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WITH MIKE ADAMS

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In this exclusive NewsTarget interview, Mike Adams interviews Tom Staverosky, president of ForeverWell (www.Foreverwell.com) about a unique fermented protein product that shows benefits for migraine sufferers and people with digestive disorders such as IBS. Adams was not paid for this interview and earns nothing from the sale of the product discussed here.

Mike: Let us start from the top. You have an interesting product that has a multitude of uses and is based on fish protein. What is this product, how did you come up with it, and what are some of its applications?

Tom: In my study of natural medicine over the last fifteen years, one of the things that inspired me was the number of doctors who told me 80 percent of the people walking into their offices—regardless of what disease they had—were protein malnourished. Not because they weren't eating adequate protein, but because they were not digesting and absorbing it properly.

In order to try and improve that situation, digestive enzymes or probiotics were used, but a lot of the doctors felt their patients still needed supplemental protein. However, when they used the various protein powders, shakes, and other protein sources that are available in the marketplace, they found that they had little therapeutic value.

They could get some therapeutic benefit from individual amino acids or amino acid blends, but essentially what I learned was the real frustration amongst the natural medicine community relative to protein metabolism issues in all kinds of ill patients. I, for a variety of reasons, happened to come across research in the critical care arena.

Protein is a main component of the body. If you take the water out of the body—which is about 70 to 80 percent of the body's weight—what is left is about 70 percent protein. Protein plays a role in every function of the body: hormones, tissue repair agents, and enzymes are all protein derivatives.

I became intrigued by this possibility that protein malabsorption was a real problem for a wide variety of conditions. I went to the library and looked for books on how the body digests, absorbs, and utilizes protein. I dug in the medical literature looking for it and really could not find much. The only thing I could find that seemed to be of real scientific value was studies done in the body building and the athletic markets, which did not seem to have a lot of implications for the chronically ill.

Mike: Let me ask you a question about that, because many people reading this article might think that protein concerns only apply to body builders, not to the average person. They may think they get plenty of protein in beef or soy or whatever protein source they consume. Isn't it true that many of us, even in industrialized nations, are eating protein but not absorbing it?

Tom: Absolutely. The old saying, “You are what you eat,” ought to be replaced with, “You are what you digest, absorb, and assimilate.” It seems that the rampant digestive dysfunction that doctors see in so many chronically ill patients—I do not care what disease you are talking about, the doctors will say that whether it is diagnosed or not—is playing a role on these diseases. In particular, the body’s ability to digest, absorb, and utilize protein. It does not matter how much protein we are eating. The question should be, are we absorbing and assimilating it?

Mike: I want to add that, of course, DNA is made of protein chains or protein bonds, and there are proteins surrounding DNA that also control how DNA is expressed, correct?

Tom: Yes. What was fascinating was that it was difficult to find any good, clear medical research on protein utilization. You can learn more about how a chicken digests, absorbs, and utilizes protein than you can a human being. Why? Because we raise chickens for money.

I was finally guided to some information in critical care research. This is an area where you might think, “Well, what does critical care have to do with arthritis or migraines or athletes trying to recover from a serious workout?” or other applications where protein seems to play a role in our daily lives.

Well, interestingly enough, in critical care they are concerned about bacterial translocation and maintaining the integrity of a gut wall. Those are protein metabolism issues. Essentially, when people are in critical care, it is because they have gone through some surgery or trauma, and they are being tube-fed directly into their stomachs. The doctor’s main focus is getting protein nutrition into the patient, because if you cannot provide outside sources of protein, then the body will start to break down. The body will begin to break down muscle protein and other proteins within the body for essential needs.

Mike: We see in many people their aging process accelerating.

Tom: Absolutely. You look at our senior citizens, and you wonder why their appetites and their diets start to deteriorate, but it is because their digestive functions start to deteriorate and they are unable to digest, absorb, and assimilate protein. Then they start to waste away.

Mike: Often we jump to the conclusion that, “Oh, that is just aging,” but in fact it is not aging. We are watching a degeneration process.

Tom: That is right.

Mike: That could be avoided or slowed at least, right?

Tom: At least slowed, yes. I think depending on how early the onset of aging is, it can be reversed for people dealing with chronic issues. I will tell you what I learned from the critical care research that is very intriguing—now well known—and defining in the work that I am doing. The various feeding formulas that are available from the pharmaceutical companies for enteral feeding—tube feeding in their stomach-type situations—in critical care, in the research in that area, compare the relative value of intact protein formulas, three-amino acid formulas, and what are referred to as peptide formulas. So in a feeding formula that is made with fish protein, milk protein or egg protein, those proteins are in their full couple-hundred amino acid links that have to be further digested to be utilized by the body.

Then, you have amino acid-based formulas in which they use various chemical methods to synthetically reproduce individual amino acids, and they are blended and put into a feeding formula. The other type, the third type of formulation, is peptide based.

Therapeutic peptides have specific biological activity

Tom: Now let us define peptide for a minute, because it is truly a poorly defined term. If you take an intact protein and break it in half, you have two peptides. Those long chain peptides must be further digested by the body in order for them to have any application in the body.

Depending on when a doctor got his medical training, he was probably taught that the body digests all protein down to amino acids, that amino acids are the only thing that cross the gut barrier, and that they are reformed into the hormones, enzymes, and tissue repair agents that protein is utilized for in the body.

More recently, the research very clearly shows that the body absorbs both individual amino acids and small chain peptides, which are two, three, four, and five chains of amino acids still linked together. Small chain peptides are absorbed intact and, more interestingly, have specific biological activity in the body in addition to their direct nutritional value.

Mike: This is new information for a lot of people. I want to make sure everybody gets this. You are saying that previously, conventional doctors thought that these peptides were molecularly too large to be absorbed into the blood stream through the intestinal wall, correct?

Tom: Through normal protein absorption mechanisms. They thought that they had to be broken down into the individual amino acids.

Mike: You are saying that the new research shows these are, in fact, passed through the wall into the blood stream intact as peptides?

Tom: They have specific biological activity in addition to their direct nutritional value. Now what I mean by that is if you have a three-chain peptide that is maybe arginine, tryptophan and glutamine, it has the nutritional value of those three amino acids, but the combination of them in peptide form has a specific action in the body as well.

Mike: It is almost like a hormone.

Tom: Or an enzyme, tissue repair agent, or a trigger for any number of different things. What is fascinating is if you do a Google search on peptide, what you will find is that a lot of pharmaceutical companies are now starting to identify specific peptides and their activity, synthetically reproduce them, and we are going to see a new generation of drugs that are individual peptides.

Unfortunately, the human organism does not work on individual peptides any more than it works on the active ingredient of an herb better than it acts on the whole herb or the whole protein—not the whole intact protein, but the cascade of peptides that the body generates by the digestive process when it digests an intact protein down to who knows how many peptides.

The truth is when you think of how many two, three, four, and five chain peptides that you can create out of twenty-some amino acids, it is hundreds of thousands. The specific action of individual peptides is limited to a handful at this point. Maybe 15 or 20 have been identified for their specific actions.

Here is one of the aspects of this critical care research that really speaks to the folks in natural medicine: They have shown that the cells of the gut wall are fed locally rather than systemically, meaning they get their nutritional support from nutrients as they are absorbed through the mucosal lining. From a protein standpoint, that support is coming from peptides and not individual amino acids.

When you are trying to deal with leaky gut, malabsorption, or any kind of inflammatory bowel disease, the best nutrient that you can provide in the lumen of the gut is small chain peptides. They have actually shown that if they feed these patients, these critical care patients, only amino acids, the integrity of the gut wall deteriorates, and malabsorption and bacterial translocation problems actually increase, which is the exact thing they are trying to avoid.

The form of your protein makes a critical difference in addressing some biological issues within the body. When it comes to gut integrity, addressing leaky gut and malabsorption issues, the missing link for a huge number of people out there is small chain peptides.

How fermented fish protein helps with IBS and Crohn's disease

Mike: That explains why so many of your customers experience benefits from your product for irritable bowel syndrome, Crohn's Disease, and other digestive disorders. I also notice a lot of benefits in terms of faster recovery time from physical exertion, athletic performance, and muscle gains. How do you explain those benefits?

Tom: That is an excellent question, and it all relates to how well the body is absorbing and utilizing protein. When I was a wrestler in college back in the early 70s—just to date myself—a training meal before a wrestling match was steak and eggs. You have to get that protein in there to rebuild the body tissue that you are going to tear down in an athletic competition.

With additional study, they realized that the steak and egg I was eating at nine in the morning for a one o'clock match was not digested and available to the body until the next day. Then training meals went towards carbohydrates, fast energy sources. The truth is that in athletic competition, we are tearing down muscle tissue.

Protein availability is critical. If you can have a protein source ready completely predigested in the proper form—meaning a combination of amino acids and small chain peptides—then you have the potential of actually having something available to rebuild that body tissue the moment it is being torn down. This would lead to much faster recovery times and greater endurance; things that we have seen certainly on an anecdotal level.

Mike: That is exactly what I have experienced on your Foundation Formula. I do very intense athletic activities such as Capoeira, that Afro-Brazilian dance art that is sort of half gymnastics, half dance. Let us talk about what is in the Foundation Formula.

What's in the Foundation Formula

Tom: What we set out to do was make the best one-step digestive product available on the market today. We knew from the research on peptides and critical care that it had to be small-chain peptide based. I have investigated just about every small-chain peptide product available on the marketplace, and we focused in on one made from fish. We are big fans of whole-food nutrition, and we did not want just a protein powder, we wanted a whole-food powder that had a high level of protein predigested into amino acids and small chain peptides. The nice thing about fish is that anything coming out of the ocean has a beautiful mineral component. They also have a beautiful fatty acid component, and we consider these things very complementary to the body's ability to digest and absorb protein efficiently. The main ingredient was this predigested fish powder that has a high concentration of small chain peptides.

We also learned through our study that probiotics, the beneficial bacteria that help us digest and absorb our food is a huge need for many people suffering digestive issues. Literally, trillions of bacteria live in our digestive tract generally for health.

The beneficial bacteria outnumber and keep in control the detrimental bacteria, but when disease and the use of antibiotics—and other things I am sure your readers are familiar with—cause an imbalance in that good and bad bacteria, we end up with dysbiosis, yeast infections and all kinds of issues. We searched for the most bioactive probiotics product we could find. Interestingly enough, we found it in a product that we import from Australia. The man there takes sea vegetables—which we were excited about as well—and organic grasses, and he ferments them with a blend of 14 naturally occurring probiotics. We have the peptides, the probiotics, and just a beautiful array of trace minerals and micro-nutrients in a combination whole food fish, whole food sea vegetable, and organic grass product.

Mike: Wow, that is remarkable. I am genuinely excited about what is in there. Just getting sea vegetables by themselves is usually considered very healthy. The mineral profile by combining that with the predigested protein—no wonder I am getting good results from this. Can you explain to people exactly what you mean by predigested?

Tom: Sometimes I get the question, “Well, should I just eat more fish to get the same results?” Well, certainly I believe that fish is a good quality food, but if you are not digesting and absorbing the protein in the milk, eggs, chicken, or any other source of protein—if you can’t do that—then you are not going to do any better by eating fish. An intact protein is made up of hundreds of amino acids linked together. When we eat any protein source, even vegetable sources of protein, the body triggers pancreatic enzymes and hydrochloric acid in the stomach and other things that work to digest that protein.

We found companies that have unique technologies based on enzymatic fermentation that, essentially, is the same process the pharmaceutical companies use to make the peptide base enteral feeding formulas. Just like enzymes do in your body, these laboratory-based enzymes break the protein down to a certain point where we end up with a combination of three amino acids and small chain peptides. People have to be careful in this area. You will find peptide-based products in various body building formulas in the health food store. Yet, if you look at the molecular weights of those peptides, they are still only partially digested proteins. This means when you get down to a small chain peptide of two or three amino acids, the molecular weight of those peptides is much, much smaller than the various designer proteins you might find in the health food store that are claiming to be peptides. That’s because “peptides” is a poorly defined term. They are not completely pre-digested like the proteins in our product.

Mike: We see that on body-building products—they'll say micro-filtered and cross-filtered.

Tom: Yes, and the molecular weights are often in, I think, it is a term called “Dacrons” or “Datrons” I forget now exactly. The weight measurement is certainly much larger than what we were looking for.

We did not see a therapeutic advantage to using partially digested proteins over completely digested proteins. I mean, one of the difficult aspects of this product is that you can go into a health food store, buy a whole tub of protein for 20 bucks, and scoop out 40 grams a day for two months. Your cost is then 30 cents a day.

Our retail price is \$40 for a bottle of 180 half-gram capsules of protein powder. Even though it is whole-food protein powder, the process of predigesting down to small chain peptides is an extensive process. That is why in the enteral feeding formulas in the hospital, the protein formulas are rarely used because they are about 10 times more expensive than the intact protein formulas.

Mike: I have an explanation that might help readers here: In chemistry, you have O₂, oxygen, which is essential for us, but if you add another atom, you have O₃, which is extremely dangerous to us. It can burn our lung tissues, right? So it is all oxygen, but it is different chain lengths. Then, you can have carbon monoxide CO, which is a poison to us. It is the same element, but it is how the element is arranged that determines whether it is beneficial or harmful.

Tom: That is an excellent correlation, so let me tie it back to the protein. With leaky gut syndrome and the delayed food allergy problems that we see in natural medicine—it is the kind of case where someone can eat an egg on Friday, then have a delayed response food allergy to the proteins in that egg, and they end up with a migraine, an attack of arthritis, gout or something three days later—there is no direct correlation. That is because with leaky gut and malabsorption issues, if a long chain peptide is absorbed in the body intact, but incompletely digested, the body sees it as a foreign substance and has an internal allergic reaction to it. So, longer chain peptides create allergic food allergy problems in the body.

Until the digestive system is working well enough to digest our protein down to the smallest component that it needs—that is, amino acids and small chain peptides—we are running the risk of longer chain peptides—incompletely digested protein—crossing a leaky gut; a gut barrier problem that creates the food allergy issues that so many alternative doctors deal with.

Mike: That is an excellent point, and I want to mention, too, that also it can result in a lot of joint pain in people.

Tom: The doctors who have inspired me in my work taught me that when somebody has a digestive dysfunction protein metabolism issue, and it is causing an underlying dysfunction in the body, what symptoms any one individual manifests is not a result of the disease that has attacked them, because diseases do not attack.

It is a breakdown of normal function; it is how the genetic predisposition of any one individual will adjust to that underlying problem. You and I could eat the exact same diet, live the exact same lifestyle, and develop the exact same underlying protein absorption issue, and your food allergy issue would be addressed by your body's balancing and counter-balancing mechanisms directed by your genetics to create the symptoms—we end up calling it chronic fatigue.

Well, maybe with the same initial insult, my genetic predisposition will create the symptoms that maybe we end up seeing as Parkinson's Disease. The root cause is the body not working right; the body not getting what it needs or not eliminating what it cannot use: gut, liver, gut, liver, gut, liver, and when in doubt, gut liver. They have the body's balancing and counter-balancing mechanisms which adjust to those underlying problems.

The health benefits of high quality protein nutrition

Mike: You have discussed some of the holistic ramifications of this protein, and the importance of digestion and assimilation. What kind of benefits people can expect to experience when they have a high quality, predigested protein source?

Tom: This is what you can hear from almost any alternative doctor: it is reasonable to expect that one aspect of stress and other daily issues is protein malabsorption. Now, the first question is, what issues manifest from protein malabsorption issues or protein metabolism issues?

Well, when you look at what proteins are responsible for in the body, you start seeing that almost anything can respond through improved digestion and improved protein nutrition: any kind of tissue repair or wound-healing issues; certainly any kind of digestive dysfunction where these small chain peptides are healing the gut wall. Certainly, any kind of inter-related protein issues like neuro-peptides, neurotransmitter issues. You can surmise that improving somebody's digestion—protein metabolism issues—has an implication with certainly anything digestive and anything neurological, and that is why our specific work is focused on migraines and tissue repair issues like arthritis or athletes repairing and recovering from strenuous workouts.

If you are going to look at the medical paradigm, disease is something that attacks us. When we are sick, and we go to the doctor and say, "Fix me," as if it is his fault and his responsibility to get certain

answers. If you choose to look at disease as the breakdown of normal function, you then have to ask this question: “What are the critical functions that are breaking down that I have to address first?” The obvious answer is digestion and protein metabolism issues. Based on genetics, they can manifest almost anywhere in the body.

Mike: Are you familiar with a book “The Second Brain” by Dr. Michael Gershon?

Tom: I am extremely familiar with that research. It is one of my favorite books on the planet, even though it is one of the most difficult books on the planet to read.

Mike: Maybe you recommended this book to me. I have not begun to read it yet. It is important for readers to know that there is emerging science in the field of neurogastroenterology. Even the name implies that the gut has its own complex nervous system, that it is a second brain and communicates with the primary brain. Like you said, the neurotransmitters that we are so concerned about in our brains and with antidepressant drugs and SSRIs and so on, those neurotransmitters are actually manufactured in the gut. I think these are “wow” concepts for a lot of people.

Holistic healing and the gut / brain connection

Tom: The beauty of the book “The Second Brain,” and the field of neurogastroenterology, is that it is the first concrete evidence we can hold onto to show a merging of two paradigms.

Now, the natural medicine paradigm, if you look at traditional Chinese medicine, classic naturopathic philosophy, the Shamanic traditions, or the native culture traditions, will look at disease as an imbalance in the body’s mechanisms and a breakdown of normal function. Most of those protocols, if you look at the philosophies underpinning these different paradigms, point to bringing balance back to the body, even though modern natural medicine is becoming too much “green allopathic,” or using natural products used to treat symptoms, rather than address disease in the body. So many of the protocols talk about gut and liver, and it all begins in that area. It is great that there really is, within the philosophies of those traditions, some real commonality, but it would be nice if there were some modern medical research that would help us gain some real credence to the possibility of what these ancient traditions are teaching.

That is where “The Second Brain” and neurogastroenterology just rings huge bells. We have always known that the gut is responsible for digesting and absorbing the food that we eat and getting the nutrients out of food that we need. For a long time, we have also accepted that the gut is a huge player in our immune function. Now this research is showing it is also huge in neurological function.

Probably the most compelling evidence from that book, in my mind, is two things: the first is that when they do autopsies on Parkinson's and Alzheimer's patients they find tissue damage, lesions in the brain tissue that are indicative of either Parkinson's or Alzheimer's. Obviously, we have always accepted those conditions as being neurological brain injury diseases. However, in those same patients, if they continue to dissect the gut tissue, and they get to the neurological tissue of the second brain and the enteric nervous system—the gut brain—they find lesions in the gut identical to what they see in the brain.

For the first time, we are able to show that a condition thought to be strictly neurological has pathology in the gut. Does it start in the brain and move to the gut? Start in the gut and move to the brain? Or, is in both places at the same time? What you can extrapolate from this work is that if you have a problem in your brain, you have a problem in your gut. Now, is this not directly reflective of all the ancient healing traditions?

Mike: Absolutely, and just the very idea that both health and disease are holistic in nature. You cannot isolate the body parts and treat them in isolation.

Tom: That is exactly right.

Mike: They are all connected. Again, it gets back to the food. Your food is your best medicine. If there is something wrong with your health, food is probably the first place to look.

Tom: The other thing with reading “The Second Brain” is how complex the balancing and counterbalancing mechanisms of the body truly are. It reinforced a belief that has evolved for me.

I share this with a lot of people, including doctors, and I have yet to have one of them argue with me: If all the information necessary to understand how the body works, what causes disease, and what it takes to recover from disease is a gallon of water, then what we truly understand with our brightest minds so far is about two tablespoons. Interestingly, what most doctors say to me when I say that to them is that the more they read, the more they realize how little we truly understand.

The sad truth is we have all been taught in this society that when we are sick to go to the doctor and say, “Fix me,” as if it is their fault and their responsibility. All I want people to do is recognize that they are turning themselves over to somebody that has much more limited information than they realize. It is not to condemn them. I think that most doctors are sincerely interested in trying to help us. It is just that they are working with too little information. The gut brain research and all that I have learned has really helped me to honor how wise the human organism truly is; that within any paradigm, you want to look at protocols that work with the body to help it work better. If you do that, you stand a much higher chance of getting to a path of wellness than with protocols that are interfering with the body's biochemistry or biophysics.

Mike: Indeed—complement the biochemistry, don't hijack it.

Tom: Absolutely. It is just a shame that so many of the protocols in pharmaceutical medicine—and even in natural medicine—are focused on interference rather than on complementing the body's biochemistry and its mechanisms.

Mike: Yes, absolutely.

Tom: They are so complex and so poorly understood. It is difficult to understand how best to interfere with them. Now the conclusion that we came to and the reason we designed the products we did, was because there is nothing in the body that can get better and no disease that can be healed, in our opinion, until gut and liver are working as well as possible.

Who benefits from Foundation Formula

Mike: Let me ask you this: Which groups, which demographics, are likely to experience the greatest benefits from this?

Tom: Well, certainly people with any type of gut dysfunction. I do not care if it is chronic constipation, chronic diarrhea, inflammatory bowel disease, or Crohn's colitis. Now it is rare that someone will say that their product will work for both chronic constipation and chronic diarrhea, and yet that is exactly what we see because this product brings the body in balance.

With any kind of digestive issue, protein metabolism improvement is the first step. The second area—the area that we focused in on initially—is migraine headaches, in particular, and neurological conditions in general. We have been getting very nice results in our focused work on migraines with chronic migraine sufferers using Foundation and Renew to get their gut and liver working right. It is so easy to point to the traditional healing philosophies and the gut brain research to show that neurological issues have a gut root. The body is an intelligent organism constantly trying to be healthy and balanced.

Mike: What about attention deficit disorder, and those types of neurological symptoms?

Tom: We have not done any specific work there, but I would love to. All you have to do is look at the dietary change from two generations ago and look at what our kids are eating now: sugar and way too much processed food compared to the home cooked meals every night that most of us in our 50s enjoyed from our parents.

Anecdotally, I have had some doctors use our products with ADHD and see very nice results. I have

had a naturopathic physician in Colorado tell me that, relative to her depression and bipolar patients, she has never seen better results since she started using our products.

Mike: That is very interesting. What about expectant mothers? They have such a high need during pregnancy.

Tom: It is so interesting, because almost any product on the planet will say, “If you are expecting, check with your doctor before using this,” no matter what it is. When I look at the specifics on premature births, I am just convinced that some day we are going to do a study that shows dramatic changes in at-risk populations if they are on Foundation Formula during their pregnancy. Absolutely.

Mike: That makes sense.

Tom: That is protein metabolism, and it is also essential fatty acid in tablet form.

Mike: And the trace minerals, which are so often lacking in both the mother and the fetus.

Tom: The issue that a lot of people raise when they think about fish protein is they say, “Oh my God! What about the mercury?” So let me speak to that just for a moment, because almost anything coming out of the ocean will have some level of trace mercury in it.

The raw materials we use consistently tested less than one-tenth of one part per million, and generally speaking, one part per million is considered safe. More importantly than that, the dosage that we are recommending people take is like having them eat less than one pound of fish per month. Essentially, they are eating a bite of fish a day. The stress on the detoxification system is miniscule compared to the value of ending the digestive dysfunction and protein metabolism issues that are at the root of most people’s problems.

Mike: It is like a bite of fish each day, but that bite is highly bio-available, because it is predigested. It is packed with trace minerals from the ocean.

Tom: One of the anecdotal examples of its bio-availability is we have had chemotherapy patients and AIDS patients—people who are really shutdown digestively—and we get them on this product, and their guts heal. They really notice a difference. When somebody is throwing up everything they eat, and you give them a supplement that they not only tolerate, but that causes them to feel their energy coming back or their appetite starting to return, that is when you know that product is absolutely supporting the body’s essential mechanisms.

Anti-aging and Foundation Formula

Mike: What about senior citizens? I see so many elderly who are literally starving no matter how much they eat because they cannot digest and assimilate nutrients.

Tom: That is exactly right, Mike and certainly the aging process has an impact on all of our function. At 54 or 53 I do not run as fast as I did when I was 20. One of the areas that breaks down in older people is hydrochloric acid production in the gut and digestive enzyme production. Consequentially, digestive function starts to reduce. If it is at 100 percent capacity when you are in your early 30s, it is probably at 70 percent when you are in your 60s and it goes down from there.

When this company grows and we can do the kind of follow-up research we want to do, one of the studies we are going to do is show that probably the most important single daily supplement a senior citizen can have is a product like Foundation and Renew. It supports the liver, kidney function, and protein metabolism issues.

If you talk to older folks, you know what their complaints are. “Oh I cannot eat, I do not eat as much. I do not have an appetite.” Well, the body is telling them, “Do not send it down here—I cannot digest it.” Their energy levels deteriorate. It is all protein metabolism issues.

Mike: Yes, and it is so sad. I see it so much in retirement centers and senior centers.

Tom: I had a doctor in Florida who has used our products with a lot of senior citizens, and one of the comments he made to me was, “Ever since I added your products to my standard protocol, I have been able to cut in half all the other supplementation I have my patients on.”

Mike: That does not surprise me at all.

Tom: They are absorbing so much better.

Mike: Well, I have personally seen really amazing results with a liquid vitamin product called “Ola Loa Vitamins.” It is liquid. It has highly bio-available ingredients. I have seen senior citizens really do well on that. I have not yet been able to witness personally any senior citizens on your Foundation Formula, but I am sure interested to do so.

Tom: Well, I would love to work with you to do that.

Health effects on children

Mike: Now, what about children? Children have very high protein requirements during their growth phase. They typically do not eat that well in Western Culture today.

Tom: As I suggested, our specific area of work so far has been with migraines, and we see very nice results with these products in kids who are suffering the onset of migraine headache issues. In our world, that is all related to their digestion absorption issues. As is ADHD, and so everything is interconnected.

This was the huge light bulb moment for me when I first got involved in this industry as a lay person like you. One of the first things that hit me as I was going to various alternative doctor conventions all over the country is that the naturopaths would say this, and the chiropractors would say that, and there was no guiding philosophy. There was no way to understand what works and what does not and why. That, I think, is the big challenge for most lay people. We all have a sense that there is something good about natural medicine, but we are not sure what. When we turn to the book store, the Internet, and the health food store to learn, more often what we get is overwhelming and confusing. With the exception of folks with good websites like your own that really give people the direction they need.

What I learned from the doctors who have inspired me is this whole concept that the things that work are going to be the things that help the body work better. My initial reaction to that approach was, “Well, that kind of makes sense.” It speaks to my intuitive knowledge of how the body works. It almost even seems a little too simplistic. I will tell you this: I have come to honor the wisdom of simplicity. I am just a huge believer that what we have to do is address the foundational needs of the body, whether it is in a child, in a stressed-out single mom, a high-powered executive, or a senior citizen. The underlying dysfunction that leads to the breakdown of the balancing and counterbalancing mechanisms of the body and lead to symptoms of any particular disease can only be countered by getting the body to work better.

Mike: That also alludes to the very important point that the body already knows how to heal itself. It just needs the environment, the raw materials, the energy; it needs to be able to get rid of waste. It just needs these basic things.

People ask me, “Why do you drink pomegranate juice? There is no scientific evidence that it does anything.” And I say, “I do not need something written on paper, because the pomegranate juice is naturally utilized by my body in a healing way, regardless of whether or not I intellectually know the formula.” You do not have to know it intellectually to benefit from it. Your body heals itself on its own.

Tom: That is exactly right. A lot of people say the body can heal itself. I like to take it a step farther and say not only is the body capable of healing itself but in every minute of every day, it is constantly trying to achieve health and vitality. That is an important thing to remember, because what that speaks to is that a little bit of the right thing can help it move in the right direction and stimulate remarkable results.

Mike: Again, the product name is “Foundation Formula.” The website is www.ForeverWell.com. I want to warn readers too that this product does have a fishy type of smell, although it does not have a fishy taste after I eat it.

Tom: That is certainly an issue that we warn people about in the instruction sheet that comes with the product. We instruct them that if the fishy odor is problematic keep it in the refrigerator. Cold does slow down those volatile little molecules. In addition, the concentration in the bottle is much stronger than a couple of capsules you take out for a daily dose.

Mike: I have not found any problem with that. To me, it is just an indication that this is the real deal. This is what you say it is. There is actually high density pre-digested fish protein in those capsules. No doubt about that.

Tom: People are not going to wonder if it is fish.

Complementary liver support with Renew

Mike: What else would you like to include here?

Tom: I would like to talk a little bit about Renew, why it is complementary, and why we believe it is two sides of the same coin because when you look at digestive issues if you are not also addressing liver issues, then you are running a risk. Some of your readers have heard me say so far that we are a company trying to address the foundational needs of the body. While our initial focus has been on applying that philosophy to the treatment of migraine headache sufferers, it really has implications and applications within a wide variety of chronic diseases. I believe the best example of the underlying philosophy is a classic naturopathic philosophy, which says disease is caused by the breakdown of normal function in one of three areas, and one of those is the body not getting what it needs, which is digestive function and dietary choices, which is the focus of our Foundation Formula.

The second cause is the body not eliminating what it cannot use, which is largely a problem with the liver, kidney or low vitality, and the vitality is something that no one can address with a pill. Vitality is the choices that we make in our life to be vibrant, alive, and energetic, or not, and that is the whole spiritual bio-energetic side.

We have covered Foundation pretty extensively. I would like to mention Renew Formula, which is our liver support product. We are concerned about the amount of literature out there about liver detox and liver cleansing. While I see the value of that, I worry that people are being guided down a path that says, “Oh, take this group of herbs for two weeks, poop your brains out for a couple of days—pardon the expression—and your liver is healthy again.” I worry that is stressful to the organ. Let us remember that the liver, by design, is detoxing on a daily basis. A lot of people who are chronically ill have their livers overloaded, and they need nutritional support.

Our Renew Formula is designed to give the active functions of the liver the support they need in a food-like presentation. Now what I mean by that is we could not find a pre-digested whole-food product that addressed liver kidney issues the way Foundation addresses digestive issues. That would have been our preference. What we did is we looked in the medical literature and asked, “What is it that the liver needs for detoxification pathways? What is it that it needs for the formation of glutathione? What is it that it needs for the other activities and responsibilities it has in the body?” We looked at the literature, and we saw this micro-nutrient and this vitamin and this herb and this mineral all play a role.

We created a product that has 21 different ingredients in it: vitamins, minerals, herbs, and micro-nutrients, none of which are included in what is generally considered to be a therapeutic dose, because we believe that the liver—just like the digestive system—needs to be able to pick and choose the pieces that it needs, and little amounts of the right things are all that is necessary.

The nice thing about Renew is that it is not something that you can only use for a certain amount of time. It is a gentle support product that effectively helps the liver and kidney work well. In our world, being guided by the philosophies of addressing the gut, liver or kidneys individually is only half the story. They are two sides of the same coin. In our work with migraine headache sufferers, we sold the two products as a migraine combo, because we do not want to have to guess which patient might need more liver support and less digestive support, or more digestive support and less liver support. We wanted to make sure we are addressing both issues.

Mike: It is interesting to me that the philosophies you described sound very similar to traditional Chinese medicine. Do you have training in Chinese medicine?

Tom: I do not, but I have read about the ancient healing traditions, Chinese medicine, ayurvedic medicine from India, and the Shamanic traditions. They talk about imbalance or disease in the body, and if the protocol is not a spiritual or some sort of bio-energetic protocol, if it is a biochemical protocol, it is gut liver. They all start there. Traditional Chinese medicine, ayurvedic medicine, Shamanic traditions, classic naturopathic philosophy; they are all the same.

That is why I love the work on the “second brain,” because now we are getting the kind of medical research that says, “Everything does start in the gut and its cousin, the liver.” What is interesting about the second-brain work is it shows that the second brain, the gut, operates the digestive processes independent of direction from the head brain. It’s able to tell the liver when to release bile. It’s able to tell the pancreas when to shoot digestive enzymes into the intestines. It’s able to direct the support of the organs of the digestive process independent of any direction from the head brain.

Mike: I think it also must explain why people so rapidly tend to deteriorate in their health once they take pharmaceuticals, because almost every pharmaceutical is toxic or stressful to the liver and the gut.

Tom: Yes, absolutely.

Mike: Even over-the-counter pain killers can cause permanent liver damage, and they do.

Tom: Yes, absolutely.

Mike: Or gastrointestinal bleeding, right?

Tom: The two most common side effects of pharmaceutical medications are gut and liver dysfunction.

Mike: Then, of course, the typical Western doctor would look at whatever new symptom appears and prescribe a second drug for that, and that cascade continues.

Tom: All of which continues to interfere with the foundational needs of the body. Basically, you are looking at two different paradigms. You can accept the paradigm that says the best way to treat the body is to interfere with the mechanisms of the body, or you can say the best way to treat the body is to support the natural mechanisms of the body.

For more information about ForeverWell, visit www.ForeverWell.com

The interviewer, Mike Adams, is the executive director of the non-profit Consumer Wellness Center (www.ConsumerWellness.org) and a writer for NewsTarget (www.NewsTarget.com). Adams is dedicated to improving human health through nutrition education.