really happy that Stamina Cosmetics was created in order to help others improve the skin health and beauty.

But you know, the name Stamina came about is **I want it to have this adaptogenic and great ingredient, hypochlorous acid as part of the skincare line in order to help with the resilience of the skin.** So it's beyond just maskne, it's helping the skin improve its skin barrier as well as overall health and have that strong resilience to withstand whatever the challenges that come around, right now it's the mask wearing.

But another day it could be the stress that we're feeling on the hormonal fluctuations. We deal with a variety of stressors, environmental pollution and UV damage. But something that can help on a daily basis to withstand all these challenges for our skin to make it more stronger, especially if someone has more sensitive, reactive, problematic, or challenged skin.

So that one aspect was very important and I'm happy that Stamina Aesthetics was born during that challenging time, and it's going to help a lot of people with that. You know, we launched it about a year ago and it's doing really well especially in my clinic and several local clinics.

There is a website, staminacosmetics.com that it's also blossoming there. Coming back to you, the second aspect of what happened during the COVID. It's my strong awareness that **skincare by itself or the traditional medical care that I can provide as a dermatologist is not enough** because what was happening is that a skincare or the treatments that we were doing was really just a way of outside in healing, which is fine for a lot of people that may be enough they've applied the skincare, they look better, they're healthier and they feel bad about themselves. So that's really uplifting. But for some patients and majority during the time period, So, so stressful, it actually was this constant cycle.

The more stressed out they are , the more they feel pressured, anxious, sad. The more they break out with worsening of their skin conditioning. So it was like this vicious cycle. So I

realized that dermatology, medical dermatology is not enough. We really have to step back and see what else is there? That's going on with the patient, approach a patient in a more holistic model.

Whole body. And that was difficult for me because as a physician first, inter medicine has this incredible passion to help a whole person. However, the medical education, I know it's changing now, but at the time when I was training, because the knowledge was so vast and scientific knowledge, they break it down into a system.

Their education is broken down to system. So then you, so that you can incorporate and actually learn it at an appropriate pace. So it's, **you learn about the brain and the nervous system. They need to learn about the heart. And then you learn about the GI system. So it's broken down,** so it's palatable.

And then eventually you you learn all about it and it's supposed to kind of come altogether. Sometimes it doesn't, especially if you settle in a certain niche, like I settled with skin, so then you concentrate on what you practice and you move along and you see that your progress and you doing all the great work and you helping so many people, it's very rewarding, but then comes that moment when you realize.

Well, that's not enough. I feel like it's almost like **this constant band aid approach helps patients short term,** where if we're not helping them in a preventative way, and we're not approaching them in the holistic way to help them to understand what is behind all this stress and anxiety and daily habits that are deleterious to their wellbeing, then **we're not really having the long-term effect.**

So that is when I started going into integrative, dermatology traveling in their journey. First, it was more in a selfish reason because I was feeling a lot of anxiety. **I was breaking out with a lot of skin issues and gut problems, irritable bowel**, and I've seen a doctor. And struggling with all of that issues.

And I know I'm going to be seeing you. It's not coming up really soon. Hopefully you'll help me even more in the long-term. But you know **I wanted to understand more, what is a holistic way of practicing medicine?** So I started researching and learning more about it. And as I researched and learned, I wanted to share it because you know, our passion as providers is really based on you see one, you do one, you teach one because you want to share that knowledge. It's exciting that oh wow, you can make a difference in a bigger and more meaningful way. So traveling into integrative dermatology, I realized, **how can I reconnect, you know, the practice of dermatology with a mind and a body and approach it in a more holistic way.**

And so one way is I realized our lives are just pretty much, and I think you learn that too is **made up of these everyday habits, rituals, routines, and those little habits and rituals either stack for you or sometimes stack against you. So how do we incorporate more of those micro moments of happiness, fulfillment, positivity on a daily basis?**

And you know, these little doses of stamina that I call. So I had a little project on mine every Sunday on launch and thank you for participating in our lives and what are those moments that can translate to happier and better versions of us? And one of those **I realized is as I was doing my own skincare and also makeup, I realize it's a very mindful and meditative moment where you're at peace.**

I was at peace and hopefully others. It's that you're disconnected from technology. You are in a self care space and you feel very fulfilled in that moment. So that was like an aha moment to say, well, what is that? What is that micro moment? He can be that integrative skincare that can lead to a more happy life for a lot of people.

And I wanted to bring that knowledge to that. So **that's one of the missions of Stamina Cosmetics, that integrative skincare, that moment of enjoying your skincare, seeing the transformation**, someone going to meet it somewhat, maybe over several weeks, but also enjoying this, the moment of self care and peace and balance of doing the skincare.

And also looking at some of the ways, either through music or affirmations, making more meditative, and these affirmations that I have on the skincare products and the stamina products like you got this or defy the odds, so go with the flow. A very positive vibe of good energy and tension leads us to change our behaviors and feel that we can handle a lot of the challenges we can endure. We have the strength and we can overcome the difficulties, the space be it COVID or anything else that comes out way.

MERYL: You touched on so many points . That I want to come back to. But that's just phenomenal.

I mean, I think there's a tremendous amount of parallels in what you're saying and the way we work and the way we want to reach people, because like you said, we are healers and my journey and my story was very much the same. Right. I went through my own illness and recovery and, and saw how life-changing it was for me and then have subsequently changed the direction of my career and my life.

So I feel like it's very important. Yeah. Yeah. One of the things that you said, and I say this often, and I'm so glad I'm hearing it from a medical professional, right? A doctor, a physician who's been in this for so long, come back and says we need a better way to look at things because right.

The idea and what my son's in medical school now, and I'm seeing, I was, I don't know that it's changed so much because he's like, oh, I had to go do this. And I had to go do that. And he's like, I'm not interested in this or that, you know about. But the fact is, it is right. You start out and you do learn about all of these specialties, because it does create, you learn about the individual specialties because it creates the whole person.

Right. But what happens is, is **people end up specializing in and hyper-focused** like you said, whether it's cardiac, heart, GI, brain, whatever it may be. I mean, that's all important, but **ultimately how does that come back and serve the person as a whole?** And I think that's really. **For the strides and the advancements that medicine has made, that's really, the deficit is we don't come back to the whole person.**

Right? Exactly. And we're working out of what I say is one toolbox and I don't think if you go back and look at where medicine has come from back when there was a family doctor and the doctor knew you from the time you were born until the time you grew up and, and whatever understood your story.

Now, sometimes it's just, you're barely a number for some of these and there's no there's no context in which they really can treat you and it does become sort of this band aid approach.

MARIANNA: Yeah, **I feel like it's very chopped up and there's a loss of continuity of care.** And then, you know, because of such a pressure on the healthcare system and the physicians there is not enough time that they feel that they can commit to really take the time and form the team approach and, and really take the time and listen to the patients. Sometimes it's such a rush and, and it's, it's frustrating as being a physician myself. But yeah. It's what you decide to do ultimately as a physician, as a practitioner, how you want to look at the end of the day in the mirror and say, what is the difference?

And then you'd realize what kind of quality of care you want to provide. So I love to listen to my patients. I love to communicate and educate because I do ultimately want them to have a long term resolve. And that's why it's taking that extra step and learning more of the functional integrative medicine.

And teaching them that approaching open next. Let me tell you once I started learning and sharing that with my patients and then also referring them to practitioners like yourself, because I only have limited knowledge. I'm still a baby in this field. You have vast knowledge in it. So you can really comprehensively understand the genetics behind and as well as all the blood work you do, it's very comprehensive, then, and guide them, they're in shock.

They're like, we are just not even aware this was available. Right. You know, that, I think some of it is also that we're so blessed to be at this time, because some of the early alternative or complementary medicines that we're incorporating now in the practical care had very minimal data, very minimal data.

And patients really had a hard time understanding and believing in them. So **now that the field of integrative medicine is expanding and research has more backing behind it that it can**

transform lives. People are a lot more likely to embrace it and believe in it and change their lives for the better.

MERYL: Right. And that's so important. Thank goodness for physicians like you, who are open-minded because, and I am grateful. Because I've been in this field a long time, 20 years and it has been, and it continues to be an uphill battle for me. And it's frustrating because people will come to me and say, well, how come my doctor doesn't know this?

How come my doctor isn't telling me this I work with, and I think there are still a lot of very closed minded. Physicians out there. And like you said, right, we want to know the hard data. We want to know the hard science. I was like that too. Until I was exposed to alternative and integrative work, I was very much in that medical model of show me the money here, show me the research, show me there's science.

And as you've said there is science out there. It's just. A lot of these practitioners don't have the time, don't have the energy or the wherewithal to go look for it. And that makes this work harder because I will have someone come in and say, well, my GI doc prescribed me this medication.

Why should I listen to you? You're not a quote unquote doctor, you know? I'm like, yeah, you should be happy. I'm not a doctor because your doctor doesn't know what I know without sounding cocky, that's not the point. It really speaks to your point about just being open-minded to a different way of thinking, right.

It is a different toolbox and it offers the long-term preventative approach, which I think is so important now. **Especially because we need prevention.** It's so much easier to prevent a condition from happening then having to deal with it once you're diagnosed with it.

MARIANNA: Right. I agree. A hundred percent. So you know, I have a lot of patients with various skin issues, as in many of them are inflammatory conditions that are chronic, such as psoriasis or eczema and acne.

So those are the three major ones that cause inflammation in the body. As a constant battle and just giving them a little bit of hope that it's beyond the, just having to here's the cream and here's the medicine. **But have you explored the other aspects of what's contributing to the inflammation, what's going on with your stress level?**

How would you describe it? What are you eating on a daily basis? Are you exercising? Are you doing any stress reduction mechanisms like meditation or visualization or gratitude journaling. And they're like, what is that? And then all of a sudden, it's just it's like the click in their mind. And then and they're like, well, I want to know more.

I was like, I wish I could help you more. But here comes an understanding from a physician's point of view that we have limitations and then abandoning the pride. And saying what, ultimately though, fits this patient the best, and then you say, okay, we have to work as a team. **So recommending an integrative practitioner like yourself, that can guide them farther, then we'll get them to a more long-term result and then complement it together.**

And then the medical care and complementary medicine together they'll come together to heal the best.

MERYL: Absolutely. It's always, it takes a village I say. Right. And in all areas, but yeah. So one of the things like you said, so the skin conditions, whether it's psoriasis, eczema, acne I often tell people, right.

The epithelium, the skin, the lining of our skin, the outside is very much like the GI tract turned inside out. Right. So we have to look at all of those things that you mentioned, the nutrition, the stress, the exercise, all of that. It's super, super, super important. Right? That is one aspect. The other piece is what's going on.

I always say under the hood on the inside, I, I often say if we had clear skin, people would take better care of themselves. Cause you could see what's going on in the inside. Right? Because we are just an amazing machine from a biochemistry perspective. But if you don't right, it is, it's all, we're all one big chemistry set.

But if you look at where the inflammation is coming from in the skin. So you have to look at the gut. You have to look at the microbiome right now. Everybody hears about the microbiome. Thank goodness for all that research, but you have to have to look at the gut and what it is. Going on in the GI tract from the mouth to the colon to the anus, it's gotta, you've got to check the whole thing, because if there is any imbalance, **if there are any imbalances in that system, then it's going to affect the skin.**

You know, people don't seem to understand that I'm like, no, it totally makes a difference. Right. We treat acne through a gut imbalance, because most of the time the inflammation is coming through look, 80% of the immune system is in the gut. Right. And if you're not sleeping, it's going to affect the gut, right. The serotonin and all of those kinds of things. And that will in turn affect your skin inflammation. And if you're eating processed foods and sugary foods that affects the lining of the intestines and the integrity of the immune system, right. It's going to affect the skin.

MARIANNA: Absolutely. I one hundred percent agree there's a strong connection between our gut and skin health, and **there's a fabulous scientific paper that talks about skin brain connection**, but it talks about how deterioration of the gut is health. And that is the barrier of the gut and the imbalance of all the microbes in the gut and the lining that you're talking about how that translates to various neural endocrine messengers that traveled to our skin and then **our skin is not just a target, it's a conduit**. So therefore it picks up this messages and then it responds in a negative way. And our skin be eczema, psoriasis, acne, whatever the genetically we are predisposed to. And then besides that expression of inflammation, it will go ahead and express its own various neurotransmitters, endocrine from mass cells and then from all the keratinocytes that we have in our skin. And then they, those various neurotransmitters and hormones will travel back to our brain and back to the gut and back to the endocrine system. **And we'll create this loop of constant inflammation.**

Now there's constant inflammation, **chronic inflammation leads to significant impact on the overall wellbeing**. So, you know, and we know that as a simple way of you know, if our skin is deteriorating. Oh, I feel awful about how I look, but so I feel sad about it. And then, that sends negative hormones throughout my body and self image drops, and then we feel more sad and anxious and we have to fix it.

And then when that negative loop, but our body's going through this biochemistry, that's continuing to propagate it and then what happens in our body and specific in our skin is, and we have the drop in the normal function of various manufacturing systems. So the mitochondria deterioration that telomeres, those little caps that protects the chromosomes start dropping off and **that translates to premature aging**.

So the skin starts getting more wrinkles, more dark spots, more solidness, more dehydration looking rough and dull. **So if we want to recreate healthier and more beautiful, more beauty, more useful skin, but also feel great about ourselves. And we look great. We feel great. We've got to work at breaking that cycle.**

And what are the things that will, going back to gut health, gotta address gut health. And we also have to take care of the skin and then we have to work on that mindset. **So all of these things at the same time we can combine, and that's what integrative medicine is about integrating all of those approaches together to make a whole person happy.**

Ad Break

MERYL: I love that. And that, yeah, again, perfectly said. I know what I don't want people to take away is the feeling like of overwhelm. Like, oh my goodness. I have to do all of these things to keep myself healthy. And, wow, that sounds like a lot. Right. But like you said, in the very beginning, one of the things is little by little, right.

We make these habits. We make these choices on a daily basis. And all we need to do is I always say to be able to **just take one thing this week, one thing. And just do it differently for the week** and then continue to do it for a second week and then continue to do it for a third week and by the end of those weeks is a month.

And look at this one habit that you were able to change. Maybe it was just changing the fact that, okay, if I drank soda every day, maybe just don't drink soda every day. Just focus on that. Don't focus on anything else, right? And think, **and see how you feel in a month.** And then if there's something about the stress.

Go out into nature, go breathe. Just take a couple of days a week and go do that. Right. So it's really, it doesn't, **I don't want people to think that they have to go out and change their lives in one fell swoop.** Like I got to change all of these things.

MARIANNA: Right. That's awesome. I feel like, especially in a momentous times in our lives, like new year, it comes around like right in January and new year, and everyone's like New Year's resolution, or maybe intentions, so many manifestations and all of a sudden they just have to transform their lives completely.

But before they know it, they abandon all of it because they make such huge intentions that are not focused and have a hard time being accountable and become even a bigger stressor for them. That, it just falls apart. So I agree with you that slow and steady wins the race, **pick few habits that serve you.**

Well, maybe for you gut health. For your mind health and for your skin health. And just start with those small ones and make them palatable. So it's like one in the morning, one in the afternoon, one in the evening you'll cooperate and you stick with them for a month. **They transform into a regular routine, and then you realize they're changing your body and then you look back and you're like, wow, I had the stamina to be able to do this.**

I can do more. Right. So maybe I have the ability to have that strength and endurance to maybe add another habit that started to be, well, maybe I will, but then turn it into nature and go for a jog, go for a walk and be mindful and actually look at and listen to the trees and the birds around and find out how uplifting that is.

MERYL: So true and that's the work that we do here is why people are so successful is because, like you said, it's creating the community.

So here it's creating the fact that **they've got someone to hold them accountable in a very gentle, nonjudgmental way**. Right. And, and **we've created a safe space for them**. And we are here to support them , not just look, anybody can pick up a book, like, is it right in the beginning of the year, I'm going to go on XYZ diet.

Anybody can pick up a book, follow a diet for a few weeks and see results. But if those habits are not realistic. Number one, nor sustainable those, those whatever gimmicky things, then they're not going to stick with it. Right. So it's **really having someone in your back pocket** to be able to do that and, and what you've created with your community, right.

The stamina community and, and just the whole idea of what you've done is so empowering for people. Right. And that's what makes the work. **I think that the collaborative work that we do together, we get that right.** We get that. It really is important for people to have a sense of community. And I think one of the hardest things and why so many people were so anxious during the pandemic and why we, so the anxiety and, and all of that rise, the depression is **humans need connection**. We need not zoom connection on a, on a panel, right on a screen.

MARIANNA: It's something, but it's not enough.

MERYL: Exactly. We need that energy of physically being in proximity to one another and, and the collective energy of being able to support each other.

And I feel like not when we're isolated and when we don't have that, it really does something to our chemistry.

MARIANNA: Right. And what happens then is if we look for an outlet, be it various vices like an addiction, which is a crutch. And many of us have them, like myself the wine consumption definitely went up during the COVID and, and then you kind of look for various ways other than to balance that out. **And then with time as you incorporate those healthy habits, you figure out how to phase that out because you realize you don't need that crutch anymore** because you have other ways. Like for me, rediscovering meditation, I meditate every day. Now. Using Calm app, I love daily Calm. **That was the transformation that I needed to let go of some of these crutches that I have, maybe the unhealthy sugars, the refined sugars, some of the sweets they enjoyed once in a while or the extra wine during the week.**

Maybe save it more just in the weekend or, celebrations, but not necessarily have to have that on a regular basis in order to just numb that feeling of fear, but instead go in the place of beyond fear and go inward and really understand like what is happening and then share that knowledge with this great community.

And then the sad thing about it, because when people are so disconnected, the place that they went in order to reconnect is social media and the internet, because that was available. We're so scared to get in contact with anybody. I mean, do you remember the hazmat suits we had to get in order to pick up the groceries to have gloves and triple masks to go grab groceries, have someone deliver groceries?

Don't bring this in. This was a scary place. So how do you find answers? How do you reconnect with people? Social media and social media can be a place for a vessel for good, which we're trying to do through the work like the stamina project. The Instagram lives that I'm trying to

educate all this integrative medicine knowledge or it could be a source of misinformation and horrible down the rabbit hole of negativity.

So I think some people we really lost and felt fractured and even in the worst place, their fears exacerbated by all the information of the social media. **So reconnecting with the community that has the guidance and has the right wisdom that has the right support is so important.**

Now, as the phasing out, and we're getting this we're still going through the pandemic again, I'm really hoping that eventually it will become this endemic.

It'll become just another flu and we can get back to our normal life. But a better life because we know more now and we're wiser and we understand that the best way to approach ourselves is through a holistic window.

MERYL: Absolutely. Yeah. No, and it's so true. I almost feel like to reconnect.

We have to disconnect.

MARIANNA: Disconnect for this limiting, monitoring that's another crutch. I mean, to some people, this is like their outlet or the shows that they're great, but then you're sucked in. And then before it it's like 12:30, 1 o'clock right. Where does my sleep go? Exactly. And then when the sleep drops, then everything deteriorates.

So yeah, I mean, we don't make the best choices. We're more reactive. The mood goes to concentration, memory. So just like dehydration, so plenty of water, plenty of sleep is super important for our wellbeing.

MERYL: And the meditation, look, I talk about that all the time. I do like Calm. We recommend so many of those and I feel like a lot of times people don't really understand.

They feel like meditation is this woo, like, oh, I got to sit in the corner and go ohm. Right. And, and I'm like, there's nothing further from the truth. There's actually one that I've also been using. It's called 10% happier that I really enjoy.

MARIANNA: I like the podcast, do you know they have a podcast? I listen to that all the time.

They have all kinds of challenges and I've found there are a lot of what Dan Abrams had started and he was very forthcoming in sharing his own anxieties. And this is why he had started it that breathing **we forget to breathe properly and they really that's what meditation is about.**

It is how do we use the breath. To calm all of those the adrenaline, right. That fight or flight response in the body to calm it down, to create almost this rejuvenative type of mindset. Okay. And that's all it is. Right. People think it has to be so hard to like, just put it on for five minutes.

Just try it for five minutes and see what it can be. I mean, I did a podcast with my son. When he first started college I'm like, You got to try. I think at that point it was like Breathe or Calm or whatever that we do. I said to him, please just try meditating. Cause he had a hard time falling asleep and he had a little bit of anxiety and he shares this on his podcast that he has done with me and, and **meditation was life-changing for him.**

And you know, he was now what, he was 18 years old, 19 years old when he started it. And, and it's still he's in med school now and he still uses it and it's still an I try and get all of my kids to do it. I think it's so important, everything, all of these things are important, but I think people

need to take the time to disconnect and **reconnect to what the symptoms, what is their body, what is your body telling you?**

Right. Right. Because our bodies talk to us well.

MARIANNA: Yeah. And many times we don't listen, we ignore it. We're just an automatic, automatic pilot, which is needed to get to the next thing. And the next thing, that's just doing, doing, doing, doing, and then we collapsed with exhaustion. **But what if we do give ourselves a little break and like you said, it could be very simple things.**

Like sometimes as I'm putting my son to sleep, I know it's, it's going back to technology, we read the books and then we cuddle. And what he discovered, is sometimes I just have no energy, like at night 9, 9:30, when I'm putting that to even give them a story. Cause I'm so drained.

My mind is like, not even able to produce a story for him, cause he's a, give me a story time and I'm like, I'm just so exhausted. Like you telling me a story. So those nights he will literally reach out for my wrist and he will, he learned this himself. I have no idea how, but he will click on this thing called Breathe.

Let's just breathe. Mama. He says six years old and I'm like, what is this thing? Like, look at this blue flower that goes up and down and Apple people, I guess, want us to feel more human and understand the power of this breathing exercise. It's only a minute, but it alerts you several times a day. Hey, do you want to take a break?

Even if you want to escape in the middle of the day in the bathroom and do it. But you just need to take these little breaks. Just like when I was doing research on maskne, they were saying

like, **the best thing you could do for your skin is you have to take breaks and take off this mask.** You in social distance, of course from others, we'll find a way to like, take a break, take off that mask, you know?

Cool it off. Rinse water, or you can do this stamina spray, which has that calming effect and decreases the microbes on the skin. And then at that same time you send me like, okay, I have the air coming in, I'm human again. I can do this. And then you just, you got this and you got the mask back on and back you go and you'll have purpose and you're taking care of whatever you need to do.

That was super important for a frontline nurse. When I was explaining to them, when I found that through my research that we need every few hours, we need to take the mask breaks, in order for our skin and our mind to get better. So that, and then eventually what other ways meditation? So five minutes, 10, I started doing it again as my skincare routine, I would put on a daily comp because I have a hard time meditating by myself.

I'm still learning to meditate and before like many other, so it's like meditation, is this quiet, perfect. Idyllic place somewhere in nature. No one is bothering. I mean for someone who is a doctor, mom of three and constantly now working on the skincare line, constantly in the roles that we play on me, it's my parents and the pets running around.

And then the cleaning lady, like what kind of ideally calm place. So you find a love bubble place. This is a good mutual friend of ours, Dr. Tamar Fairman shared with the client and love bubble. If it's just for a few minutes a day. And my love bubble was like my private place, is bathroom. Pets, nobody walks in in the morning.

This is my holy place. That's my love bubble. And that's why I was able to start meditating. So I'm putting my skincare products on, I'm putting on my makeup and I'm listening to daily calm, but before I know it, I was like, well, that's not enough. I need to be also just quietly sitting in doing that.

So I started doing that before bed, without the skincare. So. It's all takes time we're all a work in progress, but start little at a time. And then, and then you'll get there. I think that it's transformative for many people. So please believe in incorporating meditation into your life if you listening.

MERYL: I love that analogy or that story because for you, right. That was how you relax and calm. And I always say to people my relaxation is cooking. Yeah, right. I get home. And for me everybody's like, well, how are you going home to make dinner? I'm like, **my happy place is being in the kitchen, creating food.**

Amazing food for the people that I love. Right.

MARIANNA: And that's your dose of stamina

MERYL: It is. **That is my dose of stamina. It is very meditative for me.** You know, whether I'm chopping vegetables, I'm like whacking the knife. I got

Negativity

It is because I'm very much in my head. There's something very calming about the chopping about the cutting about just whatever, creating that's my creative outlet.

And that's the thing. It is, like you said, creating your love bubble, finding your space. And it doesn't have to be very long, like you said, well, maybe it's five, 10 minutes, but then you realize how good you feel. And then you're like, oh, well, you know what, I'm going to continue this.

So I love that. And I love the conversation. I'm sure we'll continue this. And I'm sure. You know, excited to tell us yeah. In your skin, in the Stamina skincare line. And, and I know you had mentioned something about the cosmetics, just tell us, you know what, I know you said it the products are clean, but tell us a little bit more about what Stamina Cosmetics is.

MARIANNA: Right. So it's three products. That's thank you for giving me opportunity to share about them, them. It's a spray. So it's a Stamina Mist that has the hypochlorous acid, that hero ingredient. That's an antiinflammatory onto microbial and regenerate it. And then there's also stamina serum, which is a gel it's lightweight, it's mattifying.

So that helps to reduce the breakouts and blemishes that also has hypochlorous acid. But it's incorporated within a gel framework so that it has a long-term more longer effect when it's applied on a skin. So this spray is great for the daytime to use throughout the day, multiple times a day. And it's universal for all age group skin types and genders. And it doesn't have any fragrances to it. It is a clean ingredient. That's something naturally derived from our bodies. And the same time for the nighttime gel, a serum that helps to treat the breakouts and blemishes overnight as we speak. And that's why I called it Stamina Sleeping Serum.

And then there's a mask. So in case some blemishes do arrive and marks and scars from the breakup, we can heal them with a stamina mask. So it's twice a week after we cleanse our face at nighttime is the best time to apply this clay mask, which is a very hydrating mask because it has these amazing organic rosehip oil, aloe, kaolin clay that's decongesting and you're going to

enjoy it, but it also has blueberry and cranberry crumbles that exfoliate. So it's polished, it's appealing with a little black cholic acid, as well as it has the mask effects. So it's really calming and cooling that hydrating for the skin. This is a great way to kind of start a good skincare ritual in order to have a beautiful self care moment, but also to make the skin healthier and more beautiful long term.

MERYL: And so anyone can, so like you don't have to have blemishes or breakout, like I could use it right now. I have no, you guys can't see me. I have no blemishes on my skin right now. So I can use it and it's fine. It's not like you have to have something going on. It's completely,

MARIANNA: Applicable to everybody that just wants to bring their skin up to a higher stamina level.

So more resilience, more brilliance.

MERYL: Awesome. And did you mention something about makeup or no, that was something separate.

MARIANNA: I like makeup. I'm not a minimalist. I'm still learning how to apply my makeup. But I like makeup too because I do, I do think it enhances in the moderate, because like in moderation, just like food vice I'm a moderator, it enhances how we feel about ourselves so when we put our face together and have a little lipstick. We feel more beautiful, more graceful. So yeah, I'm a supporter of makeup too. I know. It's not part of the stamina cosmetics, yet.

MERYL: There you go. There you go. Awesome. Well, this has been an amazing conversation. I really, like I said, I think we can, we can talk forever.

I mean, I'm sure it won't be the last time that we speak any last words of wisdom before. Close it out for the day.

MARIANNA: I think that the main thing is to have an open mind about the opportunity of taking care of yourself and your family members and others in a more holistic way. This is why we're doing what we're doing as having people being able to understand and care more about just taking care of ourselves, themselves, medically more in an integrated way.

MERYL: Thank you. I love that. That was a great message throughout. And like I said, I think I'm, I'm excited to grow and develop our collaborative work together because really, the synergy was just amazing. So yeah.

MARIANNA: Looking forward to it, say maybe some supplements that can help with the skin and gut health

MERYL: We are definitely going to be doing that.

Look, look right. Stay tuned for the skin-gut connection there. And yeah, so everyone, this is your Rebel Nutritionist signing off for today. Make it a great day, everybody.