Ray Edwards Show, Episode 564
Dr. Gus's Post-COVID Protocol

Announcer 00:00
Ray Edwards Show, Episode 564. Dr. Gus's Post-COVID Protocol. The Ray Edward Show. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

Ray Edwards 00:19
Hey everybody, I'm so excited for you to join us on this podcast because my guest is my friend and also my doctor. You may have heard me refer to him as my health optimization coach. He is a doctor and I refer to him as my doctor because he is my doctor. His name is Gus Vickery, Dr. Gus Vickery. And I just want to set this up real quick, Gus. You and your whole family, your, your very healthy family, obviously, I say, obviously, because I would only seek health advice from somebody who seemed to know how to be healthy, and you seem to know how to do that. And your whole family just recently got COVID. I think a lot of people feel like it's all over now. Well, no, not all over yet. But you got COVID. And I'm particularly interested in talking about what that experience was like, and then what recovery has been like because I have not had COVID, my wife has not had COVID, grace of God, but everybody else in my family. And I mean, everybody, my brothers, my mother, my dad, my stepdad, everybody has had COVID with varying degrees of severity. Couple of cases, it was very scary, like they were in ICU, they were concerned about, maybe they would need to go on a ventilator. And in a couple of cases in my family, there's long-term effects that have lasted for months. And I know a lot of people are concerned about that. So I'm wondering if you could just take some time to walk us through the experience of having it? And then what have you seen afterwards? And what should we do about these things?

Dr. Gus Vickery 01:46
Yeah, thanks, Ray. And obviously, this might be a topic everybody's tired of talking about. And thankfully, the day we are recording this podcast, the data is improving, right, the infection rate is down, hospitalization rate is down, mortality rate is down. The variant that we're primarily dealing with now, omicron does not appear to be as severe, people are not getting sick. So that's a wonderful thing. My family, unfortunately, we had managed to dodge it, despite the fact that in my clinic, we were treating and seeing patients with COVID, and a lot of exposures, but it snuck in through my son to the house. And it ended up passing through all of us, and unfortunately, but we're fine. We ended up with the Delta varient before it had cleared out before

Omicron came in. And people, I think, know that the Delta has can be a more intensive and infection with, you know, more, more complications than not.

Ray Edwards 02:34
We'll probably get to this. But I want to ask this right up front because it just occurred to me. What do you think about how concerned we need to be about going forward? Are these like delta variants? Is it still out there? Or what's our concern level? What should that be going forward?

Dr. Gus Vickery 02:52
Yeah, I mean, I think our concern can be lower. But it depends, of course, on who you are, if you're somebody with any, if you're immunocompromised, if you are somebody who is at high risk of having really bad outcomes with this virus, I'd still proceed with a little caution right now. But not fear, but just appropriate caution, protect yourself. But for most of us, if we're in pretty good health, for the most part, what's happening right now, probably is not very threatening to us. But the Delta is still around. It's a tiny, tiny, tiny amount of it. So if you get COVID tomorrow, it's likely Omicron or possibly the next iteration, which they're starting to develop. But also the anticipation that based on history is that future versions of the virus would continue to be less lethal, more transmissible, much like the other coronaviruses that circulate and cause common colds, that might not be the case, it could mutate in a different way. But that's what we expect to happen. So right now, I agree with completely, you know, getting rid of the mass mandates, right. I agree with that. I agree with everybody going back to normal, but if you're highly concerned because of your specific medical conditions, yeah, please continue to protect yourself. The best way to do that is be vigilant but also to, if you're gonna, you know, potentially wear a mask to help yourself then wear a K95 or N95 Mask properly fitted, and that can give you an enormous amount of protection. But for the folks who are healthy and especially children, I don't think they need to be walking around in a mask at all. I think people should be socializing and enjoying each other's company but also mindful if they have fever, chill, sweats, you know, things like that, then stay home, right? Don't, don't expose people. But the Delta variant you know, did cause for many people, milder infections, but some people more severe infections. First and foremost, my whole family is healthy and we're healthy today. Ray, I have no, no complaint or self-pity about the fact that it finally caught up to us and got us, but it was a fascinating experience because I finally got to walk through what many of my patients were reporting to me as they experienced it. My wife and son had pretty significant pulmonary symptoms, but nothing that would have put them in a hospital, and there they got completely better but it took 14 days. My wife and I both you know lost taste and smell and didn't eat and lost a bunch of weight and stuff like that. But I never actually developed the full pulmonary complex, but I had the high fevers, chills, sweats, headaches, body aches, followed by the brain fog, altered, you know, altered consciousness state that many people experienced that freak them out. And you know, you the level of exhaustion you don't understand until you go through it was, you're, you're incapacitated. But on around day 10, I broke out of that felt better. But what I also have observed and what I've observed in many of our patients, and what we know from data there, that there's a lot of individuals that had these more severe strains that are still dealing with lingering effects from this virus. And a lot of times, and there are a lot of people dealing with, they don't understand, that's what they're dealing with, that they don't know why they still feel tired, or intermittently brain foggy or depressed, or their sleep quality isn't the same as it used to be, or they're still getting weird rashes or joint pains. And it's actually because of what this virus does to us. And it's also because if you don't know what you're dealing with, you might not be able to give your body the right information, it needs to finally resolve these symptoms. The good news is that for most of us, once we understand what we need to do, and we do it, we can resolve these issues and feel a lot better and finally get past this. There will be some individuals who have specific genetic susceptibilities to more severe chronic

manifestations that it might take a lot longer to figure out exactly how we're going to help those people heal. But my experience treating patients thus far that with the protocols that I've been using, most people are getting significantly better faster.

Ray Edwards 06:28
So what, what are you using? Because we're not? We're hearing lots of news. And then people just talking that we know, saying, well, it's got these long term effects. And we don't know how long it's gonna last but haven't heard a lot about what to do about it. So that makes me super curious.

Dr. Gus Vickery 06:43
Yeah. And what I'm going to share with you is based on researching the literature, networking with other physicians, looking, a lot of times when doctors when we don't have clear mechanisms and understanding of exactly what's happening, we can't put a precise diagnosis, we have to rely on what we call anecdotes, right. But a lot of anecdotes together can be somewhat, you know, helpful and often accurate. And so a lot of us are just sharing what are we doing? And what are we observing? And the good news, of course, is my practice I'm able to track metrics too. So the first and for, the first and foremost, you kind of got to know your own body. You know, one, you know, it's objectively you know, how you feel how you sleep, how your mood is how your energy is if you exercise how your exertional tolerance and your endurance, you know, how is that how do you how long does it take you to recover from intensive exercise. And those are the things you should be paying attention to because your body is teaching you through those things. Now, you can also look at blood tests. And you can also for those who actually are into biohacking and tracking if you have an Oura Ring, a Whoop, an Apple Watch, you can look at metrics that are really helpful like heart rate variability, your resting heart rate, respiratory rate, body temperature fluctuations, and you can learn a whole lot about your nervous system in the state of stress from those metrics. What I saw in my own personal case, and again, I had I mean, I had I was sick, but I would still consider it mild compared to what most people had. And you know, the after effect, what I still feel my sleep isn't what as good as it used to be, I'm sleeping longer, but the quality is not as good and I can feel that. And my intensive workouts, my weight training, I'm more sore, and it's taking me longer to recover than what I had before I can just tell something's off my body. But generally speaking, I feel very good. And I'm not complaining, I'm just telling you what I've experienced. Now my metrics that I've been able to reserve, my heart rate variability remains 10 points below baseline, you know, six weeks later, my resting heart rate at night is still seven points above baseline, my respiratory rate at night is still two to three breaths per minute above baseline, right. So those are all clear physiological metrics that have a notable change that I had tracked for three years previously. And we're stable. Now. Because I have access to blood test, I also did a comprehensive blood panel on myself. I had just done one in December to do an end-of-the-year status check that was really excited because a lot of things that fall into place and looks really good. I was feeling good. And throughout the entire month of January before we got infected I had lived a very clean New Year's, you know, post- New Year's lifestyle. Yeah, no alcohol, very healthy diet, programed workouts, good sleep. So I was in a really good state. And so after I checked this blood work, you know, a couple weeks after infection, it was really interesting, because I saw changes that you know, really, you wouldn't have expected to see. And it didn't fit like a clear pattern. Like if you didn't know what you, the context of this, you would really just be trying to guess what's going on because it was a little this little that. Things like my something called ferritin was 300 points high, which can be a marker of inflammation, oxidative stress, my lipids didn't look beautiful. My cholesterol production markers went high, my small dense LDL went up, my LDL went up. It wasn't response to anything dietarily It had to be a response to infection and inflammation. And there were some other metrics that were different. One thing that was really interesting, I did measure my red blood cells zinc, and copper because everybody

probably knows a little bit about using zinc, and zinc is important for the immune system. But so is copper. You need both in the right ratios it's actually what matters for immunity plus many other biochemical processes. Well, like many people, when I got COVID, I started doing heavy zinc supplementation. And most people, most people are aware as part of the protocol. And I'll talk about that in just a moment, the protocols, and I use a lot of sources of copper in my diet. But I also take a lot of organ meat, desiccated capsules that have liver and other organs that are high in copper. And I really amped that up during infection. But my measurable zinc and copper levels were like pretty severely deficient, even though I had been taking very high doses. And why I can't tell you exactly other than we know that we go through a lot of zinc and copper when we have these types of infections. So despite my supplementation, I was still deficient. So I did get a very specific form of zinc and copper supplementation and started going ahead and replacing that with a, you know, a higher dose. And I'll recheck those levels soon. But the main point of this is that I'm a pretty healthy guy. Most people would say, Well, you look like you feel great. And I'm still going, but I could measure a lot of things that changed in my system from my COVID infection. And I could feel those things. And I can see them through different metrics. And at baseline, my family is a pretty healthy family. I know my metrics, I look at my metrics, this is the industry I work in. And there's a lot of, a lot of areas of my life that are soppy, but health is not one of them. And so I think a lot about because going into this infection, I knew from my December labs, I was in a pretty good state of health. Then on top of it, I have I know a lot about the protocols we would use for COVID. Because of the work that I do, including not just supplements that might help but peptides that are very powerful. And I had those available in my home. And I started my whole family, you know, immediately on peptides like thymosin alpha, thymosin beta BPC, plus liposomal vitamin C, plus high dose quercetin, all these things, and we'll define that in just a moment so your listeners, if they're interested, can, in fact, what I'll do is I'll type out a list of these things so that you could put it in your show notes.

Ray Edwards 11:54
And these are all things that people could order or obtain on their own.

Dr. Gus Vickery 11:58
Every day, all the supplements, the peptides are a little bit more challenging. Typically, you have to find a physician who's trained in peptide protocols, there are some direct-to-consumer peptides sites, but sometimes you might not be getting the proper peptides. There is a place in Canada that I completely trust to produce really good peptides, and I can put the link to their site, it will still be a challenge because you got to know why I'll put the doses I used of these peptides on this Google Doc I send you so people will know what I used and what I've been using in my patients, but they'll still have to go to the site, find that peptide, order it, get it delivered and figure out the process of reconstituting and utilizing it. So it's not, you know, as simple as buying some liposomal vitamin C.

Ray Edwards 12:41
Okay, so that's cool. We should probably at this point, say we're not diagnosing or treating or recommending that you're doing these things. We're gonna share the information that Gus has about what he's been doing. Yes. And if you have more interest in that he'll give you we'll get some links in the show notes. Provide you so you can go do your own homework and decide what you want to do.

Dr. Gus Vickery 13:02
Yeah, thank you for that, Ray. Absolutely. I'm not recommending that any listener, take anything that I'm saying or use any treatment that I'm offering. This is purely an example of what I've

been doing personally and what I've been doing with people who have a doctor-patient relationship with me. You do your own research, look at the list, talk to your own doctor about it, decide if you feel like it's right for you or not. Okay, thank you for that. Yeah, but I will, I will put together that shortlist. And it's not meant to be comprehensive, there are a lot of other agents out there, that could be helpful. But I'm going to tell you this is just something very focused and that I feel like has worked a lot for me and others. And it can make a big difference. But one of the things that I realized is that, you know, okay, so I'm in pretty good health. And then I get this infection, I don't even get it nearly as severe as a lot of people. And then I immediately have access to all these next-level therapeutics and things that we know can really boost your immune system and reduce inflammation. And I can still measure effects on my system. So what about all these other people who don't really have access to this information, who didn't know? Maybe didn't even know how important vitamin D was prior to infection. So they have low vitamin D, they have low omega threes, they've taken really nothing in addition, maybe some zinc, and have no idea what their status of their body is. And now they're still dealing, how much is this likely still impacting them? A lot, I bet a lot, and I bet a lot of them are just chalking it up to stress and life. And in fact, it's because this virus has a significant impact on the human system for a sustained period of time. Now, on the other hand, most of us clear it and eventually resolve and we're fine. So I'm not trying to get people afraid that they've got a ever-living virus inside of them that's going to wreak havoc. No, but if you don't understand how to help your system, resolve it, you could be challenged by this for months to come.

Ray Edwards 14:48
Yeah, and that's one of the reasons we're having this conversation because I've got a couple family members who have had the virus. The Delta variant got really sick. That's been Months ago now, but they're still feeling off mentally and energy-wise. And they're having these mysterious aches and pains and they're concerned and worried. And I knew that if there's one person who would have some answers, it would be you.

Dr. Gus Vickery 15:14
Yeah.

Ray Edwards 15:14
What would you say to them? I think you've already said it, there's things you can do. You can recover from this.

Dr. Gus Vickery 15:20
Yeah, so let's talk about, again, this is I'm not advising anybody follow these recommendations. I'm just sharing what I've done for myself. And I've measured the results, and they were good. And what I've been doing with patients who are dealing with these issues, and we've been able to measure that they're getting better and improving, okay. So first and foremost is the basics. But we've covered this on this podcast before, you know, if you're already sick and dealing with inflammation from a virus that increased what we call inflammatory cytokine response, you better really dial in your nutrition, right? you need to eat nutritious foods, your body needs nutrients and protein to function properly, you've got to get your sleep, my experience is that I need more sleep. And it's still not as good as quality. But we still, you have to get your sleep, you can't recover and get well without sleep. And you should exercise but with a caveat because exercise is really good for you. I have some patients and have actually lost my patience with these patients, which I don't usually do. These are the high performer, always, you know, on the go, super healthy, optimizers, biohackers, athletic, who just can't let their body recover. And I would tell them back off your workouts, go take walks, whatever, you know, just

do walkthroughs don't do the heavy stuff. And then two weeks later, they messaged me freaked out, I feel like I've totally relapsed. It feels like I have COVID again, am I dying? What's going on, I'd ask what they did. And of course, they went out and did some ridiculously intensive workout or athletic endeavor. And I would be frustrated because I've had this conversation with them. And they're writing me again, and I'm having to respond again and say you are not dying, you have relapsed, but you don't have the virus again. But you stressed your system so intensely while it's still trying to recover, that now you have an increase in your inflammatory cytokine response and your immune system is suppressed. Now it's going to take a lot longer to recover. You have to honor and respect what this virus can do to your system for a period of time, and you have to do what's necessary to let it recover. So please exercise, but pay attention to how you respond to that exercise. For those super-athletic individuals, you might be that you have to let go of some of your ambitions for a couple of months, and then you can pick them back up at that time, it is critically important to understand that. So that's one- pay attention to your environment, your diet, your sleep, your stress, recognize your body's already stressed, it's likely dealing with more than you could understand you don't have to check a bunch of blood work to know that and honor those principles of how humans heal. Now the next level is what are the pieces of information that a body needs to function well and heal? Well, a lot of folks in fact, the vast, vast majority of new patients who sign up with me where we do our first deep dive are deficient in key nutrients that are critically important for a body to function well. The most common deficiencies that I see are vitamin D deficiency, omega three fatty acid deficiency, variable, but not uncommon vitamin B 12 deficiency and folate deficiency, zinc deficiency, coenzyme Q10, and others. So what do we do about that? Well, I think it's actually smart for most people, and very safe again, talk to your doctor about it to consider taking a high-quality, basic multivitamin that covers basic nutrients. I've yet to meet a person who didn't need some form of additional Omega three supplementation, and the critical role that EPA and cell membranes plays in down-regulating inflammatory cytokine responses, especially in the brain, because the inflammatory cytokine response in the brain is what is causing the brain fog and mood changes and cognitive symptoms people are having. We know we have the mechanisms of when you have inflammatory cytokine increasing in the brain, it disrupts normal neurotransmitter production and metabolism and it really it has an impact on mood. It can make you depressed, and many people with long-haul COVID have symptoms of depression. They think they're depressed because they're not well, and that's part of it. But they're also depressed because of what's happening in their brain. Well, guess what one of the most potent agents is to reduce inflammatory cytokine responses in the brain? High-quality sources of EPA and DHA, ie fish oil- products like that, that needs to be high-quality. Critically important that you either test and treat your Omega three status or just assume you need to make three fatty acids and either eat more or get a good quality supplement and start taking it okay. And then the Vitamin D has to be corrected. And then the basic nutrients. Also protein. Most people are not consuming enough protein, they're afraid of protein we've gotten people afraid of protein. Protein can come from plants or animals. I'm not saying you have to eat animal protein, but you need enough protein. And if you don't get enough protein, your body can't heal. So it's critically important that you focus on getting adequate protein in your diet. There's some simple benchmarks for most people, if you've been advised differently then don't do this. But, you know, for most individuals, you're going to want to try to get at least 0.6 grams of protein per pound of lean mass or like normal body mass. So of course, if you have an extra 100 pounds of weight, you wouldn't take that into your calculation, it'd be your ideal body mass. What does that work out for the average female, somewhere between 80 and 100 grams a day, especially if they're trying to build muscle, the average male somewhere between 100 to 150 grams a day, right? So for simple benchmarks, if you're just a, if you're a female, I would at least try to get 80 grams of protein a day, and you probably should get more. If you're a male, at least 100 grams and get more if you need to use supplements. If you don't get enough protein, you will continue to struggle with mood, energy, hormone production, immune system function. Protein, fatty acids, specifically omega threes, micronutrients, specifically vitamin D. Okay, so that's pretty simple. But people, I've seen enough people with the problem with this issue to know, as simple as it is, and it's

common sense it is most people aren't recognizing the role it plays in the body healing. But then there's extra support you can use if you have inflammation, if you're still tired if your brain is still affected, if you're still achy, that really can help your body repair faster. And that comes in the form of anti-inflammatory compounds and anti-oxidative supplements. We don't need to overload on antioxidants, but we do need appropriate amounts. One of those one of the most powerful ones that is simple to access is vitamin C. I have found that higher doses of specific forms of vitamin C has helped people enormously to recover faster. Now this specific form I'm talking about is called liposomal. There's a difference between liposomal vitamin C and regular vitamin C. The truth is, is I used to think that it was not necessary to have vitamin C in the liposomal. And it's not for normal amounts. But there is a gut limit for how much vitamin C your body can take in. And then there's a transport limit. Most people who've taken a lot know that limit. Yeah. And then there's a transport limit across cell membranes. And I found study as studies were in ICU settings where they were treating specific types of injury, where they looked at liposomal vitamin C, and looked at efficacy and compared it to normal ascorbic acid, and they found that liposomal was clearly superior and provided the mechanisms why. So I had switched, I always keep liposomal vitamin C available. I don't take it all the time. But when we had COVID. In the home, I had every one of my family members taking a teaspoon of liposomal vitamin C every two to three hours while they were awake. Because the study I found in the ICU is 6000 milligrams a day was very helpful.

Ray Edwards 22:30
So let me ask for those who don't know what is liposomal vitamin C

Dr. Gus Vickery 22:37
Liposome is pretty is complex and simple. Essentially, you take a compound you want to deliver into the human system, and you create a lysosome around it, which is basically just a little fatty encapsulation, a specific form that can bypass through the gut, directly absorbed into the through the intestines, and then be transported through the blood and pass through cell membrane so it's delivered to cells. So it just makes it in past all the usual body's mechanisms.

Ray Edwards 22:59
And you said a teaspoon. So does this come in liquid form?

Dr. Gus Vickery 23:02
Well, so, I guess that's an important clarification because there's a lot of good companies that make liposomal C. I don't have any affiliate relationship with them, but I just use Quicksilver. Quicksilver makes phenomenal liposomal products like liposomal glutathione, liposomal NAD. And when it came to the vitamin C, I just chose their product cuz I just trust their chemical processes. So I chose Quiksilver liposomal vitamin C, there's other good companies you can research on. And with Quiksilver a teaspoon was 1000 milligrams.

Ray Edwards 23:28
Cool. Okay,

Dr. Gus Vickery 23:29
Yeah. So vitamin C, higher dose, if you're still struggling could be very helpful for you, or if you get COVID started right away. Now, there's another thing that a lot of folks don't know about, but

is actually a very potent antioxidant that I've also seen people respond well to. It's called molecular hydrogen. Have you heard about this, Ray? I may have mentioned it to you before.

Ray Edwards 23:50
We've talked about it before.

Dr. Gus Vickery 23:51
Yeah. And so there's a couple of different companies. Water and Wellness is one, another one is I think called Open Cup. They have a great product. And these are just dissolvable hydrogen magnesium tablets, you put them in water, filtered water, you let it dissolve, it becomes foamy, and you drink it real quick and you're drinking free hydrogen ions that's magnesium. That hydrogen goes right through the gut, just like a liposome would. It goes right through cell membranes, and it is a very powerful antioxidant. It can boost the immune system. It can help mitochondrial function, it can reduce inflammation and oxidative stress. It can improve athletic performance, it can definitely help you recover from intensive workouts and repair and recover from injuries faster is a very powerful way of bypassing the body's normal antioxidant functions. Because we have genetics for what we call phase two detox where we can look at how robust is our glutathione system, our catalase system and these are systems that help us deal with oxidative stress and all the toxicants and reactive oxygen species we have to manage on a daily basis and as we age, the systems don't work as well. And you can look at your genetics with these things and find out. I do I'm already dealing with like half a deck, right, like I have gene deletions and things so I'm not very good at this. And one of the in so we can fortify those systems. There's liposomal, glutathione, glutathione substrate, vitamin C, which is commonly recommended. But you can kind of do an end-around with molecular hydrogen, where you can just really deliver a very powerful antioxidant directly to your cells and kind of bypass those systems. So I started patients, I encourage them to order and use it, and they were measuring metrics like heart rate variability and how they felt and we saw improvements. These are antidotes again, these aren't randomized control trials, just sharing how I saw people respond. There's a supplement many people know about for COVID called Quercetin Q U E R C T I N. There are reasons why it has antiviral properties and helps people reduce the severity of COVID. It's very safe, it's a plant based compound, a lot of people will use it for histamine sensitivities and for mitochondrial function. I had my whole family on it, as soon as I knew we had COVID. And I continued a higher dose, of quercetin. It's 500 milligrams a day is the typical dose. Source is very important. There are a lot of different forms. I mean, again, if somebody wants to brand I used to Thorne brand. They have a great Quercetin product that I completely trust. And taking Quercetin consistently it does appear to help people recover faster from these processes. So that's another way another sort of next-level supplement that you can introduce and then many people were using elderberry. Elderberry is well known, it's a plant that we know has a lot of immune protective properties. It has a rich, rich and anthocyanins. So it also has antioxidative compounds. And people would use that because many people talked about the potential for it to fortify your system and reduce severity of COVID. Well, I was using elderberry already, and I found some data suggesting that continuing it could potentially help you resolve COVID faster, does it I can't say for sure. But I did continue elderberry along with these other compounds. I'm not taking it now. And I can't say that it helped me but I can just tell you I got a lot better faster as I continued to use these compounds more intensively. Yeah, so we have vitamin C, Quercetin, elderberry, molecular hydrogen, base nutrients, omega threes and vitamin D. It's hard to say whether people should take additional zinc and copper. I know my levels were low. Some people have genetics where they maintain high levels and they don't need supplementation. So I'm not going to make a generic potential recommendation that people would take zinc and copper. But I do think a good multivitamin would have the zinc and copper that you would need to get for basic levels. Now any questions about that thus far? These compounds how we use them, why we use them, why they may have been helpful?

Ray Edwards 27:33
I don't have any questions. I'm I'm sure we'll get questions from listeners. And we may if there's enough interest, we may do a part two of this conversation. And just to be clear, we said it once before, but definitely, if you're going to be making decisions about your health, you need to see a qualified professional and rely on their advice in your own good judgment. We're just sharing some information here. Everything you said is incredibly important. Especially the vitamin D, and fish oil and Omega three and all those things cannot be overemphasized. I'm telling you from experience. I wish I'd paid attention to that stuff a lot sooner than I did. However, I also get very excited about like the new stuff, the cutting-edge biohacker, this is the latest thing. So I know you got a few of those to share with us, too.

Dr. Gus Vickery 28:18
Yeah, and these are this is kind of the next-level stuff. And it's pretty amazing what it can do for you. But it's a little more challenging than just simply ordering a supplement online from a good quality source and taking it. One thing that's non-medicinal, I will tell you and this is if you have it available to you in your community. Again, you could talk to your doctor and check it out. But I did have a lot of my patients that I sent who were really dealing with brain manifestations and they had specific genetic polymorphisms that made them very susceptible to protracted brain inflammation that also could increase the risk in the future of neurodegenerative conditions. And these were genetics we knew because I do that on most my patients. And I sent them to a center that offers hyperbaric oxygen treatments. And there have been studies done on hyperbaric oxygen for people with pulmonary COVID. And those studies were very positive with how people recovered faster and had less complications. We know that hyperbaric oxygen treatments can treat a lot of things- musculoskeletal injuries, soft tissue injuries, traumatic brain injuries, concussions, it's incredible for anti-aging. So there's a lot of different protocols. It's a pretty amazing technology. The problem is finding a place that has it available and of course, it can be expensive. But if somebody had significant residual COVID If they thought I'm a long haul COVID patient with brain issues, talk to your doctor, obviously but I would ask the question about hyperbaric oxygen because I think that could be a game-changer for a lot of people.

Ray Edwards 29:43
Cool. Worth the investment of time and energy and even money to check into

Dr. Gus Vickery 29:47
Yeah, I had one patient who has those genetic polymorphisms and she works with me and she maintains really good health and is stayed on track and she got the Delta variant right after I did and she had some, it felt to her like, a number of years ago, she had a severe concussion and it was bad. And I sent her to a functional neurology clinic where they could do photo bio modulation, vestibular drain. Next, again, next-level stuff, and she got a lot better and it was good. Now, she felt like she had that concussion again. And it was bad for her. It was really bad. She works and as a family, and I did send her for hyperbaric oxygen IV therapeutics photobiomodulation to the brain. And it was amazing how quickly she started recovering when she introduced those, those treatment modalities into our protocol. We also use these other compounds, we're about to talk to peptides, a lot of folks if you if you're any of you out there are biohackers, that you'd love to listen to some of those health podcasters that really talk about how to take mind and body performance to the next level, you must surely have heard of peptides. peptides are just small proteins. You know, they're basically chains of amino acids. The vast majority of peptides used clinically are natural, meaning our bodies actually encode these, but they can be synthesized by particular labs that have very expensive equipment, and

then they can be delivered back into the human system in different forms. And there's a lot of different peptides for different reasons, for different purposes that affect different tissues. And we know many of them their mechanisms of action, what they're doing. And they most of them are very safe, you know, so we use peptides to help people recover from injury, we use peptides for people who have autoimmune conditions, we use peptides for people who need to lose weight and reverse diabetes and things like that. And if we're if we have them if they have the foundation's right, they're attending to the first stuff we talked about, and we've gotten all those things taken care of, then we can layer peptides in and see dramatic responses and how the body begins to heal. And I mentioned earlier that I had already had my family on these peptides one is called Thymosin Alpha. It's an amazing immune-balancing peptide, it really is remarkable. Now it got caught up in the COVID hype along with some of the other therapeutics and unfortunately, the FDA banned it's production in America and basically made it not available. We used to be able to prescribe it to particular pharmacies, and it's a shame because I've used them as an alpha in inflammatory bowel diseases, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis in combination with a comprehensive treatment plan for a patient under my direct care. And we've seen these patients go into complete remission. Like complete remission and really heal their bodies. It's a really powerful peptide and Thymosin Alpha, if your immune system has been unbalanced from infection or you're about to get infection is really good at helping the immune system rebalance, reduce excessive non-helpful immune responses like that could become autoimmunity and help your immune system be better prepared to handle pathogens that could be invading. So I use a protocol Thymosin Alpha one to help us once I realized we were getting this infection to help our immune systems recover faster. In addition, there's a peptide called BPC 157. BPC stands for body protective complex, its original saya secretion is our gastric juices. It has a profound anti-inflammatory effect on the human system. Plus, if you look at you could look it up online and read about the research and find some monographs and you'll be blown away at how many different systems that has a positive impact on. It's one of the peptides you can take in a capsule or injectable form. And the capsules work great, especially for gut healing issues, but also systemic healing. And they're really good for maintenance for people like me who want to work out a lot, but I'm over 50 it helping me recover faster reduce injury, so BPC is something I take all the time. But I did find that the systemic form the injectable was probably more potent when dealing with more severe inflammation. So I switched over to an injectable form for a month when I realized what I was dealing with. And again, I can't say exactly which intervention helped me the most. But I know that I had a significant reduction in inflammation improvement in sleep metrics, heart rate variability and recovery as I did that. And then finally, the one that I think might this is a guess, an educated guess. I think this one could be perhaps the cat's meow of the bundle when it comes to recovering from COVID based on its nervous system effects, is a first cousin of thymosin and alpha called thymosin beta. Both of them are derived from the thymus gland as we age or thymus gland, which is like the kind of beating heart of immunity, the thymus gland involutes, it gets smaller and smaller and smaller, and we produce less of these thymus-derived peptides and our immune system gets weaker and weaker. And so what we're doing is reintroducing some pretty powerful signaling compounds into the human system that we used to have at higher levels. And we're able to reintroduce and get that, that message into our system. And so thymosin beta, there's an incredible monograph looking at all the way all the different utilities from post-stroke, traumatic brain injuries, multiple sclerosis, connective tissue healing. As an aside, so my daughter tore all the ligaments in her ankle and tore two tendons severely. I'll make that I'm going to do that, you'll be like, whoa, we should have told this whole story. I'm gonna make it really quick. It was a year and a half ago. It was a bad injury. She didn't heal, she had to go to surgery. They did a remarkable job of fixing all the ligaments, it was highly complex. They got her ankle back intact. But in the whole process, it was just kind of missed that the two main tendons that were torn severely were still torn. So you know, she's getting better, but still having some issues and a good friend of mine who's an incredible foot and ankle specialist. He's, he's a, he's amazing. He's written textbooks. He was coming through town to give a TED talk in Raleigh, and he brought his ultrasound and the ultrasound my daughter's ankle. And sure enough, the two

tenants that were originally torn on the MRI are still torn a year later, they're still torn. They look bad, right? And she's crying. Oh, no, it turns out, I'm going back to square one. And so he's like, wait, wait, wait, we're gonna do this. So he injected BPC 157. Under an ultrasound guide, he injected it directly into each of those tendons. I watched him do it. I watched the medicine go inside the tendon. And then he said just wait. And let me real ultrasound. This might fix it. Two months later, I drive her to his clinic in Marietta, Georgia. And he pulls out his ultrasound, the tendons are healed. 100% It looked beautiful.

Ray Edwards 36:03
Whoa

Dr. Gus Vickery 36:03
If I could go back and show the images, ultrasounds aren't the easiest things to understand, but anybody could get this you would have seen the big body, the big defects in the body of the tendon, the fluid, the tattering, and all we saw were these beautiful linear fibers just running down and inserting where they were supposed to.

Ray Edwards 36:18
That is amazing. And I just want to comment, you would never say this. But I don't have too many friends who could just casually talk about their friend who was coming to town to give a TED Talk and brought his ultrasound machine.

Dr. Gus Vickery 36:30
I know it's a, it's a cool thing. There are some perks to what I specifically do. Yeah. And he's an amazing, generous man. And he's very gifted at what he does. And and so it's important to remember, these are tendons that one year later had not healed, right. And in two months, they're healed with an injection of BPC 157. Now what would have happened if I hadn't known Stephen Barrett? Well, she would have continued to have challenges. Her incredible orthopedic surgeon who did an amazing job of her surgery, I'm so grateful, would have ordered another MRI. He would have said, oh shoot, those tendons are still torn. And we would have had to go back to surgery to sew them back together. And it would have been, it would have taken a long time to get around to that point, right. And instead, a physician who understands musculoskeletal conditions, who's familiar with peptides, injects a peptide. And now she's back in, just this past week started back to track and will be sprinting and jumping again.

Ray Edwards 37:22
Now, I realized we have already talked about fact these are not exactly the easiest, simplest things to obtain, how safe are they?

Dr. Gus Vickery 37:30
They're very safe. But again, it's one of those things where you do need to talk to your own health advisor, seek counsil, do your own research. There's really no known long-term side effects from these peptides. Obviously, when you inject a therapeutic into your body or take it orally, there are things that can happen just like when you take a Tylenol or something like that you can have an allergic reaction, you can develop dizziness, nausea, pins and needles sensations, flushing. So there's all kinds of potential little side effects that could happen because you're putting something into your system. Most of those are like mild and temporary and go away. Obviously, if you had an allergic reaction, you need to go seek care right away if it's a

severe allergic reaction, but as far as long-term data and safety, that it's there's no known harm at this point. However, with the peptides that we don't understand as well, what we do is we use cycles, we do pulse them. So we say okay, we've got data to support using this dose for this period of time, could produce these positive effects could produce them, in some people, maybe not in others, but then we're going to withdraw that peptide, wait an appropriate interval of time, and then we can use it again. So with most peptides, what we do is use pulse presses, we cycle back off, cycle. So we send a signal, back the signal out, send the signal. And that's what doctors who are experienced in peptides are training, trained at doing, understanding how to cycle them. That's why it's not necessarily the smartest thing for a consumer just to go onto the web and start ordering peptides from the site. Because you might you're probably going to get them from a manufacturer in China, and it's not even the peptide and then you don't know how to deliver it to your system. But there are a lot of clinicians out there trained in peptides. There are companies that do tele-med consults so that people can get access to these right. I don't know all those folks, but I do know they exist. And one of my physician friends works with one of those companies as a freelancer just while he's in between jobs, just doing those consults. So the resources exist. My patients who work with me, but they have to be signed up in my intensive program, I include peptide protocols as part of my treatment protocols with them if they're interested. But before I get off that the thymosin beta, I've used it routinely for people who were post-surgery for tendon ligament repairs, I don't, Ray, you used it for your shoulder, later. What I realized is that the dosing protocols we were using were appropriate, but then when I did my research about resolving nervous system inflammation, that probably I needed to use a high dose protocol and so I had a vile of thymosin beta and I began to use the high dose protocol, which was one milligram a day and injected into myself. And in four days, that was the most dramatic response. I felt like I could tell a huge huge difference in my energy, my sleep improvement was, my sleep by the sleep scores between deep and REM, I had like a 40% improvement in sleep in that time. And my heart rate variability had been very suppressed popped up a good bit, it's still not all the way home. And I could just feel the difference. So I contacted some of the patients I've been working with who had done thymosin beta and said, I need to change your protocol. Let's go to a milligram a day. Many of them are like, wow, that's that's really changed things for me.

Ray Edwards 40:27
Dang. Now, I heard this information from you previously. I've already talked to my doctor. So I'm going to be getting after that.

Dr. Gus Vickery 40:34
Yeah, absolutely. I think these have a remarkable opportunity. Now on that said, I have patients who find me just because they want peptides. And I don't, I don't just do a peptide service. I mean, people who work with me work with me to program their health, right, whether they're sick and need to get well, or whether they're really well that they want to just keep optimizing and optimizing. And so we get data, and we spend a lot of time together, and somebody came to me and they're really sick. And I know peptides could help. But they're not going to improve their metabolic health through nutritional changes, if they're not going to begin to work on their stress axis, if they're not going to, a peptide is not going to do anything for them. Right, I'm not going to have them spend their money and expose themselves to these therapeutics when they're going to continue just to pour gasoline on the fire in the first place. So it's really important that somebody understand that the context of a peptide having its best benefit is an individual who is either already healthy or they're in the process of restoring health by adopting the right elementary habits.

Ray Edwards 41:31

Perfect. Now, I realize what you just said about you're not a peptide service. But you're going to supply us with the list of things we talked about, we're going to put those in the show notes. And then I also know that you have, you have a medical practice where you actually treat patients, then you also have a home on the web, where people can come and get information and training, and can you talk about that a little bit in case people want to know more?

Dr. Gus Vickery 41:53
Oh, ya, sure. Thank you. Yeah, so I am working on a resource list for my patients with COVID that I'll put on my website, it'll probably be in the blog section because I definitely need to get this information out to people what I've been learning. And no, I can't say exactly how I just know what's happened for me. And what's happened for the people I'm working with, they're getting better, right. They are getting better they're beginning to heal, it's really nice to see that they are feeling more hopeful that they're not going to live with COVID forever. But there are other doctors that are doing the same things that I'm doing. And they may have some interesting twists on it that are working for them. That's where we're just gonna keep talking to each other and adding to our list as time goes on. But yeah, so my personal website is DrGusVickery.com. That's DrGusVickery.com. And on that site, there is information, of course, about my health programs. But there's also blogs there where I write. And also we are releasing some video series, like if somebody needs the elementary lessons, the ABCs, of how to get healthy across the board, from mind to body in very simple to understand ways, like, here's where you start, here's how you do it. And it doesn't even require a lot of money or investment, then we're making those courses available. And we're putting them at very, very low price points. We just want consumers to have access to the information. Yeah, we'll talk at some point in the future about your genetic review and how powerful it is to know your own genome, and how it can influence how you personalize your habit matrix. We now have the self-interpretation, genetic course with our 80-page genetic reports, which was a four-hour course that walks you through your own, and walks you through a report as you interpret your own and teaches you exactly what I would tell you to do based on the interpretations you have. And so that course is now available, we're about to do a chronic fatigue mitochondrial course. And again, we're making sure the prices on these things are just very, very low. Then there's the book that you're a big fan of, right, the *Authentic Health* book that is still out there helping people and I'm still getting feedback that people apply the lessons and they're like, Wow, this works. This is easy. And that is available for free in audible format or ebook format at ebook.drGusVickery.com, and people can go there and get that book and read it. And I can promise you if you get that book and read it, you will learn things that you didn't think you hadn't thought about. And I had this confidence now because of how many people have written to me and told me how that book changed their life. And it's free. I'm not, you know, it's like, get it, have it, please have this information, it will walk you through the process of restoring health. It's all well-validated information, it works. And then by my colleague that has been training with me for the past several years, he's an amazing doctor, very passionate, phenomenal heart. He developed his own version of the precision health program that includes the full genetic report, the full blood panel, an hour medical consult, and three hours of health coaching with our health coach that's trained in all of this. And the price point on that is way below what people pay to work with me. So it's accessible to a lot of consumers and they can get these blueprints where they can know their genetics and what that means for them and they can actually know the Omega three status, the vitamin D status, the insulin resistance status, and they can get the help they need so that they can begin to get their body into that optimal state and so that's available that information is that www.WildHealthAsheville.com. I know that was a lot sorry. But anyway.

Ray Edwards 45:11
That's, that's quite alright. We'll, we'll put all the links in the show notes. I really encourage people to look at these things. And I just want to underline the last thing you were talking about.

Because think about this for a moment, we live in a time in history, that in our lifetime, we've seen the discovery of DNA, we've seen the decoding of DNA. Now we're to the point you can get your own personal genome mapped, so we can look at your own DNA and know, and I've had this done, so look at my own DNA and know what things I might want to pay attention to, what things I might be more at risk for, et cetera, et cetera, I'm probably not doing a great job of explaining this. But precision health means just that you can get these blood tests. I shared, we share all of our information that we get through services that we enlist through you, with my local doctor, and she looks at a blood test that we just had done. And she's like, Man, I wish we could get these.

Dr. Gus Vickery 46:05
Ya, I know. It's amazing.

Ray Edwards 46:06
It's amazing what you can know. And then they have information helps you interpret what you know, and share that with your own doctor. It's just we live in such an incredible time. We're so blessed. And I encourage you to go look at the links we'll provide in the show notes here. Because Dr. Gus and the folks he works with are top-notch and I trust them. Because it's more than just about the mechanics and the exchange of medicine for money. It's a healing- you're, you're a healer. That's how I look at you. I look at you as a healer. You have any final thoughts you share with people about their health?

Dr. Gus Vickery 46:35
Yeah, and I just, yeah, just real quick. I mean, that was a lot of information. Some of it was technical. But to make it simple, most of what is on this list that I'll share with Ray, anybody can do, it's not going to cost you much, obviously, get your own advice from your own medical practitioner. You know, the next-level stuff is pretty cool and maybe it's something you'll explore or have access to, but you don't have to have it. Right? If you can just get your body the information it needs to heal, it will heal and you'll get better and you do not have to live in, like thinking that the virus changed your body fundamentally in a way that you'll never get back to yourself. So despite how you know, we went kind of deep, just know that most of what you need to do is really quite simple.

Ray Edwards 47:11
Amen. Look, folks, I appreciate you listening. I know many of you were very interested in hearing this today. It's a little bit of a departure of what we normally do, but it's really important. I know there's a great deal of interest in the audience for this kind of information. Many of you have asked me What are you doing, Ray? How are you dealing with all this? Well, this is how so I encourage you to follow the links and let us know if you want to know more if you want to hear more about this we may do another follow-up episode and some of the more detailed stuff we've been doing with Dr. Gus and how I feel like it benefits me and could possibly be something you want to take a look at. Until next time my prayer for you is that God would continue to bless you with more than you can ask for even possibly imagine that it's all good at there's peace for you, peace for your house, and live long and prosper, my friends. See you soon.

Announcer 47:56
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