



How Sleep Affects Your Hormones [Podcast 67]

Dr. Park's Breathe Better, Sleep Better, Live Better Podcast

- Kathy Park: [00:16](#) Welcome to Dr. Parks breathe better, sleep better, and live better podcast, where our goal is to help you get the sleep you need for the life you want. My name is Kathy Park, your co-host for today and I'm here in the studio with my husband, Dr. Steven Park. Hey Steve, how are you doing today?
- Dr. Park: [00:33](#) I'm doing well. Thanks. How about you?
- Kathy Park: [00:35](#) Doing pretty well here. In our last podcast, Steve talked about why not sleeping well can affect our ability to lose weight and keep it off. And if you haven't listened to that yet, I highly recommend that you do, especially if you're trying to lose weight this summer because it contains information that's going to help you turbo-charge your diet regimen. But on today's podcast as a follow-up to that, Steve is going to talk about another issue that affects how well we can stay thin, happy and healthy. Specifically on how sleep deprivation and OSA affect our hormones. Now, I know that when you hear hormones, most people almost instantly think that it's all about

menopausal women. But let me assure you that hormonal imbalance is affecting all of us. Whether or not you're a man, a woman, or even if you're a small child, yes, even children are being affected. So if you're feeling a little fat, fuzzy or frazzled, this is the podcast you do not want to miss. But before we begin, I wanted to remind our listeners that the information you hear today is for general education and information purposes only and should not be relied upon as personal medical advice. Please consult your doctor before following any advice or regimen given on the show as your particular case may be different than the ones given. Okay, Steve. So why don't we start off by having you explain why hormonal issues are not just a female issue, but something that's affecting everyone, both men and women, and even our children in this contemporary society that we live in.

Dr. Park:

[02:25](#)

Sure. So let's start off by defining what a hormone is. A hormone is a chemical that's produced in your body by various different organs that sends signals through your bloodstream to affect a distant organ, or part of the body. So for example, the brain sends hormones to your ovaries, your testes, your pancreas. So it has to go through the bloodstream as opposed to the nervous system information, but the nerve sensing goes to the organs to make certain chemicals too, so that's different than a nervous system connection versus hormones. All right, obviously all of us have hormones to live properly and you need the right balance of hormones. And we have literally dozens if not hundreds of different hormones. And the most popular ones are insulin, growth hormone, testosterone, estrogen, thyroid

hormone, the ones that you hear about in the media. But there are lots of other hormones that you don't really hear about that often, like atrial natriuretic peptide, prolactin, those kinds of things too. But your body is in this really intricate state of, it's kind of like a, like a symphony, right? Right. It's so delicate and fine tuned. Any little like instrument that's off tune and your body's going to feel it.

Kathy Park: [03:48](#) And you've identified nine specific hormones that are affected by lack of sleep because that's what you specifically see day in and day out in your practice. And how the sleep breathing problems like OSA and UARS are affecting our hormone balance. Right.

Dr. Park: [04:06](#) Right. Actually I got enlightened on this topic, when I first read Dr. Robert's Sapolsky's book, Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers. And it talked about how any kind of stress, physiologic, psychological or emotional stress causes major hormonal imbalances. So it lowers your thyroid hormones, your stress hormones go up, reproductive hormones go down, and has this cascading effect on your health and wellness.

Kathy Park: [04:32](#) OK.

Dr. Park: [04:33](#) So if you extrapolate that concept to what happens in sleep apnea and sleep breathing disorders, by definition, you're going to have a hormone disturbance. Now on a practical..

Kathy Park: [04:45](#) If we're not sleeping well because we're not breathing well at night. Okay.

- Dr. Park: [04:48](#) And on a practical level, we had an interview with Dr. Richard Shames, a few years ago about, defective hormones and sleep. And we'll put a link on the show notes for that interview as well. And his book is called Feeling Fat, Fuzzy or Frazzled, which is very, appropriate to our topic today.
- Kathy Park: [05:08](#) Yup. And in the past you've also identified nine specific hormones that are being affected by lack of sleep and sleep breathing problems like OSA and UARS. Can you go through nine of those and what specifically, what function they have on the hormones.
- Dr. Park: [05:27](#) If you have sleep apnea or upper airway resistance syndrome, by definition, your body is going to be under stress and that's going to cause this cascade of hormonal changes and essentially almost every hormone your body's going to be affected directly or indirectly. But the most common ones, I'm going to list these out really quickly here, there's a strong link between sleep deprivation and thyroid function. So poor sleep or lack of sleep lowers your thyroid hormones and it acts centrally in your brain so that there's something called a thyroid stimulating hormone, TSH, and also the hormones before that inside of the brain that make TSH gets altered. So that's why when you have, um, hypothyroidism, lack of thyroid hormones, then in general, you're going to gain weight.
- Kathy Park: [06:19](#) Right. Which I personally have experienced.
- Dr. Park: [06:24](#) And also I mentioned before that any degree of stress will lower your reproductive organs. So again, when you're in a fight or if you're running

from a tiger, the last thing you want to do is to have sex and reproduce. So by definition, your sex hormones will go down, estrogen, testosterone, not just the hormones made by the ovaries and testes, but hormones to send from your brain to make the hormones, um, to produce hormones in your, in your reproductive organs.

Kathy Park: [06:51](#) Okay. So poor sleep affects thyroid hormones and also estrogen and testosterone. Okay. Anything else?

Dr. Park: [07:00](#) And when you're stressed, by definition, your adrenaline goes up, right? So cortisol, which is a hormone that's your major, stress hormone goes up and that is also going to affect other hormones. Um, so all the hormones basically affect, um, other hormones as well.

Kathy Park: [07:21](#) Okay. Cause they work in tandem, right?

Dr. Park: [07:23](#) Yeah. And also cortisol is...one of the things about cortisol is that it's controlled by your circadian rhythm. So it's really not that much affected by your sleep patterns, but it's more effective by your circadian rhythm. So it's going to be highest when you first wake up and it goes lower throughout the day, but not sleeping well, by increasing your stress hormones, stress levels, will tend to increased cortisol in general.

Kathy Park: [07:49](#) I see. Okay. What about, that's one, two, three. What about the fourth?

Dr. Park: [07:56](#) Melatonin is a very well known hormone and it's made in the pineal gland in the, in the back of your brain and it's actually affected by light. Light in humans suppresses melatonin. A little factoid in

rats and mice—it's a reverse. It stimulates melatonin. That's why they're nocturnal and we function during the daytime.

Kathy Park: [08:19](#)

Oh, interesting. Do all nocturnal animals functional like that?

Dr. Park: [08:23](#)

I'm not sure about that. Probably is because this research is based on mice.

Kathy Park: [08:28](#)

So while we sleep the mice are at play. Okay.

Dr. Park: [08:31](#)

So, light as a major, suppressant for melatonin. That's why when you use light at night, it's suppresses melatonin. So it's hard to fall asleep. And also going back to the whole stress response, I've mentioned this many times in the past, that the pathway that produces melatonin goes from your eye to the retina, to the hypothalamus, down to the spinal cord, an area called the superior cervical ganglion, and it goes back up to the brain to the pineal gland. And so, the superior cervical ganglion is part of your sympathetic nervous system. So if you have any kind of medication that suppresses your sympathetic nervous system, like the blood pressure medications, it's going to lower your melatonin levels.

Kathy Park: [09:21](#)

Melatonin is what helps us sleep better, right?

Dr. Park: [09:24](#)

It's one of the many sleep hormones, but it's a major, major one. Helps us to fall asleep. And it starts to go up long before you fall asleep, it rises about two hours before you fall asleep. So that's why I taking melatonin just before you fall asleep is not going to be that helpful.

Kathy Park: [09:39](#) I see, okay, so sleep affects those four. What about the fifth?

Dr. Park: [09:47](#) Now we've talked about this in the past and this is related to upper airway resistance syndrome or UARS. Now there's been a couple of papers written about this by Dr. Deb Wardley, We'll have a couple of links on the show notes about that. Basically she pulled together all these studies and research showing that when you have upper airway resistance syndrome of UARS, this is a condition where you stop breathing a lot, but you don't have apnea on the sleep study,

Kathy Park: [10:11](#) You don't stop breathing long enough, right?

Dr. Park: [10:14](#) Lots of partial obstructions or full obstructions with arousals, they are not 10 seconds or longer to be classified as an apnea or hypopnea.

Kathy Park: [10:22](#) Yeah, but it's pretty significant to your sleep.

Dr. Park: [10:24](#) So you don't have lack of oxygen, but you have interrupted breathing and sleep. But in the process, and this happens with sleep apnea patients too, because when you stop breathing, you stretch your heart. The heart thinks that there's too much blood coming in to the heart. So it makes a hormone called atrial natriuretic peptide that goes your kidneys to make you urinate more

Kathy Park: [10:44](#) ANP.

Dr. Park: [10:45](#) ANP, right. And so that's why a lot of people who have sleep breathing problems wake up to go to the bathroom at night. So in general, before you think about enlarged prostates for men or bladder

problems for women, think about a sleep breathing problem. They've shown that nocturia or nighttime urination can be as good of a predictor for sleep apnea as snoring.

Kathy Park: [11:05](#) Really? Okay. So if you're not sleeping well, think about ANP. If you have, if you're urinating more often than not at night,

Dr. Park: [11:15](#) Right, and even during the daytime, they found that increased frequency of urination is also associated as well because everything gets a little bit more irritable, and more sensitive.

Kathy Park: [11:27](#) All right, so what's the next hormone?

Dr. Park: [11:29](#) And this is a huge issue with the obesity epidemic. Insulin. So insulin is a hormone that signals your cells to absorb glucose and stores them as fat. So this depends on if you have sleep deprivation that's going to increase your drive for sugary fatty foods. So insulin levels go up because had this gush of sugar or glucose in your bloodstream.

Kathy Park: [11:57](#) And this could jeopardize your chances of losing weight no matter how much you exercise and diet, right?

Dr. Park: [12:02](#) This goes hand in hand with the next combination of hormones like Ghrelin and Leptin. Leptin is your appetite suppressant or satiety hormone, meaning that you feel like you've had enough food, or glucose, and that's made in your fat cells, whereas Ghrelin is made in your stomach, that's basically the hormone for hunger. And if you sleep deprive yourself, then your leptin goes down and Ghrelin goes up.

- Kathy Park: [12:28](#) So I could just imagine this, all these hormones are affecting all of us, not just women, right? And it doesn't just happen during menopausal years, obviously. So this is being affected if we're not all of us, if we're not getting enough sleep and if we're not getting quality sleep, as you mentioned about UARS and OSA conditions, okay. So what is the next hormone that's affected?
- Dr. Park: [12:53](#) This actually...the name of this hormone is not named a hormone. It's, it's a vitamin. And we talked about this multiple times in the past. Vitamin D, which is actually a hormone. Okay. Um, and this made by, uh, by your kidneys, um, and your skin. Um, you have precursors of vitamin D that's converted by light, um, and the kidneys and liver to some degree. Okay. Um, and so this is a hormone that affects every part of your body, including your brain, your bones, your gut, your skin, everything. And so, unfortunately, I see this all the time in my practice. Most of the patients I see are severely deficient in vitamin D.
- Kathy Park: [13:34](#) So we're not talking about vitamin D like calcium that we get from milk. We're talking about light induced DHA.
- Dr. Park: [13:41](#) Well, it's, it's the, um, it's the precursor to Vitamin D. That you have to ingest to get converted into the active form of vitamin D that converts into a hormone.
- Kathy Park: [13:50](#) I see. Okay.
- Dr. Park: [13:52](#) And that's, and the reason for this is that we have very limited sunlight exposure, because most of us work indoors. And we cover ourselves because we

think we're going to get skin cancer. But you could probably argue that not getting enough sunlight overall may give you a higher risk of getting cancer overall as opposed to your lower risk of skin cancer.

- Kathy Park: [14:13](#) Right. Because you're immuno-compromising yourself.
- Dr. Park: [14:16](#) There's some cancer suppressing properties to vitamin D.
- Kathy Park: [14:21](#) And I think that you did a podcast with Dr. Gominik.
- Dr. Park: [14:26](#) That was actually one of the most popular podcasts that we've done in the past couple of years,
- Kathy Park: [14:29](#) ...on vitamin D and all the effects that it's having on our bodies
- Dr. Park: [14:33](#) ...and interaction with all the B vitamins in the gut and the gut biome. It's a really, really fascinating discussion that we had.
- Kathy Park: [14:41](#) Yeah. Um, what is the last hormone that gets affected that you're going to talk about today?
- Dr. Park: [14:47](#) This is a hormone specific...this is a little bit different in men versus women... growth hormone.
- Kathy Park: [14:53](#) Yeah.
- Dr. Park: [14:53](#) And not just to make you grow, but has beneficial effects in every part of your body.

Kathy Park: [14:57](#) Hair.

Dr. Park: [15:01](#) And so with men, typically it's secreted most when you're in deep sleep, slow wave sleep, which is typically highest level in the earlier part of the night. And that gets shorter and shorter with each sleep cycle as REM sleep gets longer and longer. But in women it actually, it comes in spurts throughout the day. It's a little bit more spread out. Whereas with men, it's more concentrated in slow wave sleep. But you need it for everything to work properly.

Kathy Park: [15:28](#) Would you say that this also affects our repair system at night?

Dr. Park: [15:34](#) Yeah, it's part of the immune system repair, restorative sleep. Um, all these hormones, they're not just.... unfortunately we have these... we link a hormone with just one function, like growth hormone make you grow...too much insulin makes you fat. But each of these hormones have multiple functions that's not even talked about.

Kathy Park: [15:55](#) Right. We focus on the most significant factor and then we kind of ignore the rest. But you're saying that all of these nine hormones that you just listed, they all interact with one another. Poor sleep just wreaks havoc, on how they work.

Dr. Park: [16:10](#) Is like that deli phenomenon. Remember that deli phenomenon where you order a sandwich with five different ingredients, and they only get the first one, right.

Kathy Park: [16:22](#) Yeah, I had that happen many, many times. So we have to think about all of these different

hormones that are affecting us and not just one pick one and work on that, in other words.

Dr. Park: [16:32](#)

And also, unfortunately we get labeled as deficient in one of these conditions. So hyperthyroidism. So a lot of people will say I'm hyperthyroid. Um, so it was like saying I have chronic fatigue syndrome or Lyme disease. Well I'm anemic, but that doesn't define you as a person. It's just one out of a thousand different things that's out of balance.

Kathy Park: [16:54](#)

And I think that's a really important point for our listeners to think about because I remember I went down a rabbit hole when my doctor diagnosed me with hyperthyroidism when I was in when I was 18, and then that eventually became hypothyroidism. So everything in my life and my health just revolved around these conditions and I did everything to regulate that. So of course I was taking medications, but little did I realize that it was affecting my, um, my reproductive hormones. And so I had to be on birth control pills, which we talked about in the previous podcasts about the medications that are harming us. And that in turn affected the way I gained weight and my insulin levels, my cortisol levels, everything just went haywire. And so it's not just about controlling your thyroid hormones, it's about really a lifestyle issue. Thinking about your body as a whole and just treating it as if you have to get it in balance and how it functions naturally. Right, right. And sleep severely affects all of these hormones that are working in our bodies. Okay. So what can those of us do who are not really getting good sleep? What are some things that you recommend?

Dr. Park: [18:19](#) Now, unfortunately I'm not going to give you the one solution or cure or a supplement that's going to take care of all your health problems.

Kathy Park: [18:25](#) Oh, you're not? You just lost all of our listeners. They're just leaving. They're going out the door cause they don't want to listen anymore. Forget you. Okay. So what are they?

Dr. Park: [18:36](#) There's a long list of things and just bear with me here.

Kathy Park: [18:38](#) Okay.

Dr. Park: [18:39](#) We've covered many of these topics in the past couple of podcasts. Number one, and this, this is the beginning or the start of your whole lifestyle change, which is the natural supplements and foods to support your hormones.

Kathy Park: [18:53](#) Yes.

Dr. Park: [18:54](#) There's so much resources out there on these ways of supporting your, your hormones in a healthy way that's natural,

Kathy Park: [19:01](#) Right.

Dr. Park: [19:02](#) And try to avoid prescription medications in general because these prescription medications are not natural to your body, just like toxins, right?

Kathy Park: [19:11](#) Right.

Kathy Park: [19:12](#) And there's certain, for example, there's certain thyroid medications that are more like human hormones, but um, sometimes they have other

added materials also. So, how you eat is probably the most important thing to start with.

Kathy Park: [19:27](#)

Okay.

Dr. Park: [19:28](#)

This is besides breathing properly, we covered that in our last podcast...

Kathy Park: [19:32](#)

Right.

Dr. Park: [19:32](#)

And addressing any sleep apnea, UARS issues. But what we're talking about here is compliment the formal medical treatment options, uh, by optimizing your health, by eating healthy, okay. And as a result of these issues we talked about with that Dominic Gut biome, the bacteria and its ability to synthesize proteins and vitamin absorption and calcium absorption is really, really diminished as a result of this. So you're going to have nutritional imbalances, vitamin deficiencies, Viki guide for example, cause you have more inflammation. And so that's why you really have to, um, we evaluate what you're eating, what kind of stuff are you putting into your body? And that'll help with sleep too. Yeah. Oh yeah. Right. And you don't sleep well if you eat gluten. Right?

Speaker 3: [20:19](#)

No, absolutely. And even though it makes me exhausted, I just can't see and stay asleep. Right? Yup. Anything else that people can do?

Dr. Park: [20:27](#)

This is a recommendation that's pretty commonly made, in holistic fields, especially for peri pre or perimenopausal women, is to use bioidentical hormones. And particularly bioidentical progesterone is commonly recommended. And some women do it before their periods, for PMS symptoms, uh, but for postmenopause women,

they can do it throughout. And progesterone is an interesting hormone. It's a respiratory stimulant. It actually drives breathing and respiration. So before your periods progesterone drops, so your tongue muscles get weaker, more relaxed, but then it goes back up again after your periods. So this is a normal cycle that all women go through. But during menopause, during your late thirties, early forties, that's when it starts to drop slowly. Whereas estrogen doesn't drop until much later.

Kathy Park: [21:17](#)

OK.

Dr. Park: [21:24](#)

So that's one of the reasons why women in general their sleep quality goes down slowly in the perimenopausal years. And also if you don't sleep well, you gain a little weight and that adds to the whole sleep breathing problem too.

Kathy Park: [21:29](#)

So adding a little bit of bio identical hormones per a physician-guided approach would be one way to kind of,

Dr. Park: [21:37](#)

along with proper nutrition

Kathy Park: [21:40](#)

Right, would help balance our hormonal imbalances. Okay. Anything else that would help?

Dr. Park: [21:48](#)

A lot of women are given hormone replacement therapy. I know there's a lot of controversy about that. Um, I think the jury's still out as to what the most ideal hormone is. But we had covered this in our last podcast a couple of podcasts ago. You know, ideally, you don't want to take these medications because it's not natural to your body. Um, but this is still, you know, standard of care in this country and millions of women are taking it. But unfortunately it's really hard to, remove these

medications because so many women have, you know, all of these problems now, partially because of our diets, partially because of our breathing issues, because of our lifestyles and it's really, really hard to pull away from these medications, including the high blood pressure medications, cholesterol medications, all diabetes, um, psychiatric medications. So I kinda think of these hormones, synthetic hormones as just another variation of these blood pressure, cholesterol medications.

Kathy Park: [22:49](#)

So it's a last resort to balancing out your hormones. I mean, if this is what's necessary to at least get a jumpstart on your way to have better health and better sleep, then you're saying that that's one of the pros. It can help you do that, but try not to go that route if possible. Food as medicine, right? And using maybe bio identical hormones as another approach. But there are, like you said, there are information out there. You just have to go ahead and do the research and read up on it and find out personally what would work best for you and take that approach. Okay. Anything else that would help us balance out our hormones?

Dr. Park: [23:35](#)

So we talked about this in the podcast we did on toxins. Remember that toxins, many of the toxic substances that were exposed to mimic estrogen. And I think there's a huge problem with the BPAs, phtalates. It's effect, it's in our food supply. It's in our water supply, plastics, our cash register receipts. And so if you have too much estrogen, this is not regular estrogen, this is synthetic estrogen. So it stimulates your estrogen receptors.

And that's why again, girls are developing breasts much earlier now than 20 years ago.

Kathy Park: [24:10](#) So yeah, as we mentioned, this is not just an issue that's isolated to menopausal women, right? But this is affecting all of us, even our children. Right?

Dr. Park: [24:19](#) And so just take the steps that we outlined in our past podcasts to minimize exposure. You can't get rid of it completely, but try to minimize exposure to these, um, toxic substances in your environment. And your food.

Kathy Park: [24:32](#) Okay. And just a little bit of a side note to this is that our pediatricians are just amazed at how well our children are growing. And I have to say, I do seriously believe it's because they sleep well. I mean, compared to some of their peers who only sleep maybe at most four hours a night. I mean, two hours is a given, um, for high school kids. And that's what our son tells us all the time, that his friends are staying up until 2:00 AM and they'll wake up at six in order to get ready for school. And the same thing is happening with our 10 year old's classmates. Right, right. They're not going to bed until one or two and that's the norm. There's something wrong with that. And I, I see it, see evidence of that. If our kids, and we're talking about Asians here, if our kids tend to be taller and healthier than most of the kids in their classes who come from far better genetic profiles for growth. Right? Um, I think there's something going on, you know, and I think that sleep has a lot to do with it because we've enforced good sleep habits and our family, right?

- Dr. Park: [25:45](#) So it's not just the toxins and exposure to but your habits and to prioritize sleep. Actually let me put a plug in for Dr. Trasande's interview endocrine disruptors and children.
- Kathy Park: [25:56](#) Yes, that was an incredible interview. Um, his book is called Sicker, fatter, Poorer, and we'll have a link in the show notes to that. Um, it's a really, really incredible read because it will be eyeopening for a lot of parents, especially if you have young children. It's a must read. You must read his research. I mean, I was just bowled over. I thought I knew a little bit about this topic of endocrine disruptors, but he just goes into full detail. He's done considerable research in this area too. Right? Okay. So what's the next hormone that gets affected? Um, when we don't sleep?
- Dr. Park: [26:35](#) Well, we mentioned this before, how melatonin is affected by how much light you're exposed to. So it's funny, we have too much lighter and too little light, right? So we spend not enough time outdoors during sunlight hours, but we spend indoors when it should be dark. We have too much light shining into our eyes. So it's like this warped catch 22, I don't know how would you call it, but it's affecting our sleep because of these...everything is flip flopped.
- Kathy Park: [27:03](#) It is. So do you have any other resources to suggest our listeners on how they can combat these hormonal imbalances and now that they know that sleep does affect our hormones, anything else that they can look into?

- Dr. Park: [27:18](#) Well, first of all, let me just plug my book because you have to be breathing well to sleep well, right? So my book Sleep Interrupted, it's on Amazon.
- Kathy Park: [27:27](#) If you haven't read that yet, and it's available on audible to those of you who would prefer to listen to it. It's available in most of the... I think last time you checked it was available on Hoopla, which is a digital service from the libraries, and it's available on Audible, Amazon and Kindle. Okay.
- Dr. Park: [27:49](#) So there are a couple of books I'm going to recommend. We've had some of these authors on our show. Dr. Mao's book, Second Spring. I'll put it again, link to the show notes.
- Kathy Park: [28:01](#) Which is really geared to help menopausal women, right? To experience better health in their menopausal years. Right? Okay.
- Dr. Park: [28:08](#) And then Dr. Christiane Northrup has a number of books for women, going through their perimenopausal years also. She is also the one that endorsed my book on my cover.
- Kathy Park: [28:20](#) Right. And I also wanted to add one more book to this especially, right. Okay? For the women who are listening to the show, even if you're not menopausal, like you're premenopausal age between the ages of 20 to maybe 45, 50,. I read this book a while back, it's called The Woman Code by Alyssa Vitti. I don't know if I'm pronouncing her last name correctly, but it's a great book that gives you a primer on a woman's body and how her natural cycles interact with her hormones, with her sleep and with her fertility issues, whatever issues that you have, health

issues. She, she corrected PCOS with food and lifestyle changes and that's all she did without medications. And her doctors were just floored because she had been suffering with this for years. And just by changing the way that she lived and what she ate, she was able to overcome this and have a child naturally. And it was incredible. Not only that I think a lot of us women, especially in contemporary society, we tend to defer to physicians to give us information and wisdom about how our bodies are changing and our hormones are, in kind of in a flux every month, right. But I think she goes into so much more detail and gives us a better understanding of our bodies and how it works as opposed to most of the advice that I got from my physicians is I was growing up. I mean it was just basically, oh, you have a menstrual cycle and here, here's a pill if you need it. And that was pretty much it. It was pretty cut and dry. Right? And I don't think...it used to be in the older generations, I think women passed on this wisdom from age to age, right? From child to child and so forth. But these days it's sort of like, okay, go to a doctor and find out that information, but nobody is really talking about it the way that she does. So I think that's a great book. If you want a good primer to start with before you go into Northrup's book, before you pick up *Second Spring*, everything else will make much more better sense to you, I think. And even *Sleep Interrupted*, your book. Especially if you're a woman. Okay. So any other resources that you think our listeners can go to if they're having, if they're experiencing hormonal imbalance?

Dr. Park:

[30:52](#)

I think what you just talked about is an excellent thing to bring up that, that even men go through

cycles. Right? Right. We have different stages in our lives and you kind of have to go with the flow. Excuse the pun. Just have to just follow the rhythms of your life as you're changing.

Kathy Park: [31:11](#) Yeah. Not fight it.

Dr. Park: [31:11](#) Right, right. And assuming that as a modern culture we tried to fight against. But along with that comes really, really making an effort to eat healthy. I mean, I can't emphasize that, that's the one thing that's really, really changed our health, for the better. Yeah. That was number two after sleep. And um, so eating healthy, which also means

Kathy Park: [31:35](#) you can't eat like a 16 year old in other words. Yeah. And I think that you suffer for it if you do. And I think a lot of men tend to eat like they're 17, 18 years old still, right? Party all night, drink? Yeah. But I think, well I think I'm generalizing here, but yes, in general. Yeah.

Dr. Park: [31:57](#) And along with that comes, um, we joked about this in the past that we're taking all these supplements and vitamins that we made fun of our parents for doing, but we're doing it now

Kathy Park: [32:08](#) cause we realize how important it is at this age and this different season of life, different needs. Right. Right. And maybe we'll be doing something different when we're 10 years from now. Right? Yup. Who knows?

Dr. Park: [32:21](#) And another important tip is not to, it's not a supplement, but it's a way of eliminating causes of stress, which is too much media.

Kathy Park: [32:32](#) Oh yeah.

Dr. Park: [32:34](#) After we got rid of our TVs, that was the best decision we made a couple of years ago.

Kathy Park: [32:39](#) Yes. When we decided to do away with our cable, that was not only beneficial to our health and our mental health and just the peace and calm that we created in our family as a result. But I think that also helped us cut down on some of our bills. Right? So it was a good financial decision.

Dr. Park: [33:00](#) Right.

Kathy Park: [33:00](#) But it was also a very healthy decision too.

Dr. Park: [33:04](#) This also involves surfing the net, checking email late at night, checking email when you first wake up in the morning.

Kathy Park: [33:10](#) Well yeah, obviously we can't get rid of Internet cause that's part of our lives now.

Dr. Park: [33:14](#) You have to control it, not have it control you.

Kathy Park: [33:17](#) Right. Put up different defenses. Okay.

Dr. Park: [33:20](#) Lots of good resources for that all over the place.

Kathy Park: [33:23](#) Yep.

Dr. Park: [33:23](#) Okay. And then at a certain point, if you've tried everything on your own, consider seeing a holistic doctor that specializes in these kinds of hormonal imbalances.

Kathy Park: [33:33](#) Okay.

Dr. Park: [33:33](#) For men and women.

- Kathy Park: [33:35](#) Great.
- Dr. Park: [33:35](#) And even acupuncture. Um, you know, a lot of, it's funny, I read somewhere that many of the herbs that were used in Chinese medicine has proven scientific effects on sleep.
- Kathy Park: [33:47](#) Yup. Now those are great tips to start with. I think that anybody can go ahead and pick up a book and start reading and, I think it's important for listeners to understand that this, these are not, you don't need a scientific degree. You don't need an MD after your name to do any of these, take advantage of any of these resources, right? It's just something that you have to have first. The intention of taking over and realizing that poor sleep does affect hormonal problems, right? And our hormone imbalances can affect your health and negative and it can affect how well you live overall. Right? Because everything is connected. All right. So any last thoughts before we wrap up for today?
- Dr. Park: [34:37](#) Along with what you just said, you should take ownership of your health. Don't depend on doctors, honestly...
- Kathy Park: [34:44](#) Don't depend on you in other words.
- Dr. Park: [34:46](#) Well except for me. What I mean is that if you look at the state of health amongst physicians, it's pretty bad. And doctors are just as unhealthy if not more unhealthy than most of the patients that I see. It's really sad to see that.
- Kathy Park: [35:00](#) Well, I wanted to, along with that, I wanted to bring up something that you mentioned to me a couple of days ago. You sent out a survey recently,

right? And, um, the survey has ended, but one of the results from that survey that you sent out about what is the most, the hardest obstacle that you're facing right now in terms of your sleep and in terms of losing weight? I think a lot of the survey respondents said that the greatest obstacle that they see is that they can't communicate with their physicians or their physicians don't understand and they're very frustrated. So that is a huge obstacle. And it's not just about like, I don't think it's that people go out of their way and say, okay, I'm going to just defer my health to my physician. It's that they feel like even if they do want some guidance from these professionals, these professionals are not really helping them in any way. Right? They're not able to explain it well. And so that's one of the reasons why we did this podcast, right? We started this podcast and that's the, one of the reasons why you wrote the book *Sleep Interrupted*, and um, because you saw that a lot of your patients were falling through the cracks.

Dr. Park: [36:14](#) It's not that doctors are, they don't want to help you. They do when they help you, they have all good intentions.

Kathy Park: [36:18](#) Yes.

Dr. Park: [36:19](#) The problem is in healthcare, and I'm kind of susceptible to this too—there's so much time pressure.

Kathy Park: [36:26](#) Yeah. I think everybody is feeling overwhelmed

Dr. Park: [36:28](#) And information overloaded.

Kathy Park: [36:29](#) Yeah.

- Dr. Park: [36:30](#) It's not a very conducive situation for healing and wellness.
- Kathy Park: [36:34](#) Right. So, in other words, just in order to gain clarity about your health, I think everybody needs to take the first step whenever that may be, and everybody is going to be different. Right?
- Dr. Park: [36:46](#) Right. I've actually had a couple of patients, um, that actually educated their doctors and the doctors, started implementing their patient's recommendations. Then the more research they did more that they found out that, hey, this works.
- Kathy Park: [36:59](#) We're very thankful to all of our evangelists. You have a lot of sleep evangelists out there who are touting your book who are actually handing it free copies to their physicians and sort of spreading the word. And, and that's, that's what we want. We want to influence how people are being treated, not just our listeners, but how you, the listeners, can really affect the way healthcare is leading right now. Because right now it's kind of been a dismal state. Right? It's not going anywhere very healthy. That's on a side note. So I digress. So anything else that you can tell our listeners to motivate them to take advantage of these resources?
- Dr. Park: [37:44](#) I've given this advice before? Start with the lowest hanging fruit. Whatever's easiest to start with. If you'd like to read, read one of the books that was mentioned previously. Doctor Mao, Dr. Northrup or Alyssa Vitti.
- Kathy Park: [37:58](#) Okay.

Dr. Park: [37:58](#) And then if you'd like to listen, you can listen to my podcast for other health related podcasts and just take action and do things one step at a time. Keep making progress.

Kathy Park: [38:08](#) Great.

Dr. Park: [38:09](#) Don't give up.

Kathy Park: [38:10](#) Yup. Don't give up. What was that line from um, Finding Nemo?

Dr. Park: [38:15](#) Oh yeah.

Kathy Park: [38:15](#) that's a great line. Dory says,

Dr. Park: [38:17](#) keep swimming, keep swimming,

Kathy Park: [38:19](#) keep swimming, keep swimming.

Kathy Park: [38:21](#) I think we have to have that in our heads all the time. No matter how tough it is, if you keep plugging at it, you will overcome some of these obstacles and you will see the light.

Kathy Park: [38:34](#) Okay. Thank you again everyone for tuning in today. If you've enjoyed today's conversation, you can get all of the shownotes and the resources mentioned in this program at doctorstevenstevenpark.com/hormones. And while you're there, check out all of the resources we have available at the website and subscribe to the podcast so that you never miss out on any future episodes. And one last thing, if the information you heard today has helped you in any way, please take a few minutes to give us a rating on iTunes. Your rating and reviews go a long way to help us gain the visibility we need so that

others who are looking for this information can find us on iTunes. Thank you again for helping someone else breathe better and sleep better. This is Kathy Park. On behalf of Dr. Steven Park, thanking you for spending some time with us today. Until next time, wishing that you breathe better and sleep better so that you can live better. Bye Bye.