Transcript DMI Episode 3

Announcer: Welcome to the Mayo Clinic cardiovascular Continuing medical Education podcast in collaboration with an educational content partner, national Dairy Council, a nonprofit dairy nutrition research and education organization that share science-based information on dairy's nutritional benefits for health and wellness. Join us for this three part mini series to discuss nutrition and cardiology and gain valuable insights that can be directly applied to your practice. Please visit USdairy.com/nationalDairyCouncil for educational content relevant to the podcast series.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Hey everyone, my name is Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger. I'm a preventive cardiologist here at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. I'm also the co-director of our cardiometabolic clinic with a passion for nutrition. So I'm very excited about the third episode of our three episode series with a title for today's podcast on myth busting, common misconceptions about dairy and heart health, personalized nutrition and dairy, and practical tips for heart healthy dairy consumption. And it is my absolute pleasure to introduce two colleagues and friends who are very much front and center at Mayo Clinic when it comes to heart health and diet. We have our lead dietician, Tara Schmidt, who is an instructor of nutrition at the Mayo Clinic. She's also the lead dietician for the Mayo Clinic Diet, host of the podcast, "Mayo Clinic on Nutrition", medical editor of Nutrition and Fitness Channel, and co-author the Mayo Clinic Diet Weight Loss Medications Edition. She's passionate about reducing weight bias and educating people about realistic evidence-based weight management. Thank you Tara, for being here.

Tara Schmidt: Thanks for having me.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: We also have the wonderful executive chef Jen, who received her culinary arts degree from the Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. She's held positions at the Hyatt Hotel in Newport, Rhode Island and at Hilton Head Health where she strived for the very goal she strives for still today at the Mayo Clinic Abraham Healthy Living Program here at Rochester. She is also, if you haven't picked it up, the author of the Cook Smart Eat Well Cookbook. Hello, chef Jen.

Jen Welper: Hi. Thanks for having me.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Oh, it's so great to the three of us to be together in the same podcast, I mean, or even in the same meeting. So it's wonderful to see you both. I'm just going to go ahead and give an outline of what I hope and tends to be a very lively discussion between the three of us and just learning so much from you both. We're hoping to really understand encouraging full fat dairy to avoiding dairy at all costs, which is the right way to go. You know, we know that the internet has a

wide range of opinions and advice expert and otherwise, and do the nutritional benefits really outweigh the risks? Are there populations of people who should avoid it? I'm really hoping we could dig into some of the research around dairy and associated health outcomes and ways to healthy healthfully, incorporate it into one's daily intake as well. But also best ways. More importantly, maybe the viewers will wanna know easy ways to incorporate dairy, maybe sneak it into some recipes, different types of cheeses to use in recipes that help with flavor that can prevent you also from over consuming and some best post workout dairy eats. How does that all sound?

Jen Welper: works for me.

Tara Schmidt: I'm pumped.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: All right, and so let's just start. Does anyone have any, does anyone wanna say anything off the bat about dairy and heart health in general or how you both feel about dairy and incorporating it into your own diets or with the patients that you see?

Tara Schmidt: If we can, I'd love to hear your knowledge. You're so much more of a researcher than I am, but talk about this relationship that we have between LDL and saturated fat, which I feel like we know has a fairly well researched background, increased intake and saturated fat raises LDL, but is dairy the outlier? Right. And so we used to be really cautious in the world of dietetics about limiting people's saturated fat intake. We can say 7%, we can say 10% depending on what guideline you're looking at, but is that all saturated fat? So I would love to to bring up some of the more recent kind of meta-analyses or reviews that I believe have kind of said, okay, we still need to be mindful about ish cholesterol LDL, but more so encouraging a helpful pattern of eating right? Is red meat, is coconut oil, is ultra processed foods high in saturated fat? Is dairy all the same When it comes to risk, do I get to flip this and like ask the host the questions?

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Right? Guess we're doing it and I mean I'm happy to because I think this is the confusion that people have out there. There obviously the data is very robust with the saturated fat being associated with LDL cholesterol that if you raise one, you'll raise the other. But I think what's really important to know is that isolating a food product as the sole cause of poor health is probably not the ideal way. And I totally agree with you where patterns are more important. And so when it comes to, let's say coconut oil, which is purely saturated fat, and we can see the data that shows people who are coconut oil consumers have a significant raise in their LDL cholesterol and when they stop taking in that as their cooking oil or form of cooking, the LDL comes down. I think when it comes to dairy, the, the data still remains unclear. There are certainly some retrospective studies, right? And all of this comes from observational studies where they're able to pull out from let's say food frequency questionnaires, just dairy and they can make some associations. But really there's really limited data on randomized clinical trials really focusing on dairy and whether or not

it's beneficial or not. And so I think there are a handful of studies, a couple all point out like the pure study that really showed no association with reduced mortality and actually lower the risk of these composite outcomes for stroke and overall mortality. And there's also a French prospective cohort study that they're following over decades that show we know the French, they definitely enjoy full fat dairy. I've tried to order a soy milk latte in France and the person just, they look at me like you were, oh yeah, it was like totally sinning, insulting, like, do not come here and ask us for a non-dairy product whether you're, you know, cappuccino or you're like cafecito, that's a different country. But, and so interestingly enough, like they put out data also their prospective cohort, it's like the Nutri Sante study that they show that full fat fermented dairy and cheeses really had no association with worse cardiovascular outcomes as part of the dietary pattern of the French diet. And so when you isolate these different dairy products, full fat versus non-fat, they're really finding that some of the data shows it's protective, some it's neutral and some it's controversial in terms of it being associated with harm. We'd love to get both of your input on what you think about that.

Tara Schmidt: And I think all three of us, when we see patients and members in our day-to-day job, we never talk to 'em about singular food groups or singular foods or singular nutrients. There's no way that Chef Jen is gonna have a cooking class and just ask someone simply about what they cook in, in this very, very small category. You, Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger, when you talk to your patients, I'm assuming you talk about the pattern. So I ask so many more questions. I ask about their fruit and vegetable intake. I ask about their grain intake, how often they're cooking with what type of oil. And if I'm gonna make chocolate chip cookies, I'm going to make them with butter and you're not going to change my mind. They're very good by the way. So I think that it's so much more important for just gonna call out the internet and maybe TikTok a little bit to remind people that we don't eat or live in vacuums. We also have a really difficult time studying nutrition in the first place because we have to lock people in rooms and then ask how their food is and see how their nutrition impacted it. So what are you eating habitually? How often are you having these foods? What types of synergies do the foods you eat have together? And chef Jen gets to talk about kinda the fun part, which is like what do you do in your kitchen? What does that look like? What do you have in your pantry?

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Yeah, I to, I couldn't agree more with that. And so you know, you Tara, as a dietician who sees these patients pretty regularly, can you tell us some of the nutritional benefits of dairy? You know, dairy gets this bad wrap about having the full fat, saturated fat, et cetera. But maybe talk a little bit about the nutrients that, you know, if you replace sodas, kind of sugary drinks with a dairy that might be full fat, but there are other things including like the milk matrix with other nutrients that can be very beneficial and a replacement for these more ultra processed high fructose corn syrup types of drinks.

Tara Schmidt: Yeah you brought up a really good point a, a common question that I have when people bring up quote unquote controversial foods is what would you be having instead? So if you choose to eliminate X, Y or Z, what is going to be your alternative? And we know of course that some people actually make a worse choice nutrition wise or nutrient density wise or calorie density wise

when they make those substitutions. So the benefits that we know about dairy, which you can get from other food groups should you need to, of course I think of the dash diet, right? So I think about calcium and potassium, phosphorus, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B12. So there's a lot of of good stuff going on here. So if you need to get it from other food sources we can help you do that. But that was a pretty long list of beneficial nutrients. And so like you said, when we are talking about someone's dietary pattern, we wanna make sure to hear about where they're getting those nutrients and if their diet is happens to be low in dairy for whatever reason, where do they plan on getting them? Or if they're going to switch to a more plant-based milk beverage, I dunno what we're supposed to call those anymore, are they going to get the same nutrient profile?

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Absolutely. And maybe a chef, Jen, you can help us understand a little bit about, you know, full fat dairy and satiation. Do people consume less calories if they're having full fat types of foods such as dairy And how do actually incorporate that in a way that maybe someone's not, someone doesn't imagine, maybe now just chugging a glass of milk like we did in our childhood with our, you know, mealtime dish, but maybe other ways in which we can incorporate that. Do you have any thoughts about feeling full when you have dairy versus other kind of sugary drinks that raise your glycemic index and then you crash and then you want more?

Jen Welper: Absolutely. And I am also gonna put this out there that I am a dairy farmer's granddaughter. So I grew up on dairy farm, so I grew up on-

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Did you milk the cows too?

Tara Schmidt: I was gonna say outta-

Jen Welper: I'm short for that, but I did grow up on whole milk, like right out of the bulk tank, like so I grew up with that, very much so. And I think that people do tend, and it, it's hard because we're in a society where we're not always paying full attention when we're eating right? But it does seem that when people are consuming some full fat products, they tend to be satisfied with a little bit less, which I don't know if it's necessarily just like the density of it and just a little bit heavier. So the way it, maybe it coats the stomach, but it does seem that that seems to be kind of like the overall if you're making like a fat smoothie in the morning with Greek yogurt. So that could be a a, a mixture of the higher protein content but it could also be a mixture of the higher fat content as well. Some cool things to do too is when you're using those types of things, I highly recommend if you're gonna use a full fat dairy like yogurt, put that in your muffins instead of butter or like your canola oil because it is gonna offer two things, three things actually it is gonna be your fat. So that's mouthfeel. The second thing is to be protein. So it's up protein in your, your muffin also it's gonna help moisture. So to keep your muffins actually moist versus using things like apple sauce and and fruit purees that tend to just be like sugar and don't keep that moisture very long.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: And I love that you talked about protein 'cause I think the era in the, the era of these transformational anti-obesity medications with drastic weight loss, the biggest criticism is how are we gonna maintain adequate protein intake and dairy, while it has fat also contains protein. And so this could be a really wonderful kind of easy way to get in your protein with somebody who might not want to have a bunch of volume and food because they're already being reduced based on the way the medication works these GLP-1 receptor agonists. So I think that's absolutely fantastic. What do you guys think about the role of milk alternatives though in replacement? Or what is, what is everyone's vibe about that I know you know there's every nut milk available and people prefer different ones and different coffee shops have the oat milk versus have the soy milk, macadamia nut milk. Are these empty calories? Do we get enough protein? I mean they're much lower in the saturated fat, but are we getting the same value and have these even been studied in a randomized kind of prospective way?

Tara Schmidt: Yeah, I'd love chef Jen to talk about substituting them because not every substitution always turns out as you'd like to from a nutritional standpoint, what I think most dieticians would say is that soy is going to be our closest to cow's milk. So if you have an allergy or whatever reason that you'd like to avoid cow's milk soy is gonna be your closest bet because especially from a protein standpoint, those are equivalent. But even in the 2020 to 2025 dietary guidelines for America, other and they put milk in quotes made from plants, almond, rice, coconut, oat, hemp, I had quinoa milk once, it was not very-

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Ooh, what color is it? White.

Tara Schmidt: I think it was like creamy or cashew-y looking. I dunno, I don't think I paid very much attention. It some, they're all fortified differently, right? So these may have calcium but they do not have the equivalent of protein. So that would be the biggest kind of coaching factor I have for my patient of if you're going to replace dairy with a plant-based milk product, soy is gonna be your closest bet in terms of calcium, vitamin A, vitamin D, they typically fortify it with B12, which is great for our vegetarian and vegan populations out there. But we also have to be careful of added sugar and I will shout it from the rooftops that cows milk does not have added sugar as crazy as the internet tends to go, but a lot of these plant milks do. So I like to look for unsweetened or look at that label and make sure that the added sugar row says zero because that would also be the true of white cow's milk.

Jen Welper: And I think it's also important to like what is your why? Like what is your why for not having cow's milk? I've had heard a couple different arguments of like we're the only mammal that still drinks milk. And I would say we're also the only mammal that uses cell phones and drives cars. That's what I say. So I think if we also recognize what is our why, right? And we always, and you

know, part of my consultations with patients as well is like if we are eating and drinking foods in their purest form, like that's what's going to feed our body the best. But obviously if you have an intolerance and you need to substitute, yeah, I would say definitely like an unsweetened soy milk usually does substitute fairly well. I will say that there are other like milks and creams if you're trying to be vegan that are like maybe like a coconut milk that can at least it replicates the mouth feel. So when you're looking for that and you can't have dairy, it's, it's so funny, it's called like country, I think it's called country crock and you'd think it meant like right away margarine, but it's actually a vegetarian or vegan like heavy cream. And so it does, so for your coffee, a small amount, a little, it goes along that way, still gonna be high in fat. But that would be something that's, it's real and there's not a lot of ingredients on that either or sweet.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Yeah and that's something that, you know, two things that are running in my mind now is the idea of the high sugar content or potentially high sugar content in some of these milk alternatives. And one question I have for the group is, you know, sugar and these very high carb diets are being more and more focused on to be linked to pro-inflammation. And we know the systemic inflammation has a huge impact on the atherosclerosis pathway or building kind of, you know, fatty plaques in our arteries and also being somewhat linked to some food related cancers as well. And so interesting that we think about milk alternatives, we think about sugar and then we notice that with dairy, as Tara mentioned, that you know, there is no additive sugar in that. And so is there, from what you both know or what you think your opinion is consuming dairy pro-inflammatory, is it anti-inflammatory? What is your take on that?

Tara Schmidt: I hear this a lot from my patients and we have a lot of people who come in to the clinic understandably looking for a quote anti-inflammatory diet, right? And a lot of times they will list things assuming that gluten and or dairy are the culprits. And I, I like to politely educate them that if they don't have an intolerance or an allergy to those things, they're likely perfectly fine to have. There's a lot of benefits to whole grains. I don't really care what grain it is there. And then like we said, there are nutritional benefits to dairy. Should you tolerate it, should you not be allergic? Of course I think what I like to educate people more so on related to inflammation is yes, saturated fat may increase inflammation, but again, let's look at your whole diet. Let's look at the red meat in your diet. Let's look at any food that you have that is trans fat. Even in small amounts in it. Let's look at how many ultra processed foods you have in your diet. So instead of kind of immediately attacking again a singular food group, I would rather listen about the other foods I'm probably gonna be a little bit more strict on before I, I go to dairy one because we have a lot of nutritional benefit to dairy but also because I wanna talk about fruits and vegetables and what if it is fermented dairy? Okay, that I think we can go in the opposite direction and talk about the benefits of fermented food. So I'm, I'll be neutral, I will talk to you about whatever you enjoy eating, but I like to to make that a much wider lens, let's say.

Jen Welper: I love that you said that Tara, because I literally had a patient today that it was a, an inflammation thing and it was so fascinating because what he really needed to take out of his diet,

he, he did eventually, but he also took out dairy. But the biggest thing was alcohol, which he kind of demonized dairy along with that. And I said well I think you actually took out the main thing that is actually the culprit. I said, but I wouldn't, I was like, dairy really does have, and it was just fascinating because you just brought that very point up but he was still unsure. I said I think in you know, frequency and consistency and that's what you're looking at and the quantity, right? But I think little things of cottage cheese, little things of yogurt, those have some really big benefits

Tara Schmidt: And there's always a substitution, right? So I would prefer that people when able cook with olive oil, But that doesn't mean that you can't have a a Greek yogurt at at the same time. So we're not really pushing for one or the other. I just want you to figure out a pattern that gets you the right nutrients that gets you beneficial food that you actually like eating, that you're not miserable. And it, all of us can be friends, right? Like it can all exist in the same diet but I feel like our, our population really loves to polarize things. Oh do you feel like that or is that just me and like my high blood pressure related to the internet?

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: No, I totally agree with that and I think, you know, importantly people who are science driven, when we think about pro-inflammatory things, we think about the inflammatory biomarkers that are easily tested. And I think even the literature looking at fermented dairy products, cheese and even milk dairy depending on the population, it's either neutral or it's in favor of dairy. Especially in patients who have metabolic syndrome because metabolic syndrome having just excess sugar is pro-inflammation and maybe dairy has some role we don't understand yet that somehow neutralizes that where they've seen reduction in biomarkers but then in other studies they've found that there's no difference between people who have dairy versus not. And there's no changes or differences between things like high sensitivity CRPs, some of the ILS and TNF alpha and different biomarkers like that have that have been established to be associated with inflammation. And so I think that is kind of still in the air and I know we're in this era where most people are in search for longevity and anti-inflammation. So kind of the stuff that we always have to be thinking about and talking about when it comes to versus anti-inflammatory disease. And I totally agree that you, depending on what else you have in your diet and let's say right somebody has a clean diet, right? And the only thing that you can identify is having high in saturated fat is dairy but they otherwise eat relatively, you know, vegetarian with plant-based proteins, you know, or like fatty fish with your poly and monounsaturated fats and everything else. Nothing is fried, everything is cooked in olive oil, maybe the dairy and then the LDL cholesterol is still high. Then there's an argument there for maybe let's reduce the amount of cheese maybe or the amount of butter you're putting. I am not a proponent of butter, it's very high in saturated fat. That's one thing I think that the data's pretty clear on. And then seeing if that has an effect right on your lipid panel in three to six months. And I think me being a preventive cardiologist, I do believe in the science that the lower the LDL cholesterol, the better. One of my former mentors who's at Mount Sinai, Dr. Valentine Fuster, he's actually doing a study on, on people who are 30 to 40 years old. It's called the pre CAD trial. And he's actually without any risk factors, they're 30 to 40 years old and his goal is to keep their LDL less than 70. Okay. And we'll follow up with them in four to five years. And if their LDL is greater than 70, no history or family history of coronary disease, if their LDL is greater than 70, he's going to give

them inclisiran, which is an injectable form of you know, cholesterol lowering to keep at that 'cause he has data that shows anytime your LDL cholesterol is greater than 70, you start to build plaque in your leg arteries and even in your carotids or your neck artery. So when I think about the different foods that contribute, you know I always try to look for the ultra processed kind of saturated fats first, which most Americans, with the exception of your superstar patients, those are the lowest hanging fruit rather than finding a farmer who grew up eating red meat and maybe they eat lean red meat, right? But then they have ultra processed foods or anything. I'm not gonna tell 'em stop eating the red meat when that in comparison to other really negative foods. I'll focus on those things. I don't know how you both feel about that when you're consulting with patients.

Tara Schmidt: Yeah, I like to remind people too that we have a good amount of research about patterns of eating that are beneficial and even in multiple studies and they have multiple titles. So let's talk about the dash diet and the mind diet and the Mediterranean, which make up that one in the middle, but what's part of all of them, which is fruits, vegetables, unsaturated fats, beans, legumes, whole grains, sometimes fatty fish or at least lean proteins. So if we can focus on increasing the foods that have been promoted across these very, very kind of medically backed diets, let's, let's focus on that. We clearly know that if we have three or more different styles of eating that have been not only shown to decrease inflammation, decrease blood pressure, cholesterol, et cetera, let's focus on what we know and then the rest can kind of fill in with what you prefer. I think Jen does a really good job of helping people stay with a diet that is nostalgic or culturally appropriate to them, but to also tweak it in the right way to move it in a healthier direction. Do you do that with cooking technique most often or portion size?

Jen Welper: Yeah, so like this is the best way since we do have a lot of people from the Midwest and red meat is very common. I usually say, okay, let's say you're having lasagna, you're having Swedish meatballs or something of that nature. I'm gonna ask you, can you, would you throw some quinoa in there instead of crackers? Because the quinoa, I'm gonna get some protein. So my overall, my ratio of red meat is now gonna be lower, but my portion is going to be the same size, right? So I'm not taking away their meat, I'm just finding ways to make it better so we can kind of stretch this along. And for some of them I don't even know, like if they're, if they're making that stuff at home, I'm like okay, so either you have a French background cook at home or is it okay maybe I'm not doing very well in other areas. Maybe we just polish what we're doing at home a little bit better and maybe let's focus on maybe you're getting some fast food. Okay wait, can we take that out? Like let's, let's look at the real problem child and see how we can make that better versus be like well you gotta take all the red meat away. You gotta do all of that because you'll never stick to it in a you'll, you'll lose them and we don't wanna lose them.

Tara Schmidt: Yeah. How often, right? Like yeah while we're recording this, the holidays are almost here and everyone always wants me to healthify their holiday recipes and I'll, that's fine if you'd like to do that. But I will typically ask like how often do you have that dish? If you have that dish once a year, just make it how your grandma made it.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: It's okay. I mean it's so important to to talk about this, you know, because food culture is probably front and center in most cultures like globally. And so the more you restrict, while there are certainly so many benefits with restriction and really limiting, you know, many of the things that are part of that are culturally normal, that might not be the healthiest. It just depends on the frequency in which you're having it and how much of it you're having it. So I really love that, especially you know, knowing that as you said Tara, the holidays are coming up, you know, just for instance, my husband made Turkey chili and normally what you eat with Turkey chili is like some cheese on top and the other garnish is usually sour cream. So we replace the sour cream with a full fat non flavored Greek yogurt. So it still has that consistency and the contrast with the hot chili, especially if it's a little spicy. But now I'm getting even more protein because I'm having Greek yogurt with the Turkey chili which has a ton of protein and beans and legumes, et cetera. And so I just think it's so wonderful and you know, I think at this point we gotta pivot and chef Jen, you gotta tell us all the secrets and you know, most of the dishes that we make are snacks and how do we incorporate ways to eat less, eat less, you know, portions of food while still feeling satiated? 'cause as you said, the diet that works for the patient that they'll stick with is the correct diet for that patient. Knowing that there are these risk factors and LDL cholesterols that come in and to be mindful of that and what your take is on maybe the common things you give out to people. And Tara, you too, because you guys see a ton of these people just for these types of visits. So we wanna let all the listeners know without having to come all the way out to Rochester, Minnesota to see one of you guys in person. Why do

Tara Schmidt: We use so much like shredded mild cheddar from a bag

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Chef Jen does that. I love .

Tara Schmidt: Just that, just like boil your blood.

Jen Welper: You know what I think is funny? This is usually how I explain cheese to people. Like imagine if you went to a cocktail party, right? You had mild cheddar cubes and you had like feta cheese balls. You are not going to take like six feta cheese balls, you'll take one or two, you'll take six or more mild cheddar cubes easily. And why? 'cause they're mild, right? So with that concept, it makes me think, okay, so a little goes a long way. So in my cooking, if I'm making like a pizza, even if it's a healthier pizza, can't I just kind of put a little bit of like mozzarella, right? 'cause we're not trying to like take it away, but can we add a really good Parmesan, can we add a really good a feta cheese? You know, maybe you wanna do gorgonzola, you wanna do gruyere or something that's really got some punch to it so we're satisfied with less. So I think that's a huge part to this. And you know, sometimes people say, well some of these things are more expensive. You're right, they are, but they're better quality and you'll use less so it'll last longer, right? Because cheese theoretically does

last quite a while. We just have to be intentional, intentional about using it in more of a recipes. If you think about people put cheddar on everything, why? Why can't we put gruyere on everything, right? So when you're doing like lasagnas, when you're doing some of these casserole dishes that we're so used to, right? Can we not switch that up and use an extra sharp cheddar, do a smoked cheddar, right? Something that's got a lot of flavor,

Tara Schmidt: Right? And this can actually have an impact on people's calorie intake. So the examples that I use are cheese number one chocolate, right? Like how much milk chocolate could you eat? Or a let's talk oil, right? People kind of complain about the cost of like very nice olive oil, but if you're dipping bread into it that there's a big difference there. So there really is this like mathematical exchange of if something is that much stronger, you're going to have less of it, which means you're gonna save money 'cause you're not gonna use it up as fast and you're probably gonna have less calories and it's worth it. Like you can really, really enjoy even the few bites that you have.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: I love that. And I mean we're getting close to running outta time. There's one more question that I'm dying to hear 'cause I get asked this question sometimes at some of these CME talks is what about a post-workout? You know, what are protein shakes? And a lot of it, you know, these dairy high ultra filtered types of shakes that have a lot of protein in, is this a good form of getting our protein in? Are they healthy for us? Are they considered ultra processed?

Jen Welper: So I honestly, I keep it really simple. I think cottage cheese is amazing, right? And I usually do like a a medium, you can do low fat cottage cheese or 2%. The other thing I think is really powerful is instead of like buying these protein shakes, making your own using like a non-fat plain Greek yogurt, throwing some, some frozen fruit and maybe some raw oats because we're going to get, and not a lot, right? We're not trying to throw in a ton of oats where that would be almost like your pre-workout. But what we're looking at is really just having something that can kind of fill me up and it's doing all of the right things. But here's the thing, I can make a blender full of that and put it in little mason jars. I also explain to people, set your environment up so it's easy for you to make really quick decisions. And it's easy. So get the small mason jars, scoop all your yogurt in there. If you wanna throw some berries on there, great. Maybe you portion out a bunch of your cottage cheeses. Because we are in a society if we want things that are very efficient, right? And we don't wanna mess with it, we want it already. It's all convenient. So if you set your environment up so it makes it easy for you to do it. So make it be you did it on Saturday or Sunday, right? And then on Thursday you have to do a few more. That is okay. But I think if you can look at those typically things like cheese sticks are okay, they just, they don't necessarily do the job. So typically I kind of resort to that. One thing I wanted to mention that I didn't get to mention before with cottage cheese, this is awesome. I make, it's in my cookbook, a cilantro lime dressing. It is pureed cottage cheese. It gets very smooth. No, there's cilantro, lime, juice, garlic, a little bit of olive oil, salt pepper, right? What's amazing about it is it works great as a sour cream works great as a dip, it works great as a spread so

it can make eating your broccoli a little bit more entertaining. Plus I'm getting that protein from the cottage cheese versus it being a sour cream based dip.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Do you have a replacement for those of us who don't like the taste of cottage cheese? I've tried to like it and I like cannot.

Tara Schmidt: It's very trendy right now. I know.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: And I'm not the trendiest, I guess 'cause I can't stomach it.

Jen Welper: What I'm kind of wondering though, is that a texture thing for you?

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: Maybe. Maybe I should try to put in my Vitamix and try that recipe you just mentioned. Maybe I'll give it another try. I tried it in college a few times based on the South Beach diet. That's a low carb kind of different phases. And cottage cheese was one of the main characters for most meals every day. And I just couldn't do it. I just could not. So maybe, but I had it in the curd-y like way.

Jen Welper: Yeah.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: And I'm not from the Midwest, so I don't love like those types of textures.

Jen Welper: Yeah. What I have noticed, because we do this for every CME we, this is the class that they do and that's the recipe they make. And even in other ones, when I put it out on the salad bar, they're like, what is this? It's a sour cream. I'm like, no, it's cottage cheese. They're like, there's no way. I hate cottage cheese. And I'm like, yeah, not chef Jen's.

Dr. Kyla Lara-Breitinger: All right. So smooth cottage teeth coming up. Well ladies, I am so thankful that you took time out of your busy schedules to join me in a really fun discussion about the effect of dairy and heart health and some kind of easy practical ways, and maybe some questions that people have had that have looked on the internet. And you guys, both in your respective positions have a lot of experience out there. And so, you know, I just feel honored to share this platform with you to talk about it. 'cause I think people really want to find sources with people who actually studied this as part of their training and live it every day versus picking it up because it's trendy. And

I do value both of your opinions and expertise. So thank you so much again, and I can't wait to collaborate again in the future.

Tara Schmidt: Thanks for having us.

Jen Welper: Thanks for having us.

Announcer: Thank you for joining us today. We invite you to share your thoughts and suggestions about the podcast by emailing cvselfstudy@mayo.edu and find more episodes cveducation.mayo.edu. Be sure to tune in to each episode and tune in each week to explore today's most pressing cardiology topics with your colleagues at Mayo Clinic.