

You're listening to episode 130 of the Devoured podcast. Welcome to Devoured, the podcast for women like you who have tried restrictive diet after diet and are ready for simple solutions and resources to help you lose weight for the last time, from a place of abundance and peace. If you're looking to end the yo-yo of comfort eating and rigid weight loss protocols, and instead step into living your life on your terms while losing weight in the process, you're in the right place. Hey everyone, welcome to the show. I've got a quick episode for you on the basics of insulin resistance today, and I think you're all really going to like this episode. It's one of those tangibles of health. Before I get into that, I thought I would just say, hi, hello. Nothing too interesting is going on in my personal life. I try to give you updates, but y'all, I've just been kicking it. I actually had a migraine over the weekend that came ... Wait, maybe I shouldn't share this. So on Friday, my boyfriend and I, we went grocery shopping.

We don't really have to go grocery shopping all that much, we are still trying to keep that on a minimum. We use imperfect produce, which has more than just produce these days. It's like a food delivery box that we can totally customize. So we use that actually quite a bit each week and we tend to keep food options pretty simple, but we realized on Friday that we needed to go to the grocery store and do a pantry shop. Just get the things that make the fruits and vegetables and proteins a little more fun, the random shit. So we went to the grocery store and on a Friday evening, it was really quiet. We hadn't done that since the holiday time, so it was just such a stark difference between it being a really, really packed grocery store versus really quiet. In the pandemic, that matters a lot. So we've both felt really comfortable there and it was super fun, and that's totally how I roll. Anyway, we were going aisle to aisle and I saw this can of ... You won't guess it, maybe you will. Could you? I never would have guessed it.

I saw this can of tamales and I was like, "Wait a second. I know about frozen tamales. I know about fresh tamales. I know about tamales, and I have not known about canned tamales." I looked at the ingredient list and it was pretty decent. I am pretty sensitive to preservatives and some of those added ingredients that increase longevity, whatever. But I was like, "These are canned. They're actually pretty pure." I am fascinated by the concept of a canned tamale. I think it makes total sense because for me, I don't want a dry tamale. And when I microwave them, even if I microwave them with a paper towel over them, they always dry out and I don't tend to get fresh tamales. I just don't. Or like the ones I do ... Whatever. Anyway, I was just like, "Canned tamales are rocking my brain right now, let's try them." And they were delicious, but I actually think that maybe there is just enough preservatives in them that I had a migraine the next day.

But let me tell you, the idea of always having tamales on hand in the pantry, not even in the freezer ... Freezer space can be a little precious. I loved it. That was legit, so fun for me. Anyway, I think I paid the price of that exploration by getting a bit of a migraine the next day and through the weekend. But it was still a really chill, relaxing weekend. We took all of our Christmas stuff down, so now the house both feels very plain, but it's also very visually soothing because there's just ... It's all in its place and I love that. If you've been liking the show, I'm going to ask that you would go to your Apple podcast app, take one to two minutes and leave me a review. It's a super fast process and it offers a lot of social support for me as the creator of this podcast. I'm currently in the process of writing a book proposal. And as you've heard me say before, these tangible metrics like a positive review on the show go a super long way in helping me pitch my concept.

If you do leave a review, your review will have the opportunity for a shout out on a future podcast and I'm going to be shouting those out next episode. I would love to hear your thoughts and for you to know just how impactful your words truly are. I've been challenging myself to mention that here. Please go leave me a review, it would mean a whole lot. Now that you know that I've eaten canned tamales and that you can leave a review on Apple podcast app, let's talk about insulin resistance. Often on the show, I talk about health intangibles, like the things you can't measure with data outright. So your thoughts,

your feelings, what's driving you to be eating, to not be eating, how you feel when you are eating, how you feel when you aren't eating, et cetera. But there are health metrics that are totally tangible like our insulin levels in our bodies, the lab work that can show you what's going on when you take a snapshot, what's happening inside your body.

I wanted to talk about the concept of insulin resistance, because I think it is important, especially for those who have struggled with a history of diet behaviors who feel like their body is at an increased weight that just doesn't feel quite right, and sometimes their lab work can be reflecting that. Let me first break down what insulin is. Insulin is a hormone that is produced in the pancreas. Insulin regulates the amount of glucose in our blood, a lack of insulin causes a form of diabetes. You can have an autoimmune form of diabetes called type 1 diabetes, this is where the pancreas no longer produces insulin. Or you can have type 2 diabetes, which is where people have insulin resistance and later on in the disease do not make enough insulin from their pancreas. I like the example offered by Elena Biggers ... she's an MD and has her master's in public health, where she says that you can imagine that insulin is like the key that unlocks our body's cells so that glucose ... which is energy into our cells, can enter into the cell and be used for cellular energy.

In type 1 diabetes, there is no key, insulin is no longer there. But type 2 diabetes, the key is there, but the key is broken. It can't be used. Now that you know what insulin is, I want to talk about insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is the impaired response of the body to insulin, which results in elevated levels of glucose in the blood. I want you to remember insulin is contributing to those elevated levels of blood because the insulin working as a key to create the opening in the cells for the glucose to enter in and therefore access the blood is not occurring ... is occurring in a very impaired way. This is a key factor in type 2 diabetes. This is something that is confusing, so I want to share it here and say it a couple of times. When we're talking about insulin resistance, where then on the opposite, talking about insulin sensitivity. In terms of health and wellness and what we know about the human body in general, to have optimal health, we do not want insulin resistance and we do want insulin sensitivity. Insulin sensitive people are helpful people.

And of course, you know my slant on this podcast, you are in true ownership of how you define your health and wellness. I'm breaking down what's happening from a biochemical perspective. Today I'm going to be talking about insulin and populations that do not have type 1 diabetes. I am talking about endogenous meaning made by ourselves in our bodies insulin. The conversation is different ... Like what I'd be talking about would be different if I were to be discussing exogenous insulin. Exogenous insulin is the insulin that someone who has type 1 diabetes or type 2 ... A profound case of type 2 diabetes, would be taking. That requires a different conversation. Just know that this conversation, I cannot be talking about the whole huge conversation on insulin, because it is so rich and vast. I'm talking about someone who might be on their way to becoming insulin resistant or beginning to show some signs of that. When then, do we become insulin resistant? When ourselves stop responding to the insulin that is released from our pancreas. Why would our cells stop responding to the insulin that is released?

Our cells will stop responding to the insulin that is released when our cells are always bathed in that insulin. Then this brings me to the next question that comes up. When is it that our cells would always be bathed in insulin? This would be occurring when we are consuming foods frequently, especially those foods that encourage a release of insulin. Those sources that then trigger a release of insulin are sources of carbohydrates and very high servings of protein, if we eat a lot of protein. But for the most part, this conversation in its most simplistic form is when we're eating source of carbohydrates, especially refined and simple carbohydrates. Then we get onto our next question. When are we consuming foods that are sources of carbohydrates, especially refined and simple ones? Well, I'll let you answer that. But in

general, in our Western culture ... for the most part that's standard American diet, those simple and refined carbohydrates are coming in frequently throughout the day in doses that are quite high.

Now, this whole biological process is why I encourage intermittent fasting with my clients, even for clients who are not necessarily eating that very standard and typical standard American diet ... that sad diet, which is now ... that term is coming into our collective consciousness more and more as the year ago on. The intermittent fasting isn't just to create space for what we think about when we're not eating foods, even though that's a really powerful part of it. And it isn't also just to learn how to decide and follow through on our own decisions. Again, that's really a powerful part of it. If you heard the episode on making a plan, you know that that's part of what we're learning how to do, is to be with ourselves to make decisions ahead of time that are for us, that serve us most fully. Not only from a biochemical standpoint, but also from an emotional standpoint, both the tangibles and the intangibles of health.

But intermittent fasting is also to leverage our body's ability to gain and regain insulin sensitivity so that not only are we teaching our bodies how to lose weight daily ... meaning tapping into burning body fat stores and really gaining insulin sensitivity ... Because remember, if you aren't sensitive to insulin, you're going to have a really hard time feeling full using energy from your food naturally and effortlessly, and burning body fat stores when food is no longer there. For women in my program that shows signs of insulin resistance ... And I'll tell you what some of those signs are in just a few minutes, with the approval of their licensed medical practitioners, I encourage them to try out ... And less frequently. This is not an every single day thing, this is maybe once, maybe twice a week. A longer fast, a 24-36 hour fast so their body can have time away from food to lower insulin levels and therefore regain insulin sensitivity. That's a really beautiful process. Let me tell you some of those signs of insulin resistance.

These often come back from lab testing ... Again, a really great way to be supporting you to be in conversation with your licensed medical practitioner. Some of those specifics might be a fasting glucose level of 100 milligrams per deciliter or more, a fasting triglyceride level of 150 milligrams per deciliter or more, the occurrence and reoccurrence of skin tags or patches of dark almost velvety skin ... often can be around the back of the neck or the front of the neck even, I think that's a common area that you can see that. As well as a waistline of over 35 inches in women. Again, we're talking about norms and generalities here. But in general, a waistline over 35 inches in women. And also blood pressure readings of 130 over 80 or higher in women. It's a little different in men. While the common conversation is that weight loss is what lowers insulin resistance ... which is partially true as our body fat is a secondary endocrine organ, I really want you to understand that lowering potential insulin resistance or being on the path towards that is what encourages weight loss.

I want you to understand that our bodies, what they show us visually can be because of what is occurring on the inside. By looking at and addressing ways to potentially lower that insulin resistance and meaning increase our insulin sensitivity, this can be supportive of making sure that our body is now getting the cue hormonally to be releasing body fat stores, because it can adequately use those body fat stores for energy. It can burn them. Now, here's something else I want to mention. Muscle plays a role too. These conversations are never all or nothing, black or white, one thing or another, it's always a mixture. We're talking about the gray area of health here. It gets to be both/and. If we're to be eating sources of carbohydrates ... And if you're in my program or you work with me, you know we're not doing a no carb keto diet with fasting and all this other really intense stuff. I'm encouraging you to be eating your definition of a balanced plate in a way that makes sense for you and your goals, which includes carbohydrates.

For you to be eating sources of carbohydrates, it would then make sense that more places for the carbohydrates to go ... meaning more muscle mass that needs to be fed would support insulin sensitivity. It's like buying a bigger fridge and having more places to store the food you just bought from

your grocery store run, that's super cool. In one study, researchers looked at data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey number three, and the survey covered over 13,000 adults who were not pregnant and not underweight. They reviewed each person's muscle mass and compared it to their diabetes status. In these conversations, remember too, we're talking about the potential to be moving towards the status of type 2 diabetes. This is what could be potentially occurring if we continue to be doubling down on our insulin resistance over time. What they found was really, really cool. For each 10% increase in the ratio of skeletal muscle mass to total body weight, participants showed an 11% decrease in insulin resistance and a 12% decrease in pre-diabetes ... meaning moving towards potentially having diabetes at the diagnosis.

Those results were significant even after the scientists took into account other factors that can affect risk for insulin resistance. This is really, really cool because this, again, moves us out of that calories in calories out only hyper-focus and it reminds us that we are human beings living in environments. And not only what we're thinking and how we're feeling is going to be impacting us, but also what we're doing with those thoughts and feelings and how we're living our lives. This then brings us to the question, how do we build more muscle mass? The answer to that is resistance training and ... Hear me roar with this, eating enough food. Remember fasting isn't only for calorie reduction. And in fact, I use it quite frequently for the opposite with clients. It's for calorie regulation, energy regulation, which can and often must include an increase in substansive calories ... the ability to drop into body fat stores, meaning increase in insulin sensitivity, which naturally occurs during times away from food.

And a place to put that quick energy, meaning a big enough fridge, meaning we are allowing our bodies to know and to get the hormonal inputs that we are desiring to maintain, if not grow, muscle mass, meaning that we're using our muscles. That's all it really boils down to. People love to really complicate the subject of strength training and growing bigger muscles, all it means is that you're giving your body enough food frequently enough. You're not just doing it for a week and then wondering why you didn't grow big Popeye muscles, but you're giving your body enough food and enough muscle stimulation ... meaning strength training, but they get the signal that what you're asking them to do is to grow bigger muscles. That's it. There's so many different patterns and so many different fitness tips out there. And of course, there can be really structured programs. But over time, all you're doing is asking a little bit more of your muscles as you're engaging them. That's what a strength training or a resistance training program is.

I want you to be thinking about all of that this week, getting really curious if you were to think about this. This is a little bit more of the analytical way of thinking about food and nutrition, but we do that here too. If you've been listening for a while, you know we talk a lot about the emotions, but the emotions are also ... We have this triad. We have the body, the brain and the spirit. As much as we talk about the spirit and the brain a lot, we do have to remember that we're housed in a physical body. In this triad of feeling helpful and experiencing wellness, as well as pursuing some goal that might be shifting how our body is working and our body composition is structured, we have to remember that these inputs occur consistently over time based on what we think and how we feel about that. Because you'll drop a habit if you don't like it, or if it doesn't feel safe or doesn't feel comfortable. But I want you to start to understand just in case you've never had this conversation around food and nutrition.

Those of you listening, I know it's a wide assortment. Some of you have a really, really, really deep knowledge in nutrition, you might actually work in or have worked in nutrition yourself. But for others of you, you might have tried a lot of different dietary plans and you have a lot of information around food itself, but it might not be as deep in terms of what that food is then doing in your body from a biochemical or hormonal standpoint. Hormones are foundational to what is happening from our calories, and calories is our perspective. You see that for people. You see that when people are

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chronically dieting and under eating, their body downregulates all of this metabolic processes to match that. That's a hormonal response. That's not your body being stupid, that's your body being really, really smart. And conversely for people who are building muscle and increasing total calorie to continue to feed themselves over time, you see that then their bodies are getting this signal to increase their metabolism, to increase metabolic output and to match their environment.

So remember at the end of the day, we are living in environments, and while we are not our circumstances, our bodies are responsive to their environments and what they are being asked to do. Take that information, think about it this week, integrate it. Get at me if you have questions, there are always links in the show notes. If you ever want to be chatting about this information, go ahead and shoot me a note on Facebook ... I'm always active on the DM's over there or via email and I'll reply to it and let you know. I'll see you on the next episode. Did you know you can find more support for me on my website? Go to Lucia Hawley L-U C-I-A H-A-W-L-E-Y.com to connect.