



Fiber: An Unsung Hero of Our Health

With Dr. Martin Katz and David Roberts

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David Roberts (00:03):

Hey everybody. It's David Roberts and you're listening to the Mara Labs podcast. Today, I have Dr. Martin Katz with me, and we are going to be talking about fiber. And fiber is an important part of the diet. It, I think it's a bad rap sometimes and sometimes different diets are void of it and such a if you are doing like a juicing, you can decrease your fiber. Keto, especially high fat tends to not have the fiber spectrum that's needed. And when Martin and I were talking, he was like, "Let's talk about fiber." So Martin, what do you want to bring to the table about this important topic?

Dr. Martin Katz (00:49):

Yeah, I mean, I think there's a whole nother ball game out there called carnivore and I think we need to be understanding of a very important part of our health and that's the gut microbiome. And that's where fiber has a magnificent role, but I'd like to go back a little bit and just understand fiber a little bit. Fiber comes in both as soluble and an insoluble form. And I think there's a generous amount of studies at this time. Well, I know there's a generous amount of studies at this time that support the use of both insoluble and soluble fiber. I'm not sure if fiber ever gets a bad rap, unless you're looking at it only from one perspective. And so, if you're only taking insoluble fiber, it may not have the complete benefits if, if you're not taking both the soluble and in soluble form.

David Roberts (01:42):

Yeah. I just remember, so, especially with juicing and the amount with juicing with Mara, the amount of vegetables you could juice and consume when you remove the insoluble fiber is phenomenal. Whereas you would be eating literally all day, if you did not do that. And so yeah, I think you're right; there aren't many negatives to fiber. I think I said that because of just going back to the amount of, if you're trying to consume, the juicing that part of it makes it an impossibility, if you're trying to get those phytonutrients in.

Dr. Martin Katz (02:28):

Yeah. And so when you look at soluble fiber, that's the part of fiber that is goes into water and forms this gel-like substance that then blocks certain things from entering. So soluble fiber can certainly help certain disease processes, specifically cardiovascular disease, possibly even diabetes. And so, there's a very important part to soluble fiber. It's also what the bacteria tend to feed off and create these butyrate and these small chain fatty acids that are incredibly anti-inflammatory and very important for the mucinous layer of the gut. So what people possibly need to understand, and a lot probably do, is that the gut is only one layer thick, and that if you spread out that gastrointestinal layer, it can actually fit over a couple tennis courts, which is an amazing amount of space that your immune system has to cover. So again, 80% of your immune system is sitting around the gut and you want this immune system to be calm, not continuously on, not consent continuously seeing bacteria, not continuously seeing toxins and other antigens so you're inflamed and you're possibly now heading towards autoimmunity. So there's the one cell layer thick, and then on top of that sits, this mucinous layer. And again, soluble fiber contributes to that. Very important to help the health of the gut.

Dr. Martin Katz (04:02):

And then, something else that benefits you that we need to understand is this very important [inaudible 00:04:10] bacteria that's sets on top of that are feeding the mucinous layer, the small chain fatty acids, again, contributing to health. And again, you want this plethora of bacteria. And again, going back to

fiber, we want a variety of fiber, a variety of this prebiotic that then helps fuel a variety of bacteria that then protects us.

David Roberts ([04:36](#)):

Just thinking of growing up in the '80s, and when somebody would say, "Fiber," you'd think regularity and you need fiber for regularity, and that's the main benefit of fiber. But what you're bringing out is there's a spectrum of fiber there's within the soluble. And there are a lot of benefits to fiber.

Dr. Martin Katz ([05:00](#)):

Yeah. So interestingly, the regularity actually comes from the insoluble part. This is the part that is non-digestible and fills you up, so hopefully can help with decreasing weight gain, because you will feel more full if you eat more vegetables.

David Roberts ([05:15](#)):

Another benefit.

Dr. Martin Katz ([05:16](#)):

Another benefit. And so, in my practice, and I'm sure so many other practitioners practice, it's not unheard of that the vast majority of patients are getting far less than the 25 grams that are recommended. And 25 grams is the minimal that's recommended. And so, a lot of people skip breakfast, or skip any type of fiber for breakfast and then lunch may or may not get fiber. And then, hopefully for dinner, you have a serving of vegetable, maybe a salad, but that's not going to get you the 25 grams. And so, we really need to be cognizant of what we're doing throughout the day, what we're snacking on to help us get that 25 grams of both the soluble and in soluble fiber, again, to decrease this disease and contribute to our health. Especially if we're doing things like, again, the carnivores aren't even going to worry about it, but especially if you're doing keto, because there's a lot of low carb, low calorie vegetables that you can consume that will not contribute to the intake of carbs. If you're on a keto diet or paleo. And even I have vegans who are terribly unhealthy; they're not getting the vegetables, they're doing a lot of pasta, and a lot of breads and unfortunately that's not going to do it.

David Roberts ([06:37](#)):

So what are some low carb veggies that you recommend?

Dr. Martin Katz ([06:43](#)):

Yeah. I mean my favorite grouping would be the cruciferous vegetables and there's just a plethora of vegetables in that category. So beetroots, arugula, obviously our favorite, broccoli, cauliflower, you name it, watercress. There's just so many fantastic vegetables in that group. Obviously the starchy ones are the ones you got to be careful of the potatoes, which is really more tuber, but potatoes, peas, corn, which interestingly enough is most of what my patients consider the vegetables. So, you've got to further educate there, so just want to be cognizant of what you're getting. And again, what I tell my patients is think about eating during seasonal, or seasonal eating, so you're getting the variety, you're getting the colors. And oftentimes, the things that are on sale are the things that are readily available. And so, if you either can shop by season or you can shop what's on sale. And again, you're going to get the variety and plethora soluble and insoluble fiber.

David Roberts ([07:50](#)):

I just read soluble fiber helps protect against cardiovascular disease, whereas insoluble fiber protects against colon cancer. Can you tease those out?

Dr. Martin Katz ([08:05](#)):

Yeah. So again, soluble fiber is that gel like matrix, so it's going to protect you from absorbing the significant amount of cholesterol. It can also help if you have a high sugar beverage, can help decrease that rapid rise in insulin. And we know that high sugar, rapid rise insulin has an effect on inflammation, has an effect on uric acid, your kidneys and cardiovascular disease, diabetes. We know diabetes has a significant cardiovascular component. Metabolic syndrome, we can put it all in that category. Whereas insoluble fiber, again, your gut has to work hard to push it through. It contributes to the gut, it binds toxins, it's moves toxins through, it keeps you regular. What you do not want is a lot of stools sitting in the colon for a period of time, because if there are toxins, they're going to be sitting against that cell layer and possibly changing that cell layer. So, remaining regular, extremely important, so it doesn't only decrease colon cancer, decreases diverticular disease and improves the health of that gut.

David Roberts ([09:13](#)):

And so, what are some suggestions you have, if someone who wants to improve their microbiome?, if you have a patient that comes in, what do you say to them? "Hey, here are some things you can eat." And with the background in your mind of, this has a fiber composition that would benefit the microbiome?

Dr. Martin Katz ([09:41](#)):

Yeah. I mean, there's a plethora of things out there, both fruit wise and vegetable wise. And if you're thinking about fruits, people talk about bananas, they get a bad wrap sometimes. If you eat a more ripe banana, that is much higher in sugar, or more green banana, much higher in inulin, which is a prebiotic, this good prebiotic.

David Roberts ([10:07](#)):

This morning, the ripe bananas were on display at Whole Foods and they looked under the table and they were the green bananas, and so I grabbed them-

Dr. Martin Katz ([10:16](#)):

Swooped in.

David Roberts ([10:16](#)):

I swooped in and grabbed them.

Dr. Martin Katz ([10:17](#)):

Yeah, smart man. Potato starch. I mean, there's a lot of phenomenal prebiotics that help support the microbiome. And again, there's two fantastic books out there and they talk about this very, very important topic. One is called Super Gut by William Davis and the other, I don't remember the author, but it's Fiber Fueled. So if you're more on the vegan side of things, more on the plant strong, plant based side of things, Fiber Fueled. If you're more, just an omnivore or more paleo, I think Super Gut would be a good idea. And they really go into detail about the very important aspects of eating a variety of prebiotics, which again, both fruit and vegetable. The darker berries.

Dr. Martin Katz ([11:04](#)):

As far as my clinical practice goes, when somebody comes in and says, says they eat oatmeal in the morning, they put some nuts or seeds, I encourage them to add berries to that. That's hard to put a vegetable in that. If they're eating eggs, I ask them to put vegetables into that. If they're eating sandwiches, I ask them to add sprouts or certain greens, even sauteed peppers, mushrooms. I mean, there's so many ways you can add vegetables to a sandwich. And if they're depending on type of bread, I even ask them to get cabbage leaves. Cabbage has so many incredible benefits and it's a harder, more thick food, and so you can use it as a sandwich, use it as the bread of the sandwich. And then for dinner, obviously smaller animal protein portions, larger vegetable portions, as well as salads, or even a salad base instead of a grain base with the animal protein on top with other sauteed vegetables.

David Roberts ([12:09](#)):

And I'll go in and plug the superfood of micro greens and sprouting. So we typically, if we're adding greens to eggs, which we do, it'll be the micro greens. So just whatever is.

Dr. Martin Katz ([12:28](#)):

Your boys are all over that.

David Roberts ([12:30](#)):

Yes. My boys grow micro greens as a business and I secretly can grab some and throw it in our frittata in the morning.

Dr. Martin Katz ([12:39](#)):

Yeah. Fantastic. And again, even sandwiches, I mean, sprouts are so good on sandwiches.

David Roberts ([12:43](#)):

I'm drawing a blank. What's that the superfood for that's a seed that you can, you rehydrate and it-

Dr. Martin Katz ([12:53](#)):

I'm not exactly sure which one you're talking about, but one of the more new superfoods that I've heard about is something called [inaudible 00:13:01], which is called duckweed. And some people grow them in pods and you can also rehydrate those-

David Roberts ([13:11](#)):

Chia.

Dr. Martin Katz ([13:12](#)):

Oh, chia, for sure. Yeah. Sorry. There was so many possibilities there, but this newer one called [inaudible 00:13:20] referred to as duckweed and one of the few vegetables, it would be considered a vegetable has vitamin B12 in it.

David Roberts ([13:26](#)):

Ooh.

Dr. Martin Katz (13:26):

Yeah. So check that out.

David Roberts (13:29):

Are you into smoothies as of late?

Dr. Martin Katz (13:33):

Yeah. I mean, I love smoothies. I think they're fantastic and delicious, great way to-

David Roberts (13:38):

What was in the last smoothie you made?

Dr. Martin Katz (13:41):

Yeah. It's always funny, sometimes I eat more than one smoothie because I'll make smoothies with more vegetables than my kids would like, and oftentimes more sprouts than my kids would like. And so, they may take one step and be like, "I'm not so sure about this one." So let's see, what did I put in my last one? There was a mixed greens.

David Roberts (14:03):

What's the base first of all, is it milk or?

Dr. Martin Katz (14:06):

Or yeah, so there's a water. Protein milk. So, I'm sort of weird about that; I'll put bone broth with milk and water. So I'll sort of mix it up.

David Roberts (14:15):

Do you do raw milk?

Dr. Martin Katz (14:17):

Not currently; I'm using a protein milk. We lost our milk share at this point, but we'll get it back. My son stopped drinking as much milk as he was. He was worried it was contributing to acne, and so he just stopped milk and he was the big consumer. So we think it was the sugar that was really of incredible benefit that he stopped that as well. But he's just under this mindset that he's going to hold off on milk, so he is enjoying this protein milk made by silk. I probably shouldn't say it's getting harder and hard to find after this point. People are enjoying it.

David Roberts (14:52):

I'll edit it out.

Dr. Martin Katz (14:54):

Thank you. But anyway, so yeah, so I make a three part contribution there, and then I'll add the vegetables with some fruit, and generally blueberries or some mixed berry fruit cocktail, and then-

David Roberts (15:10):

Sweetening or what?

Dr. Martin Katz ([15:11](#)):

Yeah. For little sweetening. Yeah, my kids aren't going to tolerate just vegetables. And then I'll add a protein powder on top of that and almost always yogurt, or kefir, or the probiotic blend from the Super Gut book.

David Roberts ([15:29](#)):

Awesome. Any other-

Dr. Martin Katz ([15:31](#)):

And we can thank John for that.

David Roberts ([15:33](#)):

Thank you, John. Any other parting tips on fiber?

Dr. Martin Katz ([15:38](#)):

Yeah, no, I just obviously we've talked enough about at this point, but please make sure you're adding it to your diet. It's just such an incredible benefit to your health and your health foundation. And again, the simple question I ask all my patients when they walk into the office, almost all my patients, hopefully, all of them is, "Do you want to be healthy?" And the answer to that should be an absolute yes. Categorically, yes. And so if you want to be healthy, I think there's just way too many studies on the benefits of adding vegetables and fruit to your diet. And again, really trying to add a minimum of 25 grams. And if you look at that again, cooked vegetables, half a cup, raw, one cup, and then fruits, depending, roughly half a cup. So you want to think about really how much you're getting in a day. And with that, you want to hydrate well. So you don't want to be eating a ton of vegetables and fruit without hydrating, again, because the soluble part mixes with the water to create this mucinous layer that contributes to your health.

David Roberts ([16:40](#)):

Well, thank you, Dr. Katz. You've been listening to the Mara Labs podcast. We'll be back next week with another episode. We'll talk to you soon.

Dr. Martin Katz ([16:48](#)):

Thanks. And please take care of your human.

David Roberts ([16:50](#)):

Bye-bye.