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The Power of the Clean Fast: Reset Your Cellular Health And Age In Reverse

**Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC interviewing
Gin Stephens**



Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Welcome back to the conversation at the Restore Your Mitochondrial Matrix Summit. I'm your host, Laura Frontiero. I'm bringing you experts to help you boost your energy and fix your health so you can build the life you love. Today, I have a really fun guest. Gin Stephens is joining us. Hi, Gin, welcome to the summit.

Gin Stephens

Hey, I'm so glad to be here.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

- Yes, this is gonna be a fantastic conversation. The reason I asked you to come onto the summit is because you are part of the solution for mitochondria dysfunction, energy dysfunction, chronic disease, weight loss resistance, you know, weight regain, all of it. You know how to get people back on track with your strategy so we're gonna talk about that today. You are the author of the "New York Times" and "USA Today" bestseller, "Fast, Feast, Repeat," and "Delay, Don't Deny." I love the names of your books. They're so good.

Gin Stephens

Thank you.

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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And this is all about living an intermittent fasting lifestyle, and you live this lifestyle and you lost over 80 pounds.

Gin Stephens

I did.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And yes, you are the host of top ranked podcast Intermittent Fasting Stories and Life Lessons podcast. Now, audience for all of you listening, if you want to know about the biochemistry and science of mitochondria, go listen to some of those other interviews that I've had. Gin is here to tell you how to simply easily, effectively, and quickly solve your health problems with her strategy. Gin, you are a retired elementary teacher for what, 26 years?

Gin Stephens

28.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

28?

Gin Stephens

I taught for 28 years. I know, and I retired in 2018 so y'all can do the math.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Oh yeah.

Gin Stephens

I started teaching in 1990.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yes, Gin is older than you think. She obviously has her mitochondria health dialed in, mitochondria by the way are the key to anti-aging. Tell us how old you are, Gin.



Gin Stephens

Well, as of this recording day I am one week away from being 53.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

That's insane.

Gin Stephens

I like to tell people I was born in the 60s. Okay barely, but it was still the 60s.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

That's so great, it's so great. So you're doing something right and we all want a piece of that. And we love that you are a retired teacher because you know how to teach-

Gin Stephens

Right.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

How to do complex things and how to make it easy. So that's what we're gonna be talking about today. So let's jump right in, what is intermittent fasting and let's make it simple.

Gin Stephens

Well, you know, intermittent fasting sounds so scary with the word fasting. For people who haven't done it, you know, we picture like monks or like Jesus fasting for 40 days and 40 nights. But really, you know, and all it is is you eat and then you don't eat and then you eat again. In fact, one of the very earliest books written about intermittent fasting was called "Eat, Stop, Eat," And that's just brilliant 'cause that's really what we're all doing anyway. You know, every person sleeps and then isn't eating while they sleep so they wake up and at some time during the day everyone has break fast. We say breakfast, right? So every person is breaking their fast every single day. Those of us who live an intermittent fasting lifestyle, we simply purposefully delay when we eat a little bit later. Either we delay it later in the day or we may do something where we are doing alternate day fasting, we might delay it for 36 hours, but it's just a matter of, we are not waking up necessarily and eating from, you know, first thing in the morning till time to go to



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bed, which is what so many people are doing these days. So when you live an intermittent fasting lifestyle, you just structure the when of what you're eating just a little differently than the modern world. And you know, we know how, how well, what the modern world is doing is working right, when we look around us and see. You know, I was 80 pounds heavier, I was obese. And then in 2014, I changed my life with intermittent fasting, lost over 80 pounds. I've been maintaining it even as I went through menopause. And so intermittent fasting is an amazing way to live and it's not scary at all.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

It is simple and it's so good.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So, when you listen to the other interviews on this summit, you're gonna learn all about how mitochondria function, we're talking cellular health here. You're gonna learn about autophagy, mitophagy and this is what is stimulated when you're intermittent fasting.

Gin Stephens

Yes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So this is why this is one of the solutions. So in your experience of guiding people and supporting people through this, what kinds of health benefits can people expect to feel when they're intermittent fasting and then we'll get into your clean fast and how that's different from-

Gin Stephens

Absolutely. Well, it's-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

It's really amazing. You know, in my podcast, Intermittent Fasting Stories, I've now interviewed 200 plus people on the podcast who tell their story. They're just regular people who do intermittent fasting and the ways that their health have been improved is just remarkable. I mean, I've heard so many incredible stories from people whether it's like their Crohn's disease is better or they no longer have brain fog or, you know, I just talked to somebody recently who was wheelchair bound and with intermittent fasting, she hasn't used a wheelchair in two years. I mean, it's just amazing how much better people feel. You know, we know, and everyone listening to your summit knows that a healthy metabolism really starts at the cellular level. And that's what intermittent fasting does for us. You know, one thing that really I'm gonna use some elementary lingo here, what gunks up the machinery in our bodies is, you know, eating all the time around the clock.

That advice to, you know, start eating the minute your feet hit the floor and keep eating all day, six small meals, keep the metabolism going, we've all heard that advice, but really that means your body never gets a break. So things start to, you know, break down and our bodies can't fix them, you know, from, you know, our immune system can't work as well when we're eating all the time and not ever giving our body a break, you know, inflammation goes up, people become, you know, insulin resistant, for example. That is really the root of so many of our problems these days, you know, rooted in insulin resistance. And so intermittent fasting gets to those things at the, really the heart of the level or at the, you know, down, down deep, you know, in our mitochondria. And it does affect our mitochondria health.

We have healthy mitochondrial networks and the better that's all running, the better we're gonna age, which is so important. So, you know, I could list so many, so many things that are improved with intermittent fasting from type two diabetes to irritable bowel syndrome. I mean, just so many things that I've heard from people, even crazy things like, I remember talking to somebody and this sounds made up, but it's not. She had a C-section scar from like 30 years before, it was like thick and ropery where she, you know, had a C-section for one of her children and with intermittent fasting it all but disappeared. So it was like just a very thin scar that you could barely see. I mean, that sounds fake, like who would, Who would believe that scars would disappear, but you know, you said the word autophagy-



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah, that's what's happening.

Gin Stephens

And that's our bodies eating up the, you know, the junky protein that are kinda left over. Jason Fung talks about that in his work as well. You know, our bodies can use up the excess skin as we lose weight. So...

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So good.

Gin Stephens

It's really, it's amazing.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yes.

Gin Stephens

The things that I've heard from people, you know, you're not gonna probably write it in a book because they'll be like, that sounds like she's just making it all up, but it's astonishing and I'm never surprised anymore. People say things like my hair is no longer gray, you know, on the big ones to my MS is better to, you know, the little ones, like my hair is not gray. Now that did not work for me.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah, it hasn't worked for me yet either.

Gin Stephens

Not worked for me. I still have plenty of gray, but.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah. Okay, so you said something really important that I wanna highlight right now.



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Gin Stephens

Okay.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So you said that, you know, we've been trained to start eating from the minute that we wake up and it's, so we've heard, we've been taught that breakfast is the most important meal of the day and this is what I want to share. Break fast, the moment you break your fast, breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Gin Stephens

Yes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

However, that doesn't have to be early in the morning when you first wake up. Your break fast could be at 1 p.m.

Gin Stephens

Exactly.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And that is the most important meal of the day, yes. But understand how this most important meal of the day has been turned into a misleading guidance that you should eat as soon as you wake up. And the other thing I wanna share is it's so interesting Gin, my daughter is a natural faster.

Gin Stephens

Right.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So ever since she was a little girl, she's 17 now, but ever since like we're talking kindergarten, first grade here, she would not eat breakfast. She's like, mommy, I don't feel good when I eat breakfast and she didn't want naturally never wanted to eat until 10 a.m. And she would get in



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trouble at school because she, 10 a.m. would roll around and that was, you know, snack time at school. 'Cause that's another thing, maybe that's a whole nother tangent we're over-

Gin Stephens

Oh yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

But it was snack time. So she would start eating her lunch during snack time and her teachers would get mad at her and say, stop eating your lunch, that's for lunch time. They wanted her to eat something little like a carby thing.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And she's going for the protein in fat, right at 10 o'clock.

Gin Stephens

Right.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And she'd come home distraught like mommy they're telling me that I can't. And you know, this is something that we've struggled with her whole life and to this day she just still doesn't wanna eat until later in the day. She's so naturally smart that way.

Gin Stephens

Well, you know, all of us start off life that way. As babies, we naturally have hunger and satiety cues. You know, if you've ever tried to feed a baby who's had enough and you're like, no, but I feel like you should have more. The baby's like, mm mm, you know, not gonna eat another bite.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Right.



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Gin Stephens

And we teach all through their lives, we teach people to disconnect from those hunger and satiety cues from early on like, no, you will eat this and you will eat this now with our young children and-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Totally.

Gin Stephens

Forcing them to eat what and when they don't want to.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

And it continues as we get into adulthood and we, you know, start counting calories. You're counting macros and we're told we have to eat this many protein grams. What if your body doesn't need that much today 'cause you had some grain autophagy going on and broke down some excess skin? You know, you're getting your proteins met from within believe that or not you are. And so I have heard that from so many intermittent fasters that they started off life like your daughter, naturally not wanting to eat till later. Then they were told you gotta start the day with a breakfast. So maybe in their teens or 20s, they're like, well, okay, I wanna be healthy so I'm going to do what I'm told. I'm gonna start with my eating six small meals. And then there begins their battle with obesity or being overweight and they gradually start to gain weight. And then they're just struggling until they hear about intermittent fasting.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yes.

Gin Stephens

And they're like, oh, that's what my body naturally likes.



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

So I hear that all the time.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Totally. And I'm sure there's people listening right now who are thinking you don't understand Laura and Gin, when I wake up, I'm starving and I have to eat right now. And what I would say is hormone dysregulation is going on in your body, this is not normal and you can ease into it and I'm sure you have some great strategies for supporting people. But if you wake up starving-

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

This is, your body screaming that things are imbalanced.

Gin Stephens

That's true.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

You shouldn't wake up like that. So if you are waking up like that and people have told you, oh you just have a high metabolism, it's the way you are. No, no, no, no, no. You have hormone imbalance. You're-

Gin Stephens

Well, you know, we're meant to be metabolically flexible, right?

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yes, yes.



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Gin Stephens

That's how our natural state is to be metabolically flexible so that you're not in a panic if there's not like a cereal bar in your purse, you know, you're gonna be okay.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

The thing that I will panic over is if I don't have water in my purse.

Gin Stephens

Right.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Food, I'm fine. But if I don't have water, that's when I panic. All right, so let's talk about the clean fast-

Gin Stephens

Okay.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And how that's different from other intermittent fasting approaches out there because I know this is one of your soap boxes-

Gin Stephens

It is-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

I know that, you know, putting butter in your coffee is breaking your fast. So let's talk about the clean fast.

Gin Stephens

Well, you know, it is really, you know, I'm the person that's out there like really trying to spread this message and it has to do with, you know, why are we fasting? What are our fasting goals? So in my book, "Fast, Feast, Repeat," I took everything that I had learned about fasting and why



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we're doing it and I broke it down into three goals. And the first is we wanna keep insulin low. You know, I talked earlier about insulin resistance being really at the root of so many of our issues these days but we know that insulin is anti-lipolytic, meaning it keeps you from tapping into your fat stores. You know, that's just one of the things that high insulin levels do, it's, you know, storage promoting instead of, you know, burning, promoting, right? So we wanna keep our insulin low. And we do that by keeping our bodies from thinking that a source of your fuel is coming in and sweet tastes are one thing that caused something called a cephalic phase insulin response. And you know, our brains are still back in the day of, you know, before the modern era. Our brain doesn't understand that sweetness might be a diet Coke, you know? We taste the sweetness on our tongue, it comes in, our brain says, oh, we know what sweetness is. That means we're gonna have a sugar of some sort coming in, honey fruit, whatever, 'cause that's what natural sweetness came from. And so that stimulates the cephalic phase insulin response, our pancreas releases some insulin, keeps the insulin high. So if you're like-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Gin Stephens

Go ahead.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So you are saying that people drinking their diet soda, which I think a lot of people on this summit are not drinking diet sodas anymore-

Gin Stephens

But they're put using Stevia and thinking that it's okay.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Right? Yeah, so maybe you're doing like a healthy sweetened beverage.

Gin Stephens

Right.



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

What you are saying is you're secreting insulin even though there's no glucose there, even though-

Gin Stephens

Yeah, 'cause your brain, your brain doesn't understand. And it's always funny 'cause I'll see someone say here's the one sweetener that doesn't cause an insulin response. I'm like, how does your brain know that's monk fruit? Your brain doesn't know the difference. It just tastes sweetness and think something's coming in. You know, there was an interesting study with rats where they would, would put the sweetness, whatever the sweet flavor was inside their oral cavity. And cephalic phase insulin response, they would release insulin. Then they cut the nerves from the tongue so that the sensation did not get to the brain anymore. No more insulin response. So it's coming from the taste, you know? And there's also a study where they put sweeteners directly into somebody's stomach, no insulin response.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

They didn't have that taste, that the brain rec-

Gin Stephens

The taste.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

They didn't go through the experience.

Gin Stephens

Yes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So if you take away the experience, and so this is fascinating.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

All right so...

Gin Stephens

And a lot of people will argue with that. They'll be like, well, that's not true, that doesn't happen. And I would rather err on the side of, you know, keeping my insulin down, I can save, you know, if I wanna drink something with a sweet flavor, I can have that in my eating window. So keep your insulin low, you don't want anything your body is gonna think is food or a food flavor and that includes lemon, cinnamon, apple cider vinegar. I know people are like, yeah, but those are all... No. Keep those out of your fast, keep insulin low. If your body thinks food's coming in, it's gonna release some insulin 'cause that's what the body does with the food. All right-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So what do you say about all these people that are putting butter in their coffee and think they're still fasting.

Gin Stephens

Well, that goes into step two. The second fasting goal is we wanna tap into our stored fat for fuel. Because if you're taking in a source of fuel, whether it's butter, in CT oil, whatever, exogenous ketones. So I think people are not really doing that as much as they were for a while there, that was like a big trend. But when you're taking in a source of energy, your body doesn't need to do the processes that it takes like for example, you know, to make ketones from your stored fat. There's a lot of benefit to making ketones from your stored fat versus you're just taking it in, you know, from your coffee cup. So, you know, people say, well I drink the butter coffee and I have so much energy. Well, yes. You just took in a lot of energy. So do you wanna store or do you want to burn the energy from your coffee cup or the energy from your body? And I know what I wanna do.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Totally, we wanna burn it from our body. Okay.



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Gin Stephens

Absolutely.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So now we know what a clean fast is-

Gin Stephens

Well, there's one more step. Number three-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Oh, the third.

Gin Stephens

Yeah, it's almost there. The third fasting goal is we wanna have increased autophagy. And what stimulates autophagy? Well fasting is one of the things that stimulates autophagy. What stops autophagy? Eating but also protein. So you wanna avoid drinking bone broth. You know, a lot of people think, oh, bone broth it helps me, it gets me through, well it's food, it's food for the body. So we wanna avoid food, especially protein to stop autophagy. So I've just told you what not to have-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

But what can you have? Plain water, plain sparkling water, no flavors. And you can have black coffee, plain tea, real tea. I'm not talking about, you know, like, you know, apple cinnamon delight herbal tea, that's not tea. Real tea. Real coffee and real tea that are plain, have a bitter flavor profile. And bitter flavor profile does not stimulate an insulin response 'cause our body is not expecting, you know, glucose to be coming in.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Okay, so now we know what a clean fast is.



Gin Stephens

Yes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And we're gonna talk about the eating window-

Gin Stephens

Okay.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

But before we do that and we already touched on this a little bit, but intermittent fasting supports health and longevity. So we were just, we started off talking about how you look young, I look young. You know, I'm gonna be 50 this year, you're gonna be 53, really intermittent fasting in addition to, you know, helping you heal your chronic health problems, it truly is the part of the fountain of youth.

Gin Stephens

I think so. Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So let's talk about that for a minute.

Gin Stephens

Well, you know, one of the things that happens as we age is our levels of autophagy decline and our bodies can't clean up. And so we end up having cellular aging and then our bodies age. And if we can keep autophagy going strong, that keeps us young, you know, at our mitochondrial level. And so I just really think that it should be in every adult's toolbox unless you're pregnant, breastfeeding or have an eating disorder or if you're really severely underweight. Obviously if you're underweight then you want to not be fasting. But I think it's something that would be in everyone's toolbox. You know, my husband does intermittent fasting, he never needed to lose weight. So many people think that intermittent fasting is a weight loss diet. First, it's not a diet 'cause a diet is what you eat. Intermittent fasting is when. But yes, you may lose weight with



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intermittent fasting, you might not. My husband didn't need to, like I said. I like to call it the health plan with the side effect of weight loss.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Oh I love that, I love that. Or the health plan with the side effect of whatever your body needs. Your body is so intelligent-

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

That it is going to give you what it needs. So let's talk about eating windows-

Gin Stephens

Okay.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And what should, what should everyone be eating? So what about the eating window? What should everyone be eating and then something called bioindividuality, what does that mean?

Gin Stephens

Yeah. Well, first of all, we talk about how to structure your eating window and there's a lot of ways to do it, but you're gonna find the eating window that works best for you. You know, bioindividuality fits into that as well. Bioindividuality means we're different in so many ways, what we eat, when we eat, the best eating window for us. You know, you may hear a lot of blanket statements like everyone should have their eating window blank and they'll, they might throw something out like in the morning or midday or any of that. You know, people love to make those blanket statements. But really the best eating window for you is the one that feels like a lifestyle, the one that makes you feel great. If my eating window is too early in the day, I don't feel my best throughout the day. I am a late afternoon, early evening eating window person. And you know, since I started intermittent fasting consistently in 2014, I've tried everything over the time. I know what works best for my body and it's a late afternoon, early evening eating window.

But there are a lot of people in my community who may have a different eating window. Maybe a midday eating window works best for them. There are people also who prefer to wake up, open their eating window at 8 a.m., close it by noon and they fast the rest of the day. Some people sleep better that way. I don't, wouldn't sleep well. I don't sleep well if I am hungry. But it's all about finding what works best for you. You know, a lot of people think eight hours is like some magic eating window number. You know like, oh 16/8 that's what everyone's heard of. You know, I remember when 16/8 was like a really big thing when the eight hour diet came out and everyone was doing 16/8. Well, I gained weight with 16/8 because it was like, eat whatever you want in an eight hour window.

No, that didn't work for my body. Eight hours is too long for me. I need a shorter eating window. My sweet spot is really about four to five hours probably every day. I no longer really count. When I'm what I'm doing I just like, I'm very intuitive about it now, but I'll wait till a certain time of the day when I'm ready to eat, depending on when that is, it might be two o'clock, it might be five o'clock, it might be one o'clock, it might be four o'clock and depending on my schedule, I open my eating window, I eat till I'm satisfied, I close it. So it's taken me, you know, years to get to the rhythm that feels right for me and I had to experiment with a lot of different things along the way. But for someone who's tried intermittent fasting and it didn't work for them, you know, maybe you were trying to structure your eating window after a model of someone else's ideal eating window and that wasn't working for you. So it really is very much, you know, n equals one, you a study of one and it's you.

And so my main message is one of empowerment in you figuring out what makes you feel your best. You know, start with the clean fast. You know, that's another thing people who think intermittent fasting didn't work for them most of them were not fasting clean or they didn't give their bodies long enough to adjust. In my book "Fast, Feast, Repeat," we have the 28 day fast start and that's just the adjustment period. You're not to expect weight loss, You're not to expect to feel amazing for the first 28 days. It takes a while to build that metabolic flexibility. But once you get there, you feel so good. Then you can start experimenting. I have a section in there called Tweak It Till It's Easy. And when I say easy, I mean it. Intermittent fasting should not be a struggle and a hardship and something that's really awful. You need to tweak it till it's easy for you and that's finding your right eating rhythm. We also talked, you asked about what to eat. That's also



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somewhere that bioindividuality is very important. You know, I had a really good friend that just came and stayed with us here for six nights. It was her birthday, we live at the beach, she came for her vacation and she, her body craves more protein than mine does, for example. So like one night we had this dinner and it was, didn't have any meat 'cause often we will not eat meat. My husband and I don't always eat meat with every meal. And about an hour later, she's like, that was not enough protein for me. So we're, rummaging around in my kitchen and I'm like, you want me to cook some pork chops or something?

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

You know, her body told her you did not have enough protein so she was looking for it. And learning to trust your body instead of like, let someone else come up with macros for you or here's what you should be eating. You know, I actually have a theory that every diet book that's out there that tells you exactly what to eat and how much of it to eat, what macros, what foods, how you should structure it, that is the diet that worked best for the author of that diet book. You know, so I remember all those years when I was struggling with obesity, you know, reading somebody's diet book that was like, here's the formula of exactly, if you eat exactly like this and they have the meal plan and the recipes and I would feel terrible following it, you know, but that was what worked best for that author. So I would like everybody listening to realize stop looking outward for other people to tell your macros, how many calories you need, when you should eat it. Let your body tell you because our bodies really do. You know, if you don't get enough protein, your body will ask you to eat some more.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

I love that you're saying this because I run into this often with my clients who say their feedback to me is your program's are amazing, I got better. I just wish you would've told me more what to eat. So we give, I give guidelines and say-

Gin Stephens

Right.



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

This is what is supportive to reducing inflammation in your body and there are people who say, just tell me what to do.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And that doesn't work. You have to start listening to your own body.

Gin Stephens

Yep.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

I am like your friend. If I don't eat animal protein every day, I am not having a good day.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

I am, I could never be a vegetarian. My body type does not operate well like that. And so, and then some people don't operate well when they eat a lot of animal protein, they operate better when they eat more plants so everyone is different. The other thing that I would share, I had another speaker on here who was talking about, there is no one type of diet forever that serves.

Gin Stephens

That's true.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Actually changing your diet up is what, is what your body craves.



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Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So actually going carnivore for a while and then going vegetarian for a while and then going, you know what, whatever it is, that's what your body loves. But listening to your body.

Gin Stephens

We can tell it's easy and feels good and that's the key and it's not gonna be the same. You know how I just said, I don't, you know eat a ton of meat all the time. It was so very interesting when I had, I had COVID in the fall, in November. And when I had COVID, I lost my taste and smell very briefly, like just for a few days and then it came right back. But when I was sick, could not eat meat, I mean like zero when I had COVID. I was like, no, I can't have chicken, I don't want beef, I don't want any meat at all. I did eat some eggs. But what's funny is as soon as I got better, like a week later I was eating all the meat. I like only wanted meat. I was like eating all the chicken and I'm like, that is so interesting my body is craving this. I guess it was doing some rebuilding, I don't really know what it was doing, but my body told me that. And so our bodies know what to do. And I do wanna say one other thing. You know, I didn't talk about, obviously your audience probably knows this already, but real food is always going to be better than ultra processed food. You know, when we're trying to learn to listen to our bodies, that doesn't work if your diet is like the standard American diet and you're eating mostly ultra processed foods, like most Americans are really, that's all they're... Like over half of, of their diet is ultra processed foods. Probably not for your audience, but real food-

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah, but people, but ultra processed foods are tricky too. People-

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Think they're eating real food and they are actually eating more processed food than they realize.



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Gin Stephens

Well, and especially in the health world, there are a lot of, you know, keto, paleo ultra processed foods out there, like meal replacement kind of things that are, that people are selling them as healthy and they could even be organic, maybe an organic meal replacement bar, but that's an ultra processed food.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yes, it is.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Protein powders-

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Ultra processed food.

Gin Stephens

Ultra processed, yeah

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

It is. I mean, it is. I use protein powders when I'm in a pinch and I'm in a hurry and I need some extra, you know, food, a quick and easy meal.

Gin Stephens

Right.



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

But not every day.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

Real food is, I mean, your body knows what to do with real food and the things that are ultra processed get metabolized so differently and go straight, I mean, your body doesn't even need to do as much work to break them down. You know, there was an interesting study I talked about in "Fast, Feast, Repeat," cheese sandwiches. They took two different cheese sandwiches and fed them to people. And one of them was an ultra processed cheese sandwich and the other was a less processed version of a cheese sandwich. And the way that they affected the body was very, very different.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Of course.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So, yeah. So our big message is eat real food.

Gin Stephens

Yep. As close to it as you can, as often as you can.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And the other thing I'm hearing is intermittent fasting is not a diet-



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Gin Stephens

It's not.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Intermittent fasting when you eat your real food.

Gin Stephens

Yes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So very different. And then the power of bioindividuality.

Gin Stephens

Yes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

This means we're not all the same, we're all different, it's not one size fits all. And you might not want the same thing week after week or month after month. Your body might crave something different. Go with it.

Gin Stephens

Exactly. I'm very seasonal with what I crave. It's so interesting. And probably a lot of people are if you just learn to listen to your body. But in the summer, I really start looking at salads in a different kind of way, all, at fruit. But during the winter, I'm not gonna eat a strawberry. I don't want one. I'm not interested in that salad. You know, I'm worn like beans and things like that. But it really does follow a seasonality and I think that our bodies are supposed to do that.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Absolutely. Yeah, think about those cravings. We do crave summer foods in the summer. Now of course, nowadays you can get any food anytime of year, anywhere.



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Gin Stephens

Right.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

So when you're browsing your grocery store and you see, you know, watermelon and strawberries in February, you know, you can get them, but if you eat seasonally, I mean, that definitely supports your healing. All right, so what about women? Let's talk about women specifically. Can they safely live an intermittent fasting lifestyle?

Gin Stephens

And the answer is yes to that. And it's such an interesting question because I get that from so many people, especially in the health community, because I'll say, oh yeah, I do intermittent fasting and they go, yeah but what about women? Because there's a misnomer out there about intermittent fasting. So let me back up a little bit. We know what's bad for women is over restriction. Over restriction is not good hormonally for our bodies, but for some reason, people perceive that intermittent fasting equates with over restriction and it does not. You know, I would contend that when I was doing the diet that I was advised to do of 1,200 calories a day where I was eating frequent small meals throughout the day, holy moly that was overly restrictive for my body.

And because I was eating all those small meals during the day and I was drinking diet soda 'cause it has zero calories, my insulin was high. I was not tapping into my fat stores very well so my body was definitely not well fueled. And that's when your metabolism starts to shut down, that's when you start to have the urge to binge because you're not well fueled, that's what's really bad for our bodies, especially if you're doing intense exercise. So, you know, we tell women go on a low calorie diet and do intense exercise, eat less, move more and no one worries about that. But intermittent fasting, you know, my book is called "Fast, Feast, Repeat" not Fast, Low Calorie Diet, Repeat. You know, you're nourishing your body well during your eating window. So women should not over restrict through any paradigm including intermittent fasting, but we should not assume that intermittent fasting is overly restrictive. When you're listening to your body, you're eating according to your hunger and some days you're gonna need to eat more-



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah.

Gin Stephens

And some days you won't need to eat as much.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

You can eat 2,000 plus calorie. You can eat 2,000 plus calories during that five hour eating.

Gin Stephens

Absolutely.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Very satiated.

Gin Stephens

I count nothing. But I just eat till I'm satisfied and I'm, sure it's a lot.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

But you're eating real food. Your satisfied does not including a big old giant slice of chocolate cake and-

Gin Stephens

Not most days but there could be some cake sometimes.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Oh yeah, we wanna be able to enjoy those things sometimes.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.



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Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And when you have, when you have a, you know, cellular health that is operating at a high level, you can handle a piece of chocolate cake.

Gin Stephens

Yeah.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Right.

Gin Stephens

My most recent book is called "Cleanish," right? Eat mostly clean, live mainly clean and unlock your body's natural ability to self clean. The ish is important though, because you know, if it's summertime and I can't have any ice cream ever again, I'm gonna be sad.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

I know we do have to find a way to live in these modern times. And I'm the first person to raise my hand and say, I'm not perfect. I am not living like a cave woman where there's no sugar-

Gin Stephens

Right.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

And no, you know, nothing, no, they didn't have ice cream, right? I'm not living like that. But I've gotten myself to the point where my body can now tolerate that from time to time and it doesn't send me down a tailspin and I don't gain five pounds because I ate a dish of ice cream.

Gin Stephens

Exactly.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Yeah. Yeah. This has been incredible Gin. You are so, you're just such a breath of fresh air.



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Gin Stephens

Oh thank you.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

You are so... It's so nice to have somebody here who could just break this down so simply and I think people after watching this are gonna feel like I can do this.

Gin Stephens

You can do it, yeah. You can do it. We have people in our community, you know, when I left Facebook in 2021 but we had almost 500,000 group members in our Facebook communities doing intermittent fasting. And it's just a testament to, it's the best way you will ever live. You know, there's a saying and I didn't make it up and I'm sorry I interrupted you, but you were winding it down. But there's a saying that says, you know, "Dieting is easy in contemplation, but hard in execution." We've all been there. You know, we start off strong, it's gonna be great. I know it's awful, it gets worse over time. Fasting is the opposite. Fasting is hard in contemplation but easy in execution. Once your body adapts and you find your rhythm and you tweak it till it's easy and you choose the foods that work for your body, you will feel better than you've ever felt in your life.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

That is a perfect way to end this interview.

Gin Stephens

Yeah, thank you.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Love that. Gin, thank you so much. Tell us where we can find your books, where people can follow you and get your support. Where are you at?

Gin Stephens

Well, you can find everything through ginstephens.com. Gin is G-I-N, Stephens with the PH, ginstephens.com. There's a link to my books. They're all available on Amazon and wherever



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books are sold. And I also have a community, ginstephens.com/community since I left Facebook. It's a lot smaller than 500,000. We're sitting at just above 5,000 now but it's just a great place for intermittent fasters to support one another. And yeah, and look for Intermittent Fasting Stories podcast if you wanna hear some stories of intermittent fasters who have changed their lives.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Amazing. Thank you so much for your support of this summit, for being here, for sharing your wisdom and for the guiding light that you truly are-

Gin Stephens

Thank you.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Out in the world. You take good care, Gin.

Gin Stephens

Thank you.

Laura Frontiero, FNP-BC

Bye.