Dr. Joel Gator Warsh - Integrative Pediatrics

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IN THIS EPISODE

Integrative and holistic pediatrician Dr. Joel Gator Warsh joins Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC to talk about blending conventional training with functional medicine and a wider toolbox for families. They explore the rise in chronic disease in kids — allergies, asthma, gut issues and more — and his "seeds of health": sleep, environment and toxins, exercise, diet and stress. Recorded as the coronavirus pandemic unfolded in late March 2020, the conversation also covers kids during the outbreak, breastfeeding with COVID-19, the symptoms to watch for, and getting little ones off to a strong start with real food.

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DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Welcome to the informed pregnancy and parenting podcast. I'm your host. Dr. Elliot Berlin My guest today is an integrative and holistic pediatrician here in Los Angeles. He incorporates various methodologies Into his pediatric medical practice. He's published research and numerous peer-reviewed journals on topics such as childhood injuries Obesity and physical activity. Dr. Joel Gator Warsh. Welcome to the podcast. Thank you so much for having me You're such an interesting type of medical doctor. It's not all drugs and surgery

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: It's true. I did all the regular training and trained in regular allopathic medicine But I did get a little bit frustrated with the regular system and the really short visits and medications for everything So spurred me to start learning a little bit more about natural medicine and combining the best of both worlds

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And that means you just have more tools in your tool belt exactly

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: I think that that's key thing is when something's going on with a child a parent wants to do something about it And so they don't want to go home and just have nothing to do they feel a little bit helpless So it gives you a few more tools in your toolbox besides just a medication sometimes a medication is warranted

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's great

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: but a lot of times there is something else you could do or something natural or maybe something with a lower amount of Side effects and then that way you can give them something to do and hopefully the body has a chance to rebalance as opposed To doing a medication but at the same time sometimes you need a medication. So nothing wrong with it if you need it

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Let's take a step back. You grew up in Canada Is the health care system a little more holistic than it is in the US or is it similar?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: I think it's pretty similar. There's certainly differences between two systems But I don't recall it when I was living there being that vastly difference in terms of holistic versus allopathic or Western medicine I mean it might be a little bit different now But I still think it's fairly similar in terms of it being very Western medical style

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: When did you get into the idea that you'd get into medicine?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: I had wanted to be a doctor probably since high school or maybe early undergrad drew it. I loved working with kids I used to coach baseball and hockey and I ran camp So I always loved working with kids and I love science and so it seemed like the natural Molding of the two to go into pediatrics at some point so that pretty early on I knew that that's what I wanted

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: To do. Are there doctors in your family?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: There isn't doctors in my immediate family. I have some doctors that are cousins But not none of my parents or grandparents or anything like that How is medical training for you? It's tough. I mean medical training for most people. It's grueling. It's it's a tough thing to go through It's a lot of hours long nights a lot of studying So definitely a very very grueling process, but you do learn a ton and there's obviously lots to learn when it comes to medicine So it's good from that standpoint But it's it's a long haul to get through all the years and the lack of sleep sometimes and the stress Can definitely affect you in other ways physically and mentally as well

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, and it's not just for a couple of years. It's a long program and you're under that kind of intensity for a long time Absolutely, and in the traditional medical training, is there any Study related to alternative health care and do they teach you anything?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Nutrition based not not really they don't teach you a ton I mean there's a little bit here and there on some plants and earths, but but very minimal you learn nutrition, but much more from a Medical perspective so you learn about nutritional deficiencies and pathology You don't learn a ton about what to eat how to keep people that you have to teach parents what to tell their kids to eat that kind of stuff it's more you just work with a nutritionist there's nutrition question and when you're in the hospital you send it over to nutritionist so it's nowhere

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: near enough training in nutrition did you go into private practice first and then start to add to your training you like to do more holistic things or did you realize while you were doing your allopathic training that you wanted to

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: add more I realized during my allopathic training I didn't start right into private practice I wanted to get a little bit more experience being around a big team at first I thought it was very valuable after those first years finishing residency so you have some time around a big practice where you can still continue to ask questions if there's something that you haven't seen before so I started working in the hospital and then transitioned into private practice and was in another practice for a couple years and then transitioned into my own practice now about a year and a half ago what

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: kind of holistic modalities did you train in so I learned functional

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: medicine is the main modality what does that mean functional medicine looks at the root cause of disease so it really shifts the mindset a little bit in terms of when you're talking about Western medicine most of the focus is on disease and treatment whereas functional medicine focuses a little bit more on the cause of the infection or the illness so for example with a rash and modern Western medicine you might think about what could you treat with like a steroid cream and if that keeps happening then the rash keeps coming back then from a functional medicine perspective you might think well why do you actually have that rash now you might think about why in a Western medicine but it's usually not the first thing you think about

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: it's not a lot of the way that we're taught whereas functional medicine teaches you to think more broadly about why getting more history those kind of things so that's the major thing that I learned and then there's a lot of other modalities that I've learned on the side as well supplements and tinctures and things like that where it's not necessarily all formal training might be training with somebody or reading

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: books or learning through doing you know in the traditional model of healthcare in the US it's more like disease care right so if you do for pediatrics go for periodic wellness checks but generally you call your doctor when something's wrong when you have symptoms and you're trying to get rid of the symptoms is it different in an integrated practice

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: it's a little bit different so everybody who does integrated medicine practices it a little bit differently because there's no real standard and there's not a ton of people especially in pediatrics that are doing it so everybody carves out their own niche the way that they want it for me I still do all of the regular stuff I do all the regular checks but it's more of a blending of the two when somebody is coming in so if my patients are a little bit more savvy to a lot of this preventative care and thinking in that mentality so there's more questions and discussions around items like diet and sleep and exercise and toxins maybe a little bit less of some of the other things that are in traditional Western medicine but we still do most of

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: that and also when you're coming in for let's say a cough or a cold or something minor like that then a lot of times I'll offer both things so I might say you know this seems like it's a virus there's probably not a ton we can do from the medical perspective here are a couple of things like a syrup honey things like that that you could try and if it's not getting better then let me know and we can always consider doing a more medical treatment in the future or similar like an ear infection a lot of countries don't treat your infections with antibiotic or rarely treated with antibiotics so there are other things you could do first like ear drops or massage or cranial psychotherapy and if it's

not getting

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: better in two three days or it's really starting to get severe that's when you do the antibiotics a lot of times it's like give them the prescription but don't fill it and if it's not getting better then you can do the

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: regular treatment well it's really cool to have so many different

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: options that's why I like to do it that way and also each family is a little bit different so when you're working in an integrated practice there are some people that are very Western minded some people that are very natural minded and so finding that balance for each family and a lot of times I'll just go through the options and say here's the different things that you can do you know I'm not super concerned at the moment so if you want to start with the natural thing or and some people like I don't really feel comfortable I want to do the antibiotic and if it's reasonable then we can do at that time it just depends on each situation what are in

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: today's day and age what are some of the diseases that kids are struggling with that are on the rise chronic diseases I think that just

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: overall as a category the thing that we're seeing on the rise so things that you're seeing consistent diseases that just don't seem to go away like allergies, asthma, rheumatologic issues like lupus and rheumatoid arthritis we're seeing more gut issues so tons and tons of gut health issues constipation, diarrhea, bloating, stomach aches, food intolerances those kind of things. In little kids? In little kids there's a varying statistics about where the rates of chronic disease are the CDC has it at about 25% but I've seen studies that put up 50% and in adults the chronic disease rate is over 50% now so it's really in all ages that we're seeing these things and we're seeing a lot of diseases younger younger like

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: diabetes was mostly disease for elderly or older individuals and now we're seeing all sorts of kids with with diabetes things are just coming

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: down in age. Do you have ideas on what's leading to the increase in

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: chronic disease? My thoughts are it's really a lack of focusing on the foundations of our health we've really got away from some of the basics and gone more towards this treatment style of disease management. So for me, I call it the seeds of health being sleep and environment and toxins, exercise, diet and stress. These are the major factors that I really think about when I'm talking to my patients and what we're really seeing as, you know, movement away from focusing on these things. People are not sleeping as much. We're more stressed than we ever were. We're surrounded by toxins. We have a horrible diet. And so with all of these things that are just chronically getting worse and

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: worse, the body is just not able to handle the basic everyday things anymore. And so it's leading to more chronic disease, in my opinion.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, sleeping more is obviously you just have to do it. Although some people try to sleep and they have a hard time sleeping. When it comes to the other things like chronic

stress, do you have recommendations on how someone can try to combat that?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Sure. It would depend on the age, but there are there's so many things that you can do for stress from essential oils that are calming, like lavender, meditation. There's all sorts of meditation apps and programs for kids. Yoga can be great. Or even just finding some activities that you love to get your mind off of the stresses. So that might be being around your friends more, gardening, being involved in an activity. There's just so many things that you can do, but it's also a matter of making it a priority, recognizing that it's an issue, and then taking steps towards improving it. And also if you're currently stressed and maybe speaking to somebody, working with a therapist, they can give you strategies

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: too. But to me, it's really identifying that there is an issue as a first step and then putting some steps in place where you can try to decrease the amount of stress a little bit every day. And so you get to a point where things are a little bit more in balance.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And in the later segment, we'll talk a bit more about nutrition and toxins. We're going to take a quick break and we'll be right back with Dr. Joel Gator-Horsch. Welcome back to the informed pregnancy podcast. We're talking to Dr. Joel Gator wash. And right now we're recording remotely even though we never really do. We're usually right in studio face to face because we're in the middle of hopefully at the height of the global coronavirus pandemic. And everybody pretty much suggested to be in quarantine. So I know everybody with kids is a little bit everybody's panicking about the coronavirus and COVID disease, especially if you have little kids, it's really nerve wracking. So maybe we can talk about it a little bit. What is the difference

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: between an epidemic and a pandemic? What does that mean?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: So an epidemic is an outbreak of disease. in a community or in a location and a pandemic is more of an outbreak of the disease globally so it's it's a similar concept but just one is you know epidemics more in the community so if you had a for example an outbreak in Los Angeles versus a pandemic meaning we have an outbreak that's going more globally and involves multiple different locations. So at this point we're definitely in the middle of probably the worst pandemic of my lifetime for sure. I mean I've never seen anything like this. Yeah I mean we're definitely in the midst of a pandemic there's no question about it and there certainly has been others in our lifetime. It was still very hard to know

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: exactly where the numbers are going to go. We've had you know H1N1 and there was SARS and MERS and so there have been other pandemics throughout our lifetime but this one is still we're not exactly sure where we're gonna go on this one so hopefully it won't be as bad as it's predicted and hopefully with social distancing and working together as a community in a world then we can curb and flatten out the curve just a little bit and decrease the rate of disease and hopefully it won't be nearly as bad as the predictions state. So that's at least our hope. You mentioned H1N1 and

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: SARS and MERS but those seem different to me. I mean they didn't seem to make the entire world come to a screeching halt. They didn't but

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: if you look at the at least the statistics there were certainly it's hard to say because we're not done with this yet but there was a lot more death and some of them were even more contagious based on the contagion statistics that they've done but I think that we're maybe a little more socially connected now and they were certainly more concerned about this than there maybe have been in the past so we've taken steps much earlier than they ever took before and so I don't know if it's more concern about this one or we just taking more steps earlier. It's really hard to say at this point and it's probably gonna be hard to say at the end of the day anyways because you know you can only do whatever you

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: do and if the numbers are lower at the end of the day well maybe the steps that we took worked or helped at least make it not as bad as some of the other pandemics in the past so we'll see. In terms of parents with kids

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: and I know this information is changing the one thing we know about this coronavirus is that we don't know a lot about it and we're trying to learn more every day. We certainly we don't even know who has it and who doesn't have it because there's so few tests available at the moment and more science will emerge over time but in terms of right now in this moment do we know how it affects kids? Yeah so that's the only silver lining

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: or if you want to call it good thing about a virus is this one for whatever reason doesn't seem to be affecting kids very very severely it has an extremely low death rate in kids and the numbers are like 0.1 to 0.2 percent I've seen on different websites. Very very very few kids across the world have died and it seems to be much more severe in the elderly population so at least if there's something good and when talking about the kids then they don't seem to be as severely affected. Most of the kids or teens or young adults that are getting affected are having fairly mild symptoms so fever, cough, sore throats, headaches, body aches, kind of flu-like symptoms seem to be what is most common. There's been some cases

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: and some stories and some people nicely so it certainly does occur but it seems more that either the elderly or the immunocompromised are

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: most at risk for this disease. So is it possible that kids are getting it and we

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: don't even know they have it? It's definitely possible so we want to talk about coronavirus just as a category of virus it's actually very common and it's not new in any way. 20% of common colds are caused by coronavirus so that isn't new in any way. This is a different strain but still coronavirus strains in general are for the most part mild. They certainly can cause severe symptoms but just like the flu when you think about it most people that get the flu they they're not feeling good for a couple of days and I have coughs or throat headache body aches but they generally get better after a couple of days but you certainly can get very ill and that's a similar for the coronavirus and that most people don't

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: have any severe symptoms but some do. In terms of looking out for our kids

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: what kind of symptoms would we look for before calling the doctor? The

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: symptoms that we're seeing for coronavirus tend to be high fevers and coughs. So fevers above 103, coughs but really you want to be calling your doctor for anything if you're worried just similar to any other virus or cough or cold so what I've been telling my patients is if you're if you'd be normally worried then then you should be worried about the same things now you should think about coughs just as their regular coughs and if you're having trouble breathing then of course you'd always get seen so that would be something to always get seen for but otherwise still most coughs and colds are just regular coughs and colds and we want to be good stewards and make sure that we're not getting into passing it on so if

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: you do have a cough or cold you can just assume that you do have it and just take regular intelligent precautions like staying away from elderly people and washing your hands and not exposing other people and quarantining for several weeks just to make sure that it's not passed on and

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: make sure you don't have it. If you're worried about symptoms do you go into the doctor?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Most places are not having people come to the doctor to not have them exposed. They're sending them to either testing centers. Some places have drive-through testing, or some of the hospitals or urgent cares have testing. Some places are doing it, but the issue, at least right now, is that there's so few tests. And even if you do have a test, a lot of places, it takes a really long time to come back. So a lot of offices that I have seen have closed down and are doing telemedicine and just chatting with patients. So we're doing mostly telemedicine in my office right now. I see some patients. But if it's a new cough or a new fever or anything that we're concerned about, then we're telling them not to come in

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: so we don't go potentially expose other people and just assume that you have it. And if you want to go get tested, you can. But for the most part, I think a lot of people are just staying home and assuming that they have it and just self-quarantining themselves because the reality of it is, especially for kids, most kids are not going to have severe symptoms. And so you can just keep an eye on it, just like a regular cough or cold. And if you're worried, if things are progressing, if you're having trouble breathing, then you would get checked out just like you would any other day.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's also flu season. Are there ways to tell if you just have the point of flu or like a strep infection versus this?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: It would be hard to tell over the phone. And you can definitely do flu testing or strep testing to see if you're coming in. If you're at home, so strep tends to, if you look at the back of the throat, it's a very severe painful sore throat. There's usually redness at the back and there might be some white plaques in the tonsils or little red dots in the back of the throat or you might have a rash on your chest. So that would be something to think about for strep. And then flu tends to have high fevers and lots of body aches, but so does coronavirus. So I think there's a lot of crossover between a lot of these viruses. So it would be hard to tell for sure without testing for it, which one it would be.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm guessing with a integrative pediatric practice, many of your patients are breastfed because I mean, we keep talking about not being within six feet of people and keeping distances even with your family members in the house. Are there any changes that you recommend for breastfeeding?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: At this point, there aren't changes recommended for breastfeeding. I actually spoke to a couple of OBs and other practitioners about this and the latest research, and there's still not a ton of research, but from what they have done, it doesn't seem like the virus is transmitted through breast milk, which is good. So you should continue breastfeeding if you are a known positive with coronavirus. So if you've been tested, you know you have a positive, then it's recommended if you're breastfeeding just to wear a mask, just to try to prevent any spread between you and the baby. But it's still recommended to keep breastfeeding while you have it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, that's a good piece of information. Overall, are the things that we generally do to keep ourselves strong and healthy, like immune boosted, the same things that we would wanna do now?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Yeah, so the big things I talk about with my patients are trying to keep those foundations strong. And especially this time, it's so hard not to be stressed out or worried. And there's so much news and every other story on Instagram, Facebook, whatever you're reading and watching, it's all about coronavirus and what's happening in other countries and how bad it's gonna be. And it makes you very stressed out. And we know for a fact that one of the worst things that you can do for your body in terms of getting a virus is to be stressed out. Cohen did the landmark studies in 1990s and early 2000s where he was placing upper respiratory viruses in noses. And he was doing studies where some of the population

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: was either self-reported stressed or not stressed or hadn't had sleep or did have sleep. And any one of the studies that he did, if you were more stressed out, you were way more likely, four to six times more likely to get the virus than if the people that weren't stressed out. Same thing with people that didn't sleep versus sleep. So we wanna keep those foundations strong because if you get too worried about it, then that's gonna make it more likely for you to get sick, maybe from the coronavirus, but from also any other cough or cold as well. So whatever you can do to try to keep yourself calm is very important. And also having all the healthy foods, keeping your minerals and vitamin levels up, getting some vitamin D,

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: all of these things are very well published in the medical literature to be helpful at preventing viruses or any disease. So we don't wanna forget about those at this time either, which is really easy to binge eat or not go outside at all or-

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So are you saying vitamin D from the sun to go outside and get vitamin D by being in the sun or to take a supplement?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Either one. So there's still no recommendations that you can't go outside. So we don't wanna be around people and exposing, but you can certainly go out for a walk, go out in nature if you're somewhere that it's nice out, walk around, and getting vitamin D is very helpful. We know that if your levels are below 25 to 30 on vitamin D, you're at a significantly increased

risk of getting any kind of virus. They've done those studies, especially on the flu. And we haven't done a lot of studies on coronavirus, this coronavirus, because obviously it's new, so there's no way to do those studies, but these are all things that are inferred from other virus or studies from the flu influenza, which can most likely cross over into coronavirus

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: because most upper respiratory viruses are fairly similar.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right, two more questions on this topic. So once somebody starts- Just to show symptoms of viruses in general, do you have recommendations and supplements that they would take? I keep hearing also people talk about zinc. What do you recommend for someone to help kind of shorten the duration of the viral infection?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Yeah, the common things that people do are vitamin D, vitamin C. In general, elderberry syrup is very common. There's a little bit of controversy of COVID-19, whether you should or shouldn't be doing elderberry syrup. But that's a common one that people use for most viruses. Zinc is very common, echinacea a lot of people use, colloidal silver is a common one that people will use for coughs, cold sore throats, and essential oils you could do as well.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: My last question on this topic is how do you see this getting under control? How do we end it?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: There's a couple of things. So number one, if people are not passing it on to other individuals, then at some point it will start to slow down and the rate will continue to fall. We know that in China right now, they haven't been seeing new cases in some of the hotspots in the last day or two that we're recording this. So it's actually that's a good signal that hopefully it can be under control. A lot of respiratory viruses are not very common in the summer. So hopefully as the weather gets warmer, this virus might be sensitive to that. So hopefully that will help as well. But I think in general, just good practices, washing hands, social distancing, and being patient.

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: If the virus can't get passed on to anybody else, then there's no one to get sick from it. And hopefully it starts to go down. And also people start to develop antibodies to it. So then hopefully as the community, if someone gets exposed, then over time that starts to decrease. And oftentimes it'll take a month or two months to see that cycle. And that's what we are seeing, at least in China right now, where they've had it going on for what we think is two, three months and they're starting to come down now. Right.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So there's hope for light at the end of the tunnel.

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: There's definitely hope for light at the end of the tunnel. As a race, as a species, we've been through all sorts of pandemics and they always end. So there will be an end. The question is, what's going to happen? How severe is it going to be? And how many people will be affected? We just have no idea at this point. But one hope that whatever our predictions and whatever we're doing is going to be successful and we're going to keep those numbers to somewhat of a minimum across the globe so that way we can move forward.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. And it is really, even though the past couple of pandemics haven't reached this level in terms of dysfunctionality of the world, there have been many throughout history

that have and we always recover and we always pick up the pieces and life will resume at some point. Just to be clear, we're recording this at the end of March 2020. So that's when this data is relevant. We're going to take a quick break and we'll be right back. Welcome back to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast. All right, doctor, let's talk about as a integrative pediatrician, you're very focused also on what we can do right. Where do we start with our little kids? So we have babies, we have toddlers.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How can we get them off on a good start and prevent chronic disease and specifically with nutrition? Like what are the first foods that you recommend and how to integrate them?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Sure. So first of all, I would say it goes back even to before you're born, it goes back to what your mom and parents are doing and eating. The food that we eat, we're exposed to all of the toxins that's in our body and that some of those chemicals go on to the baby as they're being formed as a fetus. And there was a study that was done and it looked at chemicals in the placental blood and over 200 chemicals were in the cord bloods. So we know that there are things being passed back and forth to the baby. So it goes back even to what you're eating as to what's going to be a factor for the child. And then second, when we're first born, we know that breast milk, there are certainly tons of benefits and tons of advantages that

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: you just can't get from formula. Not everybody can breastfeed and there are certainly reasons why you might have to use formula and if you need to, that's fine. But we do tons and tons of research and tons of studies that have shown that there are decreased rates of allergies and eczema and ear infections and all sorts of medical issues down the road that are decreased to some degree in breastfed children when there's antibodies. So the immune fighting, infection fighting cells that are passed on through breast milk, those are things you just can't get from formula. So that's something that you can do at least for a couple of months, then there's some huge health benefits down the road from breastfeeding.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Is there an ideal amount of time that you recommend breastfeeding for?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: So the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends to try to breastfeed for six months if you can. Most people, if they have a goal, they aim for a year. But if you can get to six months, then you get the vast majority over 90% of the health benefits. So that's the number that we're always aiming for if you can at least get to six months and that's great. But realistically, any amount of breastfeeding that you can do is great. If you can do it once a day you can do a little bit then you're gonna get some health benefits and there's there's no real downside to doing the breastfeeding

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: so as much as you can do. When do you recommend starting to integrate food?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Most pediatricians will recommend starting food around six months is pretty average for most kids there there's different cultures around the world everybody does things a little bit differently so some kids start a little earlier some kids start a little later but six months is average and recommendations have changed a little bit I would say for most pediatricians I think even when I was in training a lot of pediatricians were saying start with rice cereal put that in the milk and

then they've done a lot of studies and research now that showed there's lots of chemicals in there so there's arsenic and other things found in rice cereal so a lot of pediatricians have changed their tune to just starting with veggies so

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: mashed up veggies is a good easy place to start so avocado carrots squash yams whatever you want and just one thing at a time most people get one thing in every couple of days and then put in a new a new food by

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: exposing kids to different flavors of vegetables is it more likely that

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: they'll like them as they get older so there's varying research on that I think the early exposed kids to these things and the more they're exposed to them the more likely they're gonna like them and the more like they're gonna get used to them if you start with more sugary carby starchy foods then they have these kind of vegetable foods might be a little more bland or not as well within their taste buds and taste it's a hard thing to say this there's not I don't think hard evidence if you don't do vegetables they'll never eat them but I think it's more about setting setting the precedent so I think it's just starting with veggies from a nutrient standpoint a vitamin standpoint is the most ideal and I

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: would say more just logically speaking if you eat those things early on you're gonna be more likely to eat them later

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I imagine that good nutrition is a building block of avoiding chronic disease so as the kids get older what ideas do you have on feeding them in ways that will keep their body strong and keeping disease away the

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: big big overarching theme is to eat real food so eating real food means eating actual things that you could pick that are actual items like almonds or apples or pears as opposed to processed foods as opposed to sugar preservatives chemicals toxins or things that have great marketing and pretty boxes we're looking for real food ideally things that are even from your own garden or things that are planted or local foods because the food really loses nutrient density so how good it is for you if something has been shipped across the world it's not nearly as nutritious for you as something you just picked and ate that day so we want to think about nutritious foods nutrient-dense foods and then foods with low chemicals so

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: a lot of our food is sprayed with pesticides and chemicals and so wherever you can you try to eat organic foods because those ones have fewer chemicals and we know that the more chemicals you have in your body and the more reaction your body's gonna have the more inflammation and that's what tends to lead to chronic disease so it sounds like it's a

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: combination of what to eat and what not to eat eating things that are just natural the way nature produces them and also local so that the potency is higher but also avoiding things that have been treated either with pesticides so they look prettier or processed so that they have things either toxins or high carb and low nutrition value yeah I mean most

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: definitely it's really easy to forget that we are literally made up of the things that we eat those are our building blocks and so if you're having a crappy input then you're

gonna have a bad output and so if you have all these chemicals and toxins in your body and at some point your body is gonna fight back your body's gonna get angry and yes we have amazing body we have amazing systems detoxification of great liver kidney and all these things I can get rid of some of the chemicals and some of the toxins but at some point things build up to a level where your body just can't handle anymore and that's where genetics comes in because every child every person is a little bit different and so what I can handle

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: might be different than what you can handle but at some point we each get pushed over the edge and when we get pushed over the edge then normal basic everyday things that your body should be able to do it stops being able to do and at that point that's where we start running into things like chronic disease or illness and getting sick because your body just can't handle the regular virus that it should have been handling so then you

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: get sick outside of nutrition what other preventative techniques do you

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: recommend another big one is toxins so we're just absolutely surrounded by toxins in our environment with cleaners our chemicals our soaps our makeups everything that we do and touches our skin and everything that's in our home they have all sorts of long names on chemical names and we really haven't gone into the habit over the last several decades of really reading labels for these things I think people are starting to get a little bit more savvy with the food but they're not also thinking about the chemicals in their home and again you know our skins in Oregon and if we're touching chemicals all day and all night then some of those things get absorbed and over time that can lead to chronic disease

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: as well. So just thinking about creams that you put on your children. Look at the bottle. Look at the label. If there's a bunch of really long chemical names, it's probably not good for you. Try to pick creams and lotions with words that don't actually know, like calendula or jojoba oil or the other things that are their actual words that you actually know what they are. Don't get products where you don't know what the things are. And similarly for cleaners, you can do your old-fashioned vinegar, water, baking soda, things like that, that you can just make a cleaner. You don't always have to get the thing that kills 99% of bacteria.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That might be relevant now more than ever.

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Yeah, exactly. So there's a mixture of things that you can do. And certainly when we're in the midst of disease and things like that, then okay, maybe you want something that's going to kill a little bit more. But in general, vinegar, water, baking soda, this can do a great job of cleaning and it can decrease exposure to toxins.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: In an era where we're more and more locked into our electronic devices, how important would you say getting out for exercise is in the overall package of preventative

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: healthcare? It's extremely important. We're so focused on our devices and phones and we're inside all of the time and our bodies are meant to move. And the more that you move, the healthier that you're going to be. And you need to get outside and get your hour or whatever it is of exercise every day. You got to get back into nature. We're disconnected from nature. We're not getting enough natural vitamin D anymore. And all of those things contribute to chronic

disease. If you're not moving, then you're not sweating. And if you're not sweating, then you're not flushing chemicals out of your body. And I don't think there's any foundation that's specifically so much more important than there is. It's a combination of everything

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: because if one thing is way off, then your body's out of balance.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So we got to focus on all of them. All right. I'm learning a lot from you and I know our audience is too. We're almost out of time. I do have one question to end off with this. Do kids, especially if they eat the way you were talking about, if we feed our kids the way you were talking about, do they still need nutritional supplementation?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: Most kids, I think don't in general. I think supplements are just that they should supplement your daily life. And so you shouldn't need in general, a supplement forever or medication. If you have a thyroid issue, you might need to take thyroid medication, but you shouldn't need to take a multivitamin for the rest of your life. You shouldn't take a probiotic for the rest of your life. These are higher dose vitamins, minerals for specific things. So if you're low on something, then you get it back to a certain level and then your body should be able to stay in balance. We eat so poorly. So a lot of kids are nutrient deficient or even if you eat pretty well, a lot of our foods are nutrient deficient and we're

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: seeing this more and more even in very healthy eaters. So sometimes a multivitamin or something that can be helpful, but ideally you get these minerals and vitamins from your food. A supplement can never replace a healthy diet. So it's always better if you can to eat healthy. But if you have a picky eater or you were sick recently, or you just want to boost the immune system over the winter season and a supplement can be extremely helpful, but it shouldn't be a replacement for a healthy lifestyle. Nothing replaces that. Thank you

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: so much for sharing such valuable information with us. Where can we find you online?

DR. JOEL GATOR WARSH: So you can find me online at integratedpediatrics.com or you can find me on Instagram Dr. Joel Gator over the easiest two places to go. Perfect. Thanks for being here with us and at

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: home. Thanks for listening to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast. If you like our program, share us with your friends and leave us some feedback in your podcast app. And for more pregnancy and parenting related media, visit us on Instagram at Dr. Berlin. That's D-O-C-T-O-R-B-E-R-L-I-N.

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