

Winterizing Your Child

Sheila Kilbane, MD



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Rebekah Kelley: Welcome to the Humanized podcast, all about personalizing your health. I am your host, Rebekah Kelley. And today we'll be discussing Winterizing Your Child, with Dr. Sheila Kilbane. Before I introduce Dr. Kilbane, I want to remind everyone to subscribe and get all the variety of casts in audio, video and transcription at HumanizedHealth.com. I'd also like to thank our lead sponsor, Village Green Apothecary, at MyVillageGreen.com.

A little bit about Dr. Sheila Kilbane. She's a board certified pediatrician who specializes in integrative medicine. She uses the best of traditional and integrative medicine to find the root cause of illness. Using her seven-step process along with natural and nutritional therapies, Dr. Kilbane helps families significantly improve or resolve altogether illnesses such as colic, reflux, eczema, recurrent ear and sinus infections, asthma, allergies, and stomach and GI issues such as constipation and abdominal pain. She also conducts online educational classes, in addition to seeing individual patients in Charlotte, North Carolina.

So great to have you. Thank you so much for being here with us. It's always fun.

Sheila Kilbane: Thank you, Rebekah. I always love chatting with you.

Rebekah Kelley: So, I just want to jump right in. Obviously, as we're looking at winter ahead, having healthy immunity is on everyone's mind, especially in the current situation that we've been in, some of us being "on lockdown." What are some key personalized strategies that parents can be doing to winterize their child? What is the foundation that you recommend they start working on?

Sheila Kilbane: Yes. And I love that terminology when I thought about it because I want people... We all spend a great deal of time and effort in keeping our automobiles moving, with the right oil and all that kind of thing. So I want us to start thinking about our kids and our health the same way that we would take care of our car, or that we would plan a trip. So I want you to start thinking about the winter this way. And when we talk about... I always call it the foundation. We have our foundational piece in our foundational supplements, and then sometimes we need to add in other supplements as maybe acute viral support, things like that. We can talk a little bit about that.

But today I wanted to really focus on those foundations. That's what's going to allow us to respond better when we get exposed to a virus or maybe the bacteria that causes strep throat or things like that, because we can get exposed to things, but it doesn't always mean we're going to end up sick. And our immune systems are incredible and beautifully designed to take care of these things.

So the first thing that I want to talk about is digestion. And when we're setting the foundation for digestion, most people know that we've got a lot of microorganisms in our GI system. We've got some bacteria, there may be some yeast, there are different microorganisms. I think about

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it like the soil of our body. And so we want to fuel that bacteria, we want to feed it with the right kind of foods. And that's where we talk about fiber – fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, things like that. And I want to give you a little statistic here about this. So – 93% of kids don't eat enough vegetables, and 60% don't eat enough fruits. So if you're going to do anything, add one extra vegetable and one extra fruit to your kids' meals daily. And a great way to do that is through a green smoothie. So you can do that in the morning.

That being said, this is how I also really talk to parents about why we do need supplements, because kids are not eating the foods that we need. I wish we could do it without supplements, but we live in a very fast-paced world and we're often having food out of a package or at a drive-through. And that isn't the type of food that's going to sustain us and to create really healthy cells.

So the first thing that we do is we add in a probiotic. And you don't need to take notes for this. I've got a free download where you can see all the supplements that I use, and dosing and everything. And it's just SheilaKilbane.com/SupplementGuide. So we do a probiotic and I have the family start it at the start of breakfast and dinner, and then we add in a digestive enzyme. Digestion can be compromised through a lot of different things – as we age, if we are taking medications, if we're under stress, if we're sick, so many different things compromise our digestion. So we just... it's a really nice, powerful, plant-based digestive enzyme. And for the kids, there's a powder, there's a chewable, there's a capsule, whatever works for your family. And you would do that along with the probiotic at the start of breakfast and dinner. So this is great, we've got a good solid digestion.

And then we talk about omega-3 fats and those are the anti-inflammatory fats, and we want to really focus on those. We've got our digestion set. Then we really focus on the omega-3 fats because if we're doing, if we're adding maybe coldwater fish, like sockeye salmon to the diet, we want to make sure that fat is getting broken down and absorbed. Hence the enzymes. So you can do that, or you can do it with a fish oil, or there are some plant-based sources of omega-3 fats. And some of the food plant-based sources are going to be things like chia seed, flax seed, hemp seed, which are phenomenal, but they're not often... kids aren't eating a lot of those. So you can throw those in smoothies. You can make little puddings and things.

And then the next supplement is vitamin D. And vitamin D is the end-all, right? This is the biggie. We know it is really a huge part of our immune system. It's actually more like a hormone than it is a vitamin, and we've got a vitamin D receptor on almost every cell of our body. And we're in a pandemic with viruses, different things. We know that optimizing our vitamin D levels, it's one of the most important things we can do. And one of the ladies in my office jokes, she's like, I think we should make people show their vitamin D levels, like when you're going to travel or do something because that's how important it is.

Rebekah Kelley: [Laughs] It makes sense, yes.

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Sheila Kilbane: Right? And so with vitamin D, we get it naturally through sunshine and then it gets converted and it goes through the liver and it adds a hydroxyl group. And then it goes to the kidney and we add another hydroxyl group. But when we have sunscreen on, we don't synthesize vitamin D, or if it's the middle of the wintertime. And you know, if you're a significant distance above or below the equator, we need to take a supplement in the wintertime. But not in the summer. I always stop vitamin D in the summer because we want to get it naturally, but we don't want to burn, right? So we want to be careful. So we do that.

And then the last thing we add is a whole food supplement or a multivitamin mineral. And I love whole food supplements because that's going to give us, it's going to be made from fruits and vegetables. And it's just going to be put into either a capsule or a chewable or some different forms. Or if you can't do that, then we would do a good multivitamin/mineral. And I've listed several brands that I have researched, in my handout. So you can look through those. I've got ones from the more expensive to the less expensive and easier to get.

And once we have that really good foundation set, then we start to look at other things like zinc, right? Zinc is very closely tied in with our immune system. It's important for wound healing and it's important for, just our cellular function. An interesting little factoid is that zinc, in developing countries, in kids with diarrhea, zinc is one of the first lines of treatment. It's just very, very important. And so that's one of the things, but we don't want to just do a whole bunch of zinc for a long period of time because zinc and copper, they are in balance with one another. So we want to get what we need. And when I'm replacing zinc with kids, I'm checking their levels. So I know how much I can give them for how long a period of time. But most of the supplements that you would get over-the-counter are going to be a safe amount.

Then another thing is vitamin C. And vitamin C is antioxidant, it's going to very much support the immune system. It also can help with things like allergies. It stabilizes mast cells, which are what house histamine, which is what creates all the congestion and cough and everything like that.

And then I also use a supplement that is an immunoglobulin. So everybody knows colostrum, right? And it's the immunoglobulins that are in breast milk that help keep babies healthy while their immune systems are developing. So I use a form of an immunoglobulin for my company and it's non-dairy based. So many of my patients are sensitive or allergic to dairy, and this is another way that it supports... it binds with viruses and bacteria in the gut and helps to decrease them. So that's another thing that we use.

And we will use a couple of other things. Quercetin can be helpful. And elderberry syrup can be helpful. I use elderberry in short courses at a time because it does activate the immune system, and if you have auto-immune conditions, you don't want to do that every day for a long period of time.

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So those are the main ones that I use. But Rebekah, I want to take a pause because I've been talking here and I just want to make sure that all makes sense.

Rebekah Kelley: It makes complete sense, and I love how you're structuring it. It really helps to see... I love how you talk about the foundation. And I was really surprised when you said that we're not getting enough vegetables and fruit, and you're right, they aren't as portable, right? That is one of the challenges of that. The smoothie makes so much sense and I love how you layered it. And I like that you use testing to figure out what's also going on. I think that that's such an important thing for parents to consider. Because every child's going to have an individual need, and if you're testing it, then you really understand what you're dealing with.

Sheila Kilbane: Yes. And quality supplements are key. I've been doing this long enough that I have used... and I did this before, I really had a strong idea about quality supplements. And I would check vitamin D levels and replace it. And I know that certain types were not actually bringing the vitamin D levels up. So that's why I'm very specific. And I really talk about brands and quality because if you don't know what you're doing, I really recommend that you don't supplement because you can do more harm than good. And supplements can have artificial dyes and colors and all that kind of stuff.

Rebekah Kelley: Yeah, that's really great. I love your supplement guide and I love that you offer it so that they can just download it. That's wonderful.

Sheila Kilbane: And I've also had my book that came out. It's *Healthy Kids, Happy Moms*, and you can get it anywhere books are sold. And I have all of this written out in the book. We've got great images and they're colorful and it really is such a... We've been getting such great feedback, and from the conventional pediatricians who have really been liking the format of it, because these are topics that we don't learn about in our medical school training. We didn't when I trained. We didn't train him about nutrition, we didn't train about supplements.

Rebekah Kelley: You don't happen to have one to hold up show?

Sheila Kilbane: I do. I've got them all over the place. [Holds up her book] You can get them anywhere books are sold, whether it's Amazon or Target or any of those places. And if you go to my website, we have all the links in there, and we've got a lot of free downloads that are nice companions with the book. Anywhere on the website, we've got little things that you can click on to get to the book link.

Rebekah Kelley: Congratulations!

Sheila Kilbane: Thank you.

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Rebekah Kelley: It's great. Thanks Dr. Kilbane, those are really valuable insights. Dr. Kilbane can be found at SheilaKilbane.com. I'm going to go ahead and spell it. It's S H E I L A K I L B A N E.com. Let me remind you to subscribe and get access to all Humanized videos, podcasts and transcriptions from all of our thought leaders on personalized health at HumanizedHealth.com.

Thanks so much for being with us and providing such great information. Thank you.

Sheila Kilbane: Thank you.