# Postpartum: When you don't bounce back

Episode 162 · February 13, 2020 · with KC Fee

IN THIS EPISODE

Celebrity men's groomer KC Fee joins Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC to share why the postpartum chapter — not pregnancy, not birth — was the hardest part of becoming a mother of two. Her pregnancies were mostly smooth and both of her daughters arrived in fast, unmedicated births (the first after a rush-hour dash across Los Angeles that nearly made the car the delivery room). Recovery was another story: weight that would not budge, low moods, numbness, exhaustion, and a "baby brain" that never seemed to lift. KC talks honestly about trying harder workouts, stricter eating, and therapy, about what the long, frustrating search for answers did to her confidence and her marriage, and about refusing to accept that feeling that way was just what new motherhood had to be.

***About this transcript:*** *This transcript was created with AI-assisted transcription and reviewed by our team. It may not be 100% accurate — names, medical terms, and phrasing can occasionally be mis-transcribed. For exact wording, please listen to the episode audio.*

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Income welcome to the informed pregnancy and parenting podcast. I'm your host dr. LA Berlin in this episode We're talking about roadblocks to postpartum recovery. My guest is a sassy mother of two sassy girls She juggles her family life with a busy career as a celebrity men's groomer making sure that America's sexiest men look just right From the scalp up after giving birth. She experienced frustrating postnatal challenges, which took a long time to diagnose and treat She joins us in this episode to share her personal experiences in hope of helping others who may be looking for answers to similar problems Casey fee butterfield. Welcome to the podcast. Hi. Thanks. It's great to have you here

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** And I know this is kind of personal stuff that we're talking about I'm grateful to you at the beginning for coming and sharing it and you know Not everybody would and I know exactly why you're doing it because actually once we started talking about these things I realized over the years. I've been hearing about them The same story from more and more people and like as you started to put puzzle pieces together Things clicked for me in a big way and already since you shared your story with me just personally I've been able to take that information and hope several other people in just a short period of time So let's get to the meat of it. First of all, let's talk about your pregnancy. So you got two sassy kids

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yes, indeed. They have your sass gene. Yeah, they do they inherited the sass gene two girls. How are your pregnancies my pregnancies? Well, my first pregnancy was pretty easy pretty low-maintenance all the way through

**KC FEE:** I mean, it's not how people describe pregnancy today mostly no, but it was awesome. I really liked it. I enjoyed it It's interesting Because it was one of those things where I I wasn't sure what my relationship to it was at first and then I went and decided to do some hypnobirthing classes and That kind of connected me to the pregnancy and then just kind of put me in a very calm place and very Zen about the whole thing and It was towards the end where actually I met you because I've always had neck and back issues So that just started to kick in towards the end

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** But it makes sense because I've since I've met you you've always been pretty Zen So I must have met you after the hypno stuff, right?

**KC FEE:** It was only after that you had had to be after that Very eyes strung But then it was the actual birth that was the funny part of this whole pregnancy my first pregnancy Well kind of yeah Looking back on it for sure I had a doula. I had my doctor. I was living in West Hollywood But had to deliver in Santa Monica at st. John's. Okay, so for people not southern, California that is Across on the other side So with zero traffic like about 25 minutes But sometimes it could be ours because the hospital closest to me wasn't taking my insurance at the time Well, but my doctor was delivering over there as well. So that's where we decided to do Welcome to our medical system. So here I am my water breaks at about 1130 p.m a

**KC FEE:** Call the doctor on call. He says it's your first you want to do most of your laboring at home Which is what I wanted to do, you know, maybe come in at like 8 in the morning So I'm like, okay great check back in and then I spoke to my doula. She agreed as well So I'm like, alright, cool. We've got the night. So going through it contractions start in at about 2.30 in the morning and, you know, they're progressively getting more intense. By 6 o'clock in the morning, I'm in serious pain and my whole plan was to try and do natural.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** For you, natural means unmedicated?

**KC FEE:** Unmedicated.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Okay.

**KC FEE:** So here I am, like, in excruciating amounts of pain and I said to my husband, I'm like, F that. I'm getting medicine – like when we get there, I'm getting the epidural. I'm not going through another six hours of this, you know, because here I think I'm like mid-stage.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** What are you doing to stay comfortable through it or to just manage it right at?

**KC FEE:** We were at home. I was sitting on – bouncing on the ball and I went into the shower. I kind of was like everything I had learned just kind of –

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You weren't just hypno calm?

**KC FEE:** I wasn't hypno – I was breathing. I was breathing.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Okay.

**KC FEE:** And I have a pretty good pain threshold.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You do?

**KC FEE:** Yes, I have a good – I have high tolerance for pain. So my –

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You didn't think to call your doula at that time because your doula still wasn't with you, right?

**KC FEE:** No. And I did – well, my mom came. She had just flown in from New York the night before, which I then said to my belly, I said – before the water broke, I said, Cece's here, my mom.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yeah.

**KC FEE:** So you're okay. You can come now. And this is 10 days early, by the way.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Okay. So – It was the same night that you were on the water broke?

**KC FEE:** I had her fly early – like change her fly out earlier because I'm like, I think this baby's coming. So that night after we saw her for dinner is when my water broke.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh, wow.

**KC FEE:** And then – so she comes in – And usually go –

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yep. There it is.

**KC FEE:** We call her –

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Was it a gush? Like unmistakable, this is my water?

**KC FEE:** Yes. It started as like a leaky faucet.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yeah.

**KC FEE:** I ran to the bathroom and then it gushed.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Gush. Oh, wow.

**KC FEE:** And I just said, thank God I wasn't anywhere public for that. Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** But –

**KC FEE:** Different story. Yes. Entirely. So we tell my mom it's time to come over. She comes over. She takes one look at me, pulls my husband aside and says, we have to go now.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh, wow.

**KC FEE:** So call Adula. She's like, I'm trying to get my kids to school. I'll make it there as fast as I possibly can.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Wow.

**KC FEE:** It's now rush hour.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Right. This is what we talked about. This is what we talked about.

**KC FEE:** 25 minutes with no traffic. We're stuck in rush hour traffic at the Wilshire Corridor, which is almost to where we need to be. I swear to God, I sound like a dying cow and I think this baby is coming out of me. We could have named her Wilshire because it almost happened because we get to the hospital, they put me in the wheelchair, they wheel me up, they take one look at me and they're like, this baby is coming. I'm sorry. We have no time for your doctor, no time for your doula. Are you okay with the labor specialist delivering this baby?

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh, wow. Did they take a look at your face or did they take a look at your baby? Both.

**KC FEE:** Okay. They can tell. And 22 minutes later, nine pushes.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Holy cow.

**KC FEE:** She was out. That's amazing.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** It was amazing. It was intense. So not only did you do unmedicated birth, you did unmedicated, no doula birth and without your doctor. Everybody, yeah.

**KC FEE:** It's funny that they said at the beginning, like 8 a.m. for nighttime. It's like, first of all, conveniently like after breakfast, but.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Because it was only a total of six, was it six hours or, yeah, I guess. I usually thought that first baby will take a while, but it doesn't always. So she came flying into this world and she's been flying around ever since. Nice. So great pregnancy and then pretty great birth.

**KC FEE:** Yeah. But then it was actually a post-birth for both mine that I had probably the hardest time with mastitis and all of that. But then my second one.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Just for one second, do not envy your husband who was driving the car during that moment.

**KC FEE:** Oh, not at all. And then my mom.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So much pressure.

**KC FEE:** Was driving behind him.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** No. White knuckles.

**KC FEE:** There was my one point, there was a crosswalk and Tom, my husband stops at the crosswalk to let this old man walk, walk it through the crosswalk and my mom is watching this from

behind like, just run him over.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I thought you were going to say like she rear-ended you guys.

**KC FEE:** No, no. She probably was about to, but no, it was hilarious in retrospect.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** How fun.

**KC FEE:** Yeah, it was fun. Second pregnancy.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Second pregnancy.

**KC FEE:** Not that far apart. 21 months apart. So you know definitely more about this one. Actually, I had a tough time this second time around. Started out just well running after a 20 month old toddler baby. She was still a baby, my oldest one. And then I had migraines and then I had to go to a wedding in London for a weekend. Came back, had bronchitis for like three and a half weeks because I couldn't take proper vacation.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Can't take anything.

**KC FEE:** Yeah. So then there was that and then I got into my car accident. I was like seven months pregnant I think at that point.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Much more eventful pregnancy.

**KC FEE:** Yeah. And then I got into the car. accident, so I'm seeing a lot of you and then …

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney You said, sorry, I've been seeing a lot of you.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange That was the best thing about the car accident.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Oh, thanks. I get that a lot. You're the greatest thing about my thunderbender.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Yeah, it's amazing. Then I went to work. I was still working and I was eight months pregnant at this point. I was still able to travel and I went to Toronto for the film festival where I'm on my feet the whole time for five days and then came back and then went to New York to visit my family before I was cut off from traveling and it was in New York where all of a sudden I couldn't … sciatic nerve. There was so much pain in my back and lower back and radiating down my leg. I couldn't walk. I was debilitated and I was in so much pain and I went and saw my mom's acupuncturist and her chiropractor and stuff while we were still there and nothing was helping. I almost sliced my thumb off with a bagel slicer.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney I remember that. This is why you became one of my favorite people because you came back and I saw you at like, I don't know, Sunday morning maybe at seven, six something in the morning. As I'll do if somebody needs help, you know, and you brought bagels for everybody.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Yes. Well, it was like 7 a.m. or 8 a.m. on a Sunday morning.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney I know, but you could hardly walk. You almost sliced your thumb off and you still …

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange On a bagel slicer.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney On a bagel slicer.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Nonetheless.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney You wouldn't want to be around bagels for a long, long time.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange I'm a New Yorker.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney I'm a New Yorker.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange We love our bagels.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney I'm a New Yorker.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange We love our bagels.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney H&H bagels.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Yeah. So I had to go to the urgent care to get my thumb stitched up and then I have to go and have a wheelchair service in the airport and to get me back to LA, which then I came to see you and we couldn't figure it out. I did acupuncture here. We did treatments and we're trying to figure this out until you felt around and you were like, your baby's breached. Let's try and get her turned around and …

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney So just one more adventure.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange One more adventure.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney For an already adventurous …

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange And then it took a couple of sessions but you're like, watch this. When she turns, you're going to have no more pain and you turned her.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Wow. I made space.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange And I was able to walk again.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Yeah.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange I remember distinctly. I mean you could barely move. Jennifer Lange I could barely move.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney As soon as your kid flipped over.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Yeah. I ended up having to stop working a month earlier than I wanted to and so …

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Wow.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange And then she came.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Yeah. How was that one birth-wise?

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Oh, so then my doctor said as soon as your water breaks, you aren't going to the hospital.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Right away.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Like right away. There's no waiting around. There's no laboring at home and I said, okay, done. And actually it was the exact same amount of time.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Oh, really? From start to finish you mean?

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange From start to finish. And it was five pushes instead of nine. And again, non-medicated.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Oh, wow.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Because this time around I said, all right, well, when I thought I was halfway there, I was able to handle it. It was horrible but I was able to handle it and get through it. So therefore I know I can do it again.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney You can do it.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Oh. Jennifer Lange And I did.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Rockstar.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Times 12.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Well, and also too, like with the amount I went through with Alice being breached and all that and I was like, I got this.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Yeah, and you did. Were you back on the west side again?

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange No, I was at Cedars.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Closer to the hospital.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange Oh, yeah. Now it was like ten minutes away. Yeah, I wasn't.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney Even with traffic.

**KC FEE:** Jennifer Lange I wasn't doing that again.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Matthew Feeney All right. We're going to take a little break. You know, the episode is really about postpartum here and the interesting things that you experienced and your journey to finding solutions. We'll be right back with Casey Fee Butterfield. Welcome back to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast. We're talking to Casey Fee Butterfield. Okay, first of all, very inspiring pregnancy and birth stories. Thanks. I mean, the first one's being so uneventful and just like, oh yeah, I was pregnant, and then I calmed down and had my kid. And then the second one, a few more things, but still, like you just-

**KC FEE:** Actually even interesting, their personalities. Really? Like that? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, there's more of an intensity with my little one. Second one. And then my first one is just kind of free spirit.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** That's so interesting, because I feel like as a generalization, maybe an observation, it goes the other way oftentimes, where the first one's so intense and just-

**KC FEE:** Yeah, it's true.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** And the second one's just chilled out. All right, anyway, what happened after you had your kids? How was your recovery?

**KC FEE:** My recovery, with pregnancy as a whole, my recovery was definitely the hardest part of experiencing pregnancy. I've always had issues with hormones and I've had some bouts of depression and things like that. So, you know, the first time around, I guess it was like experiencing, I never experienced postpartum depression, but just kind of moods and general kind of mental well-being and just kind of being sluggish and down. And I had gained a lot of weight both pregnancies, which then I came to find out it was a huge, massive struggle to get off.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** But did you get it off after the first, before the second?

**KC FEE:** I didn't get all of it off. I was able to get a lot of it off.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Okay.

**KC FEE:** But not all of it because-

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** But even that was a big struggle?

**KC FEE:** Yes. And because they were so close together, you know, I didn't really have the time. And part of me was like, well, I'm about to go again. So-

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yeah. Well, I guess that's one way to approach it. A lot of people are like, I'm not going again until I get it all off. But for me, my wife insisted on getting pregnant again before I lost all the baby weight from the first one. Yeah. And now I just, I gave up.

**KC FEE:** Oh, yeah. That's the sympathy.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So, did you prepare during your pregnancy at all for what the postpartum terrain would look like? Weight loss aside, just in terms of what you were saying about feeling blue or emotional swings, did anybody talk to you about that before you got there? Because I think that's fairly common.

**KC FEE:** No.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Among everybody.

**KC FEE:** It is.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Even if you haven't had previous history of anxiousness or sadness.

**KC FEE:** It is. Nobody tells you really, right? I feel like there are some friends I would talk to where someone along the way would be like, oh, yeah, now everything just like, it's so hard. It's so rough. It's so tough. But it's more like the physical aspects of it and the taking care of the baby and the lack of sleep. And so I really didn't know much about it. And I just assume it was what it was supposed to be like. And baby brain, like baby brain was a huge thing for me. I became just like, I could never find my words again. My mind was just mush. I could never find my words. I could never remember anything.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Did that start during the pregnancy or not until your baby came? Because it was, you know.

**KC FEE:** It started a little bit during the pregnancy, but it really came in afterwards.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Interesting. Because people call it pregnesia.

**KC FEE:** Oh. Well, that makes sense.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Sometimes.

**KC FEE:** Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** But yours was like post-nesia.

**KC FEE:** Yeah. No. And so I'm like, oh, it's baby brain. And I would always hear women talk about, oh, you know, I've got baby brain and stuff like that. And you'd be like, oh, really? Is it really that bad? And then you go through it and you're like, oh, it's a real thing. No, it's real. And then even just the routines, like just how you would be sleep deprived and how, you know, there's a learning curve on feeding your baby. Yeah. And you assume that that's it. And that's what's causing this is the sleep deprivation and the hormones. and all this, and that you are eventually gonna get back to normal. But going back to it, yes, I had the mastitis, and yeah, I had a tough time, and I had a tough time nursing in the beginning.

**KC FEE:** You know, and you have this sense of failure, and am I doing this right? Am I meant to be doing this?

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Ouch. You're making me weepy. I mean, seriously, there's like, tears coming to my eyes right now.

**KC FEE:** It's, because you have nothing to compare it to, except for when you do try and talk to your friends, and nobody, either they do or they don't get it. And then from that point on, I just made it a point to always discuss that with my friends after that who became pregnant. To let them know. I'm like, listen, I just wanna let you know. Afterwards, it can be really, really tough.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh my God, you're the kind of person who tells people when there's spinach in their teeth.

**KC FEE:** Yeah, oh, all the time.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** That's amazing.

**KC FEE:** It's my job.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I guess it is your job.

**KC FEE:** Don't have the confidence. I'm like, I should have told her. It's cruel. I know.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You'll let someone walk around with spinach in their teeth.

**KC FEE:** Well, if it's, everybody's gone green. But yeah, no, I always say, it's tough to hear this, and I'm sure this is not what you wanna hear, but let me just give it to you. And if it's the same way for you, then you'll be glad I told you, and if it's not, then I'm happy for you. Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I mean, we used to do a little comedy show. By the way, we're doing another one soon, just before I... Oh, you are? Yeah, all about having kids, pregnancy, postpartum, and parenting. And we called the section when it was all prenatal, we called the section on like, it was like 30 minutes of like hardcore tidbits that nobody ever tells you, or the less pleasant stuff. And we called it what to really expect when you're expecting. And it's like all the stuff people over the years wish somebody would have told them, at least like, expect this so that if it happens, you don't feel like you're the only one or you're a failure or you're a loser.

**KC FEE:** Exactly. Now, the thing is though, is everybody, and this is something they do know wholeheartedly, is everybody has their own experiences.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** For sure.

**KC FEE:** And everybody has their own experiences, everybody has their own body, everybody works differently and has a different outcome and a different story to tell. But I was just really struggling with the fact, so having a hard time with the weight and my moods and my disposition and lack of energy, lack of libido, lack of, you know, any kind of interest in anything was just really.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So it's pretty numb, like you were just numb.

**KC FEE:** That's exactly what it was. It was numb, I was numb. And after the first pregnancy, not as much, but after my second pregnancy, it was like came, it just doubled. And to me, I'm like, I'm thinking, okay, well, it's my second, so my body now is, because there was not much time in between, I guess it's just adding on to what I didn't have time to get rid of, I don't know. So here I was, everything just felt harder, and it just felt like it went to a deeper level of numbness and fatigue and lack of energy, sex drive, all that confidence. I thought a lot of the issues though were having lack of confidence because of my body. I was ashamed of my body and the way I looked and I didn't feel myself. I didn't know who this person was

**KC FEE:** because I just physically, mentally, emotionally did not connect to who this person was.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Were you doing things to try to target each of those different symptoms? What kind of things?

**KC FEE:** So I got a trainer and I was working out harder than I'd ever worked out before, like hardcore intensity. He was really kicking my butt. And my eating, and I would try every fad diet out there, but even not fad diets, but even more, like you and I had spoken about different types of diets and ways of eating. Just healthy eating. Yeah, mindful eating, and I was trying to do what I had done.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Which generally, if there's excess weight, we'll do the trick. Either one, certainly both, working out and eating well.

**KC FEE:** And then it was to the point where I went back and saw my therapist, who I hadn't seen in probably four years or so. And I thought maybe that would help.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Is this still feeling bouts of anxiousness and sadness?

**KC FEE:** Yeah, oh yeah. And feeling down and not feeling good about myself. And my husband was just like, I don't know what to do. What can I do? Because I feel helpless. I try to be intimate with you. You refuse it. I try to help you. There's nothing I can do that'll make you feel better. I compliment you. I tell you, you're beautiful. But it doesn't sink in. And you need to fix it. it out and I'm here to help you in whatever you need to get there. But we

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** have to try and figure out a way to figure it out. And eventually you did. Yeah. Find the answers. But it took a long time. Yeah. We're gonna take another little break. When we come back, we'll find out how you finally figured out what was going on. Don't go anywhere. We will be right back. Welcome back to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast. We're talking to Casey Fee-Butterfield. So after all of that, how long did it take you until you finally figured out, I gotta do something else? Oh, I don't know. Maybe it was a year and a half. It's like a

**KC FEE:** really rough year and a half. When you say postpartum, I'm talking about three or four months. No, we're not. And we're also thinking, yeah, because here I am still thinking to myself, oh, it's just because baby brain and lack of sleep and hormones and, you know, all that stuff. There's a collection of

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** symptoms. You're going through bouts of emotional swings, sadness, anxiousness, numbness, like emotional numbness, excess weight that won't come off even though you're working out harder than you ever did and following strict eating plans. And you were following them. You would even come tell me about workouts that you did and I would sweat just while you were doing the workout that you did. I was like, oh my goodness. And then lack of sex drive and desire for intimacy. That's a big collection of symptoms while you're taking care also of two little ones trying to have a relationship with your husband and a career. Yes. So how did you ultimately point in the right

**KC FEE:** direction? It was actually my mom who mentioned hormones to me, and she was just dealing with hormones herself. She's with hormone replacement therapy and she had a doctor, a very open minded doctor, suggest it to her. And she started doing it and started feeling so much better, like life changing amounts of energy and just feeling really good and having just a whole new kind of

lease on life, so to speak. And she was depleted in estrogen mostly and a bit of testosterone. And so I bounce everything off of my mom and she's incredibly well read and well informed. She's been in the health and wellness industry her whole life. She was an aerobics instructor in the 80s, personal trainer in the 90s. She was a Pilates instructor

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** before Pilates was cool. She must be doing Zumba now. She knew, by the way, with your first birth, time to go to the hospital right now. Yes. And then I remember her being behind you with the white

**KC FEE:** knuckles. Exactly. Exactly. So she's always reading up on everything. Had you done any hormone testing at that point? Not at that point. And my mom suggested I go see my gynecologist and get some testing done. She said, because I think you might benefit by this. I think this might be an avenue worth exploring. So I went in and we did a panel of tests and they came back and my doctor said, well, your testosterone looks like it could be a little low on the lower side, but nothing alarming. So I'll prescribe you like a compound cream. Like an estrogen creamer or a testosterone creamer? Testosterone cream. Yeah. And see how that goes. So I started that and then I went to my therapist and I was still going to

**KC FEE:** my trainer. And it was funny because I went to my therapist only once and I was like, this isn't it. That's not it.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You knew.

**KC FEE:** I knew. I knew it wasn't what I didn't need to talk about. It was in me. And so scratch that. So then I was really frustrated because I'm like, no, these symptoms sound, and my mom said, too. She's like, no, it has to be hormone related. And then my mom, who's also very open to Eastern medicine, she said, no, I think it's Western doctors will tell you that and they won't get deep enough for you and take a look at things in a bigger picture. So then I was just talking to a friend and she said, oh, you have to go see this doctor and he's a nutritionist, specializes in all this. He does entire blood panel, entire workup of everything possible. So from hormones to food allergies to vitamin deficiencies and thyroid and brain function and

**KC FEE:** everything you can think of, this panel will test. So I said, great, that is exactly what I need.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Look under every stone.

**KC FEE:** Every stone. Let's figure this out. So I did. I went and lo and behold, I have thyroid issue in my T3 and T4, depletion in T3 and T4. My serotonin levels were incredibly low, so that affected my mood and my anxiety and my energy and stress and all that. And my memory, baby brain, quote unquote, the baby brain that lasts forever. And then more than anything was my testosterone. Women's testosterone levels are supposed to range between 80 and 125. Mine was at a seven.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh my goodness.

**KC FEE:** Seven.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Wow.

**KC FEE:** Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So.

**KC FEE:** That's not even really on the chart. No. So it was like seven months working hard at the gym and seeing no results and not losing any weight. It's because I had no testosterone. Because as much as I wanted to work out and I worked out hard, nothing was going to happen. Because my muscles wouldn't respond to the weight training and to the toning and all that. It just would never happen.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You're essentially a hamster.

**KC FEE:** Yeah. Yeah. And that's, so testosterone is muscles and it's energy and huge, huge thing. It's sex drive and libido.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Of course.

**KC FEE:** Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So.

**KC FEE:** Even testosterone alone makes a lot of your life explained. Well, exactly. But then also your thyroid and your serotonin. It explains everything, really. It explains everything. And so I am on thyroid medication. I have to give myself testosterone injections twice weekly, teeny, teeny itty bitty drop of it.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** And then do you test again?

**KC FEE:** And then we test again.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** And now where do you end up on the chart now?

**KC FEE:** I went up. At one point I was a 90. So in the zone. In the zone. But then I went on vacation and I didn't have.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You didn't have your shots?

**KC FEE:** I didn't have my shots. I didn't bring my shots and I went back down.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So. Do you go in to test every time? Is there like a.

**KC FEE:** Yes. There's no home like glucose monitor, testosterone monitor. No. I wish there was. There should be. But it was just fascinating too to discover these things because then my husband and I had this conversation of this epiphany moment and we're like could you imagine the amount of couples that suffer from this and wives and women who have had these had babies and their bodies are going through these changes. They're depleted of testosterone. They don't know it but they have zero sex drive and no energy and you know lack of intimacy and you know you hear these stories about how you know women just you know the men are like oh my wife won't get in shape and she you know she doesn't give

**KC FEE:** me any anymore and you know there's no time for sex and you know and then they go and they stray and they cheat and then they end up in divorce and you know it's like can you imagine the amount of people that this actually might be happening too.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yeah and really how horrible it is. And how much it does affect your life and in entirety and you just think oh it's just because I had a baby that I'm feeling this way.

**KC FEE:** So common.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yeah it's so common. So common. You know and some of those things is the problem like if you knew ahead of time what to expect.

**KC FEE:** Right.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Like you know the numbers 80 to 125 testosterone great do you know what to expect in terms of most people experience some kind of emotional swings after they have the baby hormone shifting for sure massive changes. But what's within the normal realm in terms of what to feel and for how long to feel it. And when is it like wait a second something's off here like a year and a half is just way too long. And like thank God you survive that.

**KC FEE:** Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Because as an individual and as a couple and as a family unit that's a hell of a strain.

**KC FEE:** Yes. No absolutely.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** So how long after you start taking these you know the thyroid medicine and the testosterone and do you do anything specific for serotonin or does that respond to everything else getting better.

**KC FEE:** I have supplements.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh natural supplements. So yeah how long after you start taking things do you start to feel different.

**KC FEE:** It was probably about two months I think by the time I was actually starting to feel myself again like cloud lifting.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Are all the symptoms gone now at this point.

**KC FEE:** No but for the most part it's so much better.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I mean that frustrating weight you definitely were able to take off.

**KC FEE:** I'm getting there. Yeah I'm still like it's coming off. It's like halfway to where I still want to be. But as far as my just overall mood and energy and outlook on life and confidence and just wanting to be social again and you know I mean my job is very social but.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Can you feel the difference now with testosterone when you're going low.

**KC FEE:** I can.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Like it must be that you can.

**KC FEE:** I can because when I didn't. take it when I went on my trip and stuff. And there was like a lull there where I wasn't being very responsible. I felt it.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** That's interesting. I'm going to tell you, we have another guest coming on very soon. Her name is Dr. Stephanie Canale. And we did an episode. She's a medical doctor, but she's a family physician, which is a little more holistic in their approach. And they're the whole family's doctor. They work on the babies, and they work on the adults, and they even do geriatric care. Within the realm of general care, as soon as you need a specialist and they recommend a specialist, they stay on top of it. Meaning, if tests are done, they kind of stick with the results. It's a different kind of practice than America's shifted to, where we all see our own specialists and nobody's managing the care. But after she had her baby, we have an episode called

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** What's in Your Breast Milk? And after she had her baby, the baby wasn't thriving, and they couldn't figure it out. So she's like, well, let's test the milk. But there was no lab set up in this country for testing breast milk with what's normal, what should be in there, to what degree. And so she created that. It's called Noctation Lab. But in my brain, short-tank, there should be easy-to-do hormone tests like this, where just, I don't know if it's doable. Maybe this was the whole theranose problem. But where you should be able to just prick your finger, stick your thing into your iPhone. Check your hormones at home. Yeah, and see, where's my testosterone? Where's my thyroid hormones? Where's my serotonin? I don't know.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I'm just saying, seems like it would be very helpful to be able to do that.

**KC FEE:** Very helpful. And you need to be balanced in order to function properly. And that just is common sense. And the amount of depletion and ebbs and flows of what hormones do, not just in pregnancy, but also just in women in general, but also in men. For sure.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Like, what's a midlife crisis? That's men's menopause. Menopause. Yeah. Wait a second. So have you ever felt like you've taken too much testosterone? Does your husband catch you checking out all the other girls?

**KC FEE:** I do. It's the 5 o'clock shadow. I start to have to groom myself.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh, there you go. At least you have experience.

**KC FEE:** Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Gosh, that's, I mean, thank you again for coming and sharing your story.

**KC FEE:** Of course.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** No, it's absolutely. So powerful. And I know people are listening, saying I got to go test my hormones right now.

**KC FEE:** Well, that's the thing. And you should, because, yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** But before we go. It answers a lot of questions. I do have one question.

**KC FEE:** What is it?

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Tell me more about celebrity male grooming. What does that mean exactly? I know I quipped about it at the beginning.

**KC FEE:** Yes, so basically, I get actors ready. So I do their makeup and their hair for all their publicity for films. So whether it's red carpet, awards, photo shoots, press junkets, so.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** That sounds a little stress on, like, for every nine to five. Or the opposite of that. It's not really nine to five, but it's.

**KC FEE:** That's what I'm saying. But there's not, actually, I used to work with women. I used to do women's makeup. And as soon as I had my first, my oldest, I stopped working with women and only work with men now. Because women are more time consuming.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Time consuming, yeah.

**KC FEE:** Yeah, a little more stress.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I can tell, because when we go out.

**KC FEE:** Guys can be a little more chilled.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** You think?

**KC FEE:** Yeah, well, depending on the guy. But for the most part. Truth.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** It's a little more chilled. But in terms of getting somebody ready for something, I assume even on the professional level, my wife and my daughters, they've got stuff to do. I'm like, what do you guys do?

**KC FEE:** Yeah.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** I just kind of out-dry my hair and I'm ready to go.

**KC FEE:** Well, that's like, sometimes my job only takes 15 minutes.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Oh, that's cool.

**KC FEE:** Yeah, which is cool.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** It's like being a doula, but only for second time mums who have already given birth.

**KC FEE:** Right.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Yeah, it's a much quicker job.

**KC FEE:** Yep.

**DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC:** Casey, I'm very grateful to you. I appreciate you joining us at home. I appreciate you listening to our podcast. If you would like more media about pregnancy, postpartum, and parenting, check us out on Instagram at DrBerlin, D-O-C-T-O-R-B-E-R-L-I-N.


## Enjoying the Informed Pregnancy Podcast?

Visit us at **informedpregnancy.com** for episodes, articles, and resources for pregnancy, birth, and beyond.

Want more? Subscribe to **Informed Pregnancy+** at **informedpregnancy.tv** for films, series, and exclusive content.