



# MUSCLE EXPERT PODCAST



EPISODE 56

ROLAND PANKEWICH

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Welcome to the Muscle Expert podcast with Ben Pakulski, one of the world's top professional bodybuilders – an expert on human performance and mindset mastery. Ben dives deep to deliver the strategy of top experts to upgrade your body, mind, muscle, strength, performance, biochemistry, and how to become the upgraded, modern man.

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**BEN**

Hey, what's up everybody? Ben Pakulski is back in house with another episode of the Muscle Expert Podcast. I have an amazing guest for you here, Mr. Roland Pankewich, who is an optimal health practitioner.

Today we're going to talk about digestion: benefits of digestion for optimizing health. We're going to talk a little bit about circadian rhythms, metabolic function and how to optimize fat burning. Roland, how are you doing, man?

**ROLAND**

I'm doing really well, how are you my friend?

**BEN**

I'm excellent, thank you. Welcome and thank you very much for joining me.

**ROLAND**

Thank you for having me, it's an honor to be on!

**BEN**

So Roland and I have a very brief history of knowing each other, but I was extremely impressed with his credentials, and he's extremely bright guy after having a few conversations with him. So I thought what better opportunity than to bring him on podcast and have him teach you guys some of his golden nuggets about health function and just living a better life? So Roland, where do you want to start the conversation today? I know we talked about...let's roll with the idea that, you know, most bodybuilders are so set in the mindset of 'I just need to eat calories to grow.

It's really ironic that I actually wrote an article yesterday: how arbitrary calories is a thing of the 1980s and 1990s, and now being mindful of what you eat, when you eat it and optimizing your digestion is such a massive part of optimizing muscle-building and health in general. So I'd love for you to start giving insights and feedback as to where people should start. So I'm going to assume that everybody listening to this podcast is probably pretty damn close to not optimizing anything with respect to digestion. So if we could give them some golden nugget takeaways as to where to go and how to start, I think that will be a great way to kick off the conversation.

**ROLAND**

Yeah, I'd be happy to. And you set me up with an expectation to deliver, right?

**BEN**

Yeah man

**ROLAND**

So the digestion conversation is interesting because it's of the utmost importance, but it's not sexy – it's the exact opposite of sexy, we're turning food into waste, right? But what's important about digestion is, digestion is the fundamental process of what allows your body to turn the food we eat into the cells that you become. And in the case of someone who is looking to build muscle, obviously the bias is towards muscle mass and accumulation of muscle mass.

So the digestive processes in and of itself is kind of contingent on controlling a whole bunch of other body processes. You know, digestion connects to the immune system, it connects to the neurological system, it connects to inflammatory responses, and many people go through life with sub-optimal digestion thinking that those things should just be normal. I mean, all you have to do is watch TV for a while and see how many of those Pepto-Bismol commercials or those Zantac commercials are basically promoting 'you can eat the foods you love without any of the consequence'. But no one is thinking what these consequences mean and their symptoms, right?

So if someone has heartburn, they have bloating, they have indigestion, they have poor bowel habits (they go to washroom too little or they go too frequently) –that's a sign that the system is out of balance, and they have to go back to basics to understand how digestion is meant to work in the first place.

I don't know if it's okay with you Ben, but maybe we can do a digestion crash course on how everything is supposed to work?

**BEN**

Yeah man, I think that's a great idea. Just speak to the fact, you're saying nutrition or digestion isn't sexy. I think the idea of the scenario, most people are after the impossible dream of being able to eat whatever they want and look as good as they possibly can, or look like some of the professional athletes out there. People need to realize that: one, those professional athletes are extremely genetically blessed to be able to eat whatever they want, but they are also optimized, and if they ate better nutrition they would actually have better results and less negative side effects. And that's one of the things that people neglect to realize; is, they look at these guys, they're insta-famous, eating pancakes and doughnutsevery day, and they go, "Oh man, I just want to be able to eat that and look the way they do!"

But there's a lot of things behind the scenes going on that you guys don't see: is, chemically as far how their digestion is, it's not normal to live your life with gas, it's not normal to live your life with poor digestion or bloating – all those kinds of back pain, right? People wake up every day with back pain and they just kind of assume: oh shit, I've got some back pain, and it's okay. But it's not! Like, you can get that back pain fixed, just like you can fix your digestion.

So Roland, let's walk through what you would suggest as a crash course in digestion.



## ROLAND

Absolutely, yeah, it's a good point. And even those insta-famous people who can seem to eat anything, there will be a day when it catches up with them, because everyone is biochemically unique, and that means that the amount of stress someone's system can tolerate varies among individuals. And those people might just have those genetic blessings in that regard, but it doesn't mean that is optimal nor that it's something that's sustainable.

So when looking at digestion, the first thing we need to understand, it's going to sound so obvious, but we need to really focus on chewing our food, right? Digestion starts before you even take your first bite – it's when you smell food. I mean, think about when you're in family's for the holidays. You walk into the house, what's the first thing you notice? You notice the smell of whatever is in the kitchen, right? That actually sets the tone for your digestion: it allows for saliva to be produced, it allows the pancreas to start remedying enzymes, hydrochloric acid in the stomach gets primed. So that first aspect of digestion comes from smelling food and then when we can actually chew and taste our food.

I used to work as a personal trainer, and I used to be able to pride myself in pounding a full chicken breast with rice, to sweet potatoes and greens, in about five minutes between clients. Little did I know that I was doing a whole host of damage, because your stomach doesn't have teeth. So unless you do actually do what's called masticate (break the food down fully), you don't give your stomach the exposed surface area so that things like hydrochloric acid and enzymes can actually work on them.

Why it's even more important for bodybuilders is: if you don't chew properly, all protein digestion is contingent upon what happens in the stomach, and if you don't have enough stomach acid, if you don't break down the food enough, there is a good chance you won't break your proteins down properly.

## BEN

So one thing I started doing – and you can tell me, be transparent if this is good or bad – but a long time ago I started using ground meats, just for that exact reason, right? Because obviously, the sheer volume of meat I need to eat on day-to-day basis is high, so obviously I'm using enzymes to assist me in the process. But I recommend to a lot of my clients to use ground meat, because it's not like it's obviously predigested, but certainly broken down a lot more than a piece of steak maybe. What are your thoughts on that?

**ROLAND**

Absolutely! Absolutely a smart idea, because anything that you can do to take the load off of the system, if you are in the process of trying to increase muscle mass, what you're basically doing is you're going to force your system to work harder than the average. So if you can have those little white hacks that can reduce the stress on the system, that's a great idea. So yeah, I think you're banking there Ben.

**BEN**

Cool, sorry to interrupt you.

**ROLAND**

No, no, it's a good thing to jump in with. The other reason I want to highlight the initial stages of digestion is, we have this things that's called the 'acid trigger'. So when we actually break food down in our stomach, the pH (which is the measure of acidity) gets super-low if we have healthy digestion – somewhere between like 1.5 and 2. And that allows proteins to be broken down. So imagine, the analogy is like a beaded necklace, right? Proteins are these amino acids strung together, so what the acids and the enzymes do is they start cutting the beads into what are called peptides, which are little amino acid chains.

And if you don't break food down enough, if that doesn't happen the core of your body won't have an easy time furthering that process when food leaves the stomach and goes it not the small intestines and interacts with the enzymes that get released from the pancreas as well as things like bile. Bicarbonate is also released in the pancreas.

**BEN**

I think that's definitely something that's a massive concern. I know so many bodybuilders who say we need to eat more protein, but the obvious response or rebuttal is it's never about what you eat, but what you absorb. So that's definitely a huge point. As far as any negative effects other than obviously not absorbing or digesting, any negative effects to having large peptide or protein floating under large undigested protein in your bowels?

**ROLAND**

That's a great question, and there are, there are a couple of things. So let's look at the best case scenario: undigested protein ferments. The example I always use is: have you ever left a little bit of protein in a shake or cup and found it like a month later?

**BEN**

Of course

**ROLAND**

What does that smell like?

**BEN**

Awesome.

**ROLAND**

It makes your nostrils burn, right? So protein has this ability to putrefy. So if you're someone who can clear a room when you drop a fart, that's a sign that things probably aren't the best in the urinary system, and you want to take a step back and maybe look at some aspects of improving digestive support or the entire process of how you approach eating, because eating in a relaxed state is going to be very different from eating in a stressed state.

The second part of the question is: if you have poor digestive function, if you have this thing called leaky gut, which is basically when undigested peptides can get through the digestive system into the bloodstream, you can sensitize yourself and your immune system to foods, and you can develop what's called a food allergy. And anytime you eat that food, the immune system will remember it, and over the course of weeks, months or years, if you chronically expose yourself to that, you can have a pretty substantial inflammatory response that causes a whole bunch of immune system dysregulation.

And here's an interesting thing: you know, everyone blames gluten nowadays for what happens to us, it's always gluten's fault, it's inflammatory, it's problematic. Gluten is a protein that we don't digest very well, but in order for gluten to be a problem your immune system has to be a problem first of all. So you have to have exposed yourself to something food-related over time that your body can no longer process or tolerate. That can happen with eggs, it can happen with any protein. So it's a long way of saying if you don't break your proteins down properly, there can be some peripheral downstream effects that aren't going to serve you, especially when it comes to muscle-building, because inflammation is an underlying mechanism of every aspect of the degeneration and disease process.

**BEN**

So based on what you are saying, reading into things it sounds like the idea of fasting may actually be a solution for people who have undigested proteins or eating too much protein and didn't do a very good job masticating.

Any thoughts then on fasting's application for bodybuilding, and would it be too negative and too detrimental for a bodybuilder who is really trying to optimize every pound of muscle? Would it be too negative, have too many negative effects to consider fasting, and is that even a good thought?

**ROLAND**

It is an interesting question you propose, just because human beings likely did evolve – and we're talking of bodybuilding, we're talking evolution and survival here, with periods of fasting. That's why we can store a lot of fat, and we can release fat for energy; it's the principle source of what sustains us.

The benefit of fasting is when you take energy resources or the requirements of energy resources away from the digestive system, they can be directed to other things. So a lot of time it can be healing, because the body doesn't know how to destroy itself, it only knows how to self-heal providing you provide the right signals.

So if a bodybuilder is fasting, what is the downside? Let's look at the negatives first. Well, you're not getting food coming in, so you have two options: you can break down stored body fat. If you have good metabolic function, you can break down stored glycogen, which has a finite supply; and you can break down some amino acids, meaning your body will likely start to become more catabolic because it does need to derive energy to repair this processes.

The benefit of having a period of fasting in your life is, it does allow your body some time to regenerate without being stressed if there is a problem with your digestion. The way I think that you can balance the two worlds, not sacrificing too much in terms of calorie intake but getting some of the benefits of fasting, what I do with a lot of my clients and athletes is I have them implement a 12-hour fast. Meaning if they had their last meal at 7 PM in the evening, their breakfast would be at 7 AM with nothing but maybe water and non-calorie containing liquids in between. So they still have the benefits of that nightly cycle where there is a digestive kind of cleaning out and repair process, there is some detoxification that goes on. But those are energy resources that don't happen unless you do have a bit of a restrictive time feeding window.



**BEN**

Is that something you recommend on a day-to-day basis, or like a couple of times a week, or what's your thought?

**ROLAND**

I do recommend on a day-to-day basis. I recommend for the average person. It's something that you can do because as we get into the evening, things like insulin insensitivity and anabolic aspects of building muscle, they actually from what I've read become less important – not less important, but insulin sensitivity goes down in the evening for example. So if you continue eating, there is a higher likelihood that your body, based upon the fact that there is darkness (and darkness is a signal), is not going to be putting those calories to use for building muscle or generating energy. So what ends up happening is that the likelihood of storing extra calories as fat becomes a bigger problem. So that's something you can do.

Or you can do something where you do a cyclical once a week: you know, 12, 14, 16-hour fasts. And what people will probably be surprised at is that if you do that once a week, you're not going to lose a lot of muscle tissue because if you're allowing your body to do a little bit of a cyclical cleanout and you're cleaning out old wasted cells (it's a process called autophagy), you're actually regenerating the ability to improve the robustness of metabolic function and lower inflammation. And anytime you can lower inflammation, that's in my opinion an unlikely obstacle to building muscle.

**BEN**

I completely agree man. I actually advocate, you know, a lot of bodybuilders go, "Should I wake up in the middle of the night and have a protein shake or have some food?" Obviously the answer to that is, absolutely unequivocally no! I advocate low protein consumption, and sometimes even no protein or at least no meat one day a week for a lot of my clients. Some guys, bodybuilders obviously, have been condemned over the years for distension. And obviously some of that can be chemically influenced, but some of it I think is just a sheer amount of food that's undigested.

You now, when you're 250 pounds plus of muscle, there's just a lot of food that needs to be eaten. So for those guys, I often recommend not eating any hard protein, it needs to be solid protein most days: a milkshake, or you can have some egg whites or eggs or something – something that's a little bit easier in the digestive tract. But it seems to get really, really good results from guys that say they feel better, to your point of digestion and inflammation, right?

**ROLAND**

Absolutely!

**BEN**

They feel like their joints are going to hurt less, systemic inflammation is going to be much lower. I don't know the mechanisms, maybe we can talk a little bit about that. Is there a reason for that?

**ROLAND**

Yeah, there's a couple of things going on. So it kind of plays off of what I was mentioning before, but to further it, when you don't put food in the system, the system can calm down, right? So the digestive system itself is an organ, but there's an organ within the organ – so there's something that's called the microbiome. We have about four and a half pounds of bacteria that live inside of us, and the population and diversity of these bacteria are reflective of the foods we eat. For example, if we have a scenario when someone's eating a really high-protein diet, they're not getting a lot of fermentable fibers, they're not getting a lot of plant foods, that might thin the herd in terms of how many diverse bacteria that are actually beneficial can live inside you.

And if you imagine or can envision a teeter-totter in your mind, you want the at least neutral or beneficial bacteria always to greatly outweigh the negative, pathogenic bacteria. If you continually put in non-fermentable foods (i.e. a ton of protein), there are certain bacteria that can actually start to build up, and those guys can cause a cascade of effects. One can be localized fermentation of when you put carbohydrates in there, so it can actually negatively interact with certain starches. The other thing is that it can promote local and systemic inflammation, because if you have leaky gut those inflammatory compounds can get into the general circulation and that can cause problems downstream.

So if you're constantly stressing the system, basically it's like you hire someone to work 40 hours a week but you're basically putting them in chronic overtime without compensating them anymore. They get really grumpy after a while. So when you take a break from that, the whole system has the ability to calm down. And something I use strategically is, if someone is terrified of losing muscle mass, you do need amino acids to detoxify. So the more you stress your digestive system, the more you stress the liver.

If you don't have those essential amino acids, things like cysteine, methionine, threonine, glycine, you do potentially have a lower ability to detoxify some of these inflammatory compounds. So you can use an essential amino acid complex, but refrain from eating anything that requires the whole cascade of digestion to happen. And if you do this strategically, you stimulate a process called the autophagy, which is almost like the cleaning crew comes in, it looks for old worn-out cells, and it can initiate like a self-destruct signal, and the body recycles those materials and can use them to make a new cellular structural tissue. So it's a recycling process that only happens when the body isn't chronically breaking down food and getting food.

The fasting pathway activates certain signals that are opposite of when you're chronically eating. Autophagy and things like IGF-1 and mTOR, those are pathways that are kind of diametric opposites, you'd want the building ones when you're trying to build muscle, but if you don't allow for the cleanup to happen, your place is always going to get dirty, right?

**BEN**

I love that you brought that up. So there's one thing that we've kind of been diving into a little bit here at the gym: the idea that mTOR, I mean, you almost lose sensitization, you lose the ability to stimulate mTOR. So this idea of stimulating autophagy sounds like it could be a more necessary component than we think.

**ROLAND**

It really is, because the body has, you know, when we look at anabolic and catabolic nature, there is an anabolic and catabolic cycle based upon someone's age, their activity – it all matters. But when we chronically stimulate the anabolic side of things, you do need the ability to balance the requisite catabolic side of things, because they're always building up. Your body is never able to use the immune system to censor things like cancer cells or potentially old worn-out cells, things that need to be recycled.

And that's why I like the 12-hour fast the average person, and even if you're a bodybuilder, even in that 12-hour window there's a lot of calories you theoretically could consume in that 12-hour window, which would necessitate the equivalent amount of time to allow the system to calm down and relax so that you can continue to eat that amount of calories, absorb that nutrition optimally, derive benefit from it, but also not stress the system and chronically activate the mTOR and IGF pathways.

**BEN**

Another thing to realize at least for guys listening, is you can't grow in a linear fashion. You can't constantly be stimulating mTOR and IGF pathways in hopes of being as big as Ronnie Coleman in shortest amount of time possible. It just doesn't work that way, there has to be a period of, like you said, balance. I think that's a very important realization for bodybuilders to make, that growth can never be linear.

So your training shouldn't be linear, your nutrition shouldn't be linear – everything needs to fluctuate. And obviously you want to constantly be making progress, but don't expect it to be constantly in one direction, don't be afraid to take one step back. One thing Roland that you keep bringing up is the idea of all these things leading to inflammation. I'd like to dive into that a little bit more, because that's something that I bring up a lot. I want guys to pay attention to inflammation and manage inflammation, because it is going to influence negatively muscle-building. Can we talk about that a little bit?

**ROLAND**

Absolutely! Inflammation is one of my favorite topics, it's something I'm really diving into right now. I think in some ways it is the most complex topic, so let's introduce inflammation in a couple of different contexts. The classic inflammation people knows is like, when you roll an ankle, what happens? The ankle swells up. You elevate it, you ice it, you wait until the swelling goes down. That second immune system mediated the inflammation thing. The same thing if you step on a rusty nail, your immune system is going to freak out and inflammation is the first sign of healing.

So that's something that can be influenced also by food choices. We can have things like immune complexes build up from foods we're allergic to. Those immune complexes can get into the system and affect things like joints, kidney function, liver function.

But there is also another aspect of inflammation that can be tied to the molecular level of activity. What I mean by that is, inside the cell we have these structures how mitochondria. Have you guys talked a lot about mitochondria in the podcast before?

**BEN**

Yeah, we have.



## ROLAND

So mitochondria, everyone says is the powerhouse of the cell – that’s a soundbite everyone knows, and it’s true. Those are the only things in our body than can make any kind of concentrated energy in the presence of oxygen and food. But they are also things that can stimulate poor inflammatory responses because of things like free radical stress. So what basically happens is that when we have these initial cascades of poor digestive function or poor immune function, these compounds (if you will) can actually get into different cellular structures and they can stimulate the cell to turn on the genetics of making inflammation more easy to upregulate. It’s actually called a pathway, NF-CAPB is the most famous one that I’m reading right now. What ends up happening is that if we don’t have good metabolic function, we start to make too many free radical. And these free radicals can be signaling molecules, and basically the mitochondria can talk to the nucleus of the cell and if there’s nutritional deficiencies, if there are any aspects of constant inflammatory cascade from undigested food, inflammatory foods, lifestyle variable, poor sleep and poor endocrine function; the body say: well, we know that this is our new reality. So it actually changes the genetic expression of the cell to make it better at raising inflammation. And therefore more inflammatory compounds are being secreted, and that is causing a change in the structure and function of the cell.

So what you want to do is figure out all the pathways in your life currently that you might be initiating more of an inflammatory response, that is a sustained molecular inflammation, and try to turn those off. And a lot of the common things from a diet perspective are, pro-inflammatory foods like, gluten can be one of them (if you’re allergic to any protein), a lot of these processed foods (people are crushing starchy powers and things that have maybe pesticides, chemical residues from poor quality food origin, things glyphosates spread on corn). It could be something environmental, if you live at a house where there’s a lot of mold or a lot of environmental toxins. Anything that’s going to stimulate the inflammatory pathway is going to compromise your ability to build muscle because it compromises mitochondrial function.

The more inflammation you have, the more you start to cause premature mitochondrial death, which is the whole thing that props the cell’s function up. So if you want to build muscle and optimize things like fat loss and performance, without a healthy metabolism it doesn’t happen, and a healthy metabolism is not possible with having high levels of inflammation.

**BEN**

That's amazing and extremely valuable. I think that's going to be a lot of information for people to process. Can we go back and just give them a few action items, like: remove this from your diet, avoid this, or maybe even just discussing the specific pathways and which things they should remove to influence those pathways?

**ROLAND**

Yeah. I mean, there's essentially two master switches, right? One is the NF-CAPB pathway, the other one is the NRF-2 pathway. The one that's problematic when it's constantly expressed is the NF-CAPB. This comes from eating a lot of processed foods. I mean, you could eat too much, and excessive caloric intake that undigested can stimulate that; chronic stress – these are the basic things.

The basic building blocks of health come from regulating circadian rhythm, not having excessive amounts of artificial iodine, which can raise cortisol. Even too much in the gym, right? Too much exercise can stimulate an unchecked inflammatory pathway response. So getting back to eating high quality food first, then quantity. You want to make sure that you're getting a large sum of plant-based foods of different color, so the pigment in food alludes to potentially nutrients in those foods. You know, the blues of blueberry, the greens of kale, the reds in the pepper, the orange of an orange. All those compounds are phytonutrient antioxidants (for a lack of a better description) that allow our body to help regulate inflammatory responses. So one thing that I always tell people is: if you look at your diet, if you don't have at least six to eight servings of plant food a day plus all of your protein, you're likely to be eating in an unbalanced pathway. That's one thing.

The second thing would be from a sleep perspective, knowing how to regulate your circadian rhythm, because all these things can be thrown off by something as simple as the wrong kind of light at the wrong time of day. An example would be: if you wake up in the morning, what's the first thing you do? Most people check their phone. That's artificially blue light. Or they pop the TV on or go on their computer. Human beings should probably see light the first thing in the day, and the sun is really what governs that whole thing. So the more we can live in the natural light cycle of when the sun goes up and the sun comes down, that helps to optimize those pathways too, because our body in the morning has high cortisol, but in the evening has high melatonin. If you have a lot of oxidative stress from inflammation, melatonin besides helping you sleep is also a very powerful antioxidant, especially for the brain. It's probably second next time glutathione. So if you have a deficiency of antioxidants because of your lifestyle, that's also going to drive that inflammatory pathway up even higher. There are certain foods you can use, like one of the most powerful activators of the anti-inflammatory pathway are things like broccoli sprouts, or putting turmeric or cumin in your food. Omega 3 is going to help manage inflammatory pathway, as can good Omega 6's from what's called GLA. Everyone craps on Omega 6 – the wrong kinds of Omega 6 are bad, things like corn oil, sunflower, safflower oil. Always read the ingredients, never the nutritional panel of the food. But eating really high quality omega 6 foods, some borage and ham and whatever else in the seed world that might provide that to you, those are actually anti-inflammatory if you look at the pathways of the essential fatty acids.

So making sure that's a big thing, not over abusing carbohydrates. I mean, if you have blood sugar issues, that can exasperate things, that can cause cortisol to be upregulated, which changes those pathways. And then knowing how to not stress out – I know it's a cliché thing to say, but the average person is living in fight or flight.

You know, if you're working in an office, you have Wi-Fi around you, you're on a computer all day long, you're sitting all day long, you're not moving. Getting into some meditations and some mindfulness can actually stimulate the brain to be able to calm the nervous system so it's not driving that pathway as much.

**BEN**

I'm so glad you brought all these things up, because bodybuilders have a reputation for being assholes.

**ROLAND**

I don't know what you're talking about!

**BEN**

Well, honestly. And I'm not trying to judge or stereotype, but it's true. They don't realize how much that has to do with the level of inflammation being caused in their gut by the poor digestion. All this stuff, as soon as you take those things away, you don't feel as negative toward the world. Like, things don't look as gloomy, you tend to smile a little more.

I get a lot of bodybuilders who come to me, and they're assholes. And we manipulate their nutritional a little bit, take some inflammatory foods away, and all of a sudden they're like, "You know what, I'm getting along with my wife a lot better, my sex life is a lot better, my training is better, I don't hurt as much." Man, imagine the correlation, imagine the fact that these things actually are correlated. People don't put those things together, myself included.

I'm dieting for a contests, obviously we're training too much, our nutrition is unbalanced sometimes; and then you kind of get back to your normal life when you don't mind missing a couple of meals and doing a bit of fasting to reduce your inflammation and pay a lot of attention to how your body feels. Honestly, you're just a different person. And it's such a fascinating thing, and people just don't make that correlation between food and psychology and mental state. I think that's something you and I need to get into on a future podcast.

**ROLAND**

I'd love to, I mean, you hit the nail on the head right there. Anything that comes into your body, you know: food, supplements, even these modalities you may use, something like hyperbaric oxygen or oxygen exposure, it's all just a signal for the body. And the body is going to respond to what signal it predominately experiences. The cool thing about the body but also the challenging thing is; the more often it gets the same signal, the more it knows to respond to that almost in an automated fashion. So if you have, like you said, poor digestive health, and you start getting inflammatory response and it changes your behavior, I mean, everything is connected. A leaky gut; you can assume you have a leaky brain. And if you start messing with the brain, that's a very fragile organ because it's not meant to be experiencing all these inflammatory compounds. And if that activates your chronic fight or flight response, guess what you lose most often? It's the pathway to you never stimulate.

So if you start to change your behavior, that's going to be exasperated by the fact that if everything you do in your lifestyle continues to stimulate that, you're going to have a hard time to get it back and you have to do more to undo what you've done in order to restore balance; which is why I like that you said that right now I'm imbalanced in my life for the purpose of my competition, but when I get back to normal life that's different for everyone. You're going to be able to do what it is that you need to do to restore what you've determined to be optimal. And that's how I think everyone needs to look at it.

**BEN**

And I noticed that so much in kids. I've got three kids now, so I'm in a lot of sporting events like baseball, hockey, gymnastics – all those things. You notice the temperament and the manners of children. This is something I'd love to introduce to parents, just like, there needs to be a book on; this is how you need to feed your children, this is what you need to not give them. Because most people go, "It's a kid, they're allowed to have shit." But it's kind of the opposite, right?



**ROLAND**

Kids are in even greater need of optimal nutrition, because they're chronically anabolic until they stop growing, right? And anabolism as you know, requires enough resource to drive the process. Kids in North America nowadays, they eat absolute shit. They eat for taste, parents go for the marketing that a cartoon character in a box is going to get their kid to develop a relationship with a breakfast cereal, and parents make separate meals for their kids. It drives me nuts!

When I was a kid, I ate whatever my parents were having. It would be cut up or mashed up or whatever I could manage, but nowadays it's grains with a side of dairy and some sugar and God forbid a vegetable, approaching someone's plate.

**BEN**

Right. And I think the biggest (this is kind of off-topic) thing that I noticed is parents trying to be the better parent. Assume the parents are divorced, and the single parent is like: well, I want my child to like me more than the other parent, so I'm going to give them whatever the hell they want. That just ends up being the worst slippery slope for the child, because parents are like: I'm going to let him eat McDonald's every day, I've going to let him eat doughnuts or whatever, because I want them to think I'm the better parent. But they don't realize how much they're screwing up the child long-term.

**ROLAND**

100%

**BEN**

Anyway, I don't want to let this go on too long, but I'd definitely love to have you back on. I think those are extremely valuable takeaways. Is there anything you want to add before we wrap up?

**ROLAND**

I guess if people are interested in some things to find out more about what we're talking about, I do run a podcast, and I'm going to have you on it very soon, called Metabolic Mastery Radio. So that's where you can kind of dive in to some of these topics. I typically interview experts in the field, so I am on the other end just asking questions and learning, and it's a fun project. It's for people who want to actually not just understand the what, but the why and how behind things.

If anyone resonates with anything that I was speaking about today, you can find me on Facebook, on Instagram, and through a company called ATP Labs. I do all the education for them, so I often write an article or potentially will through up a video on their Facebook page or website. So that's really about it man, other than that I'm not too interesting, I'm just a scientist who loves to research.

**BEN**

Cool, man. If anyone has questions they want to ask, you guys can just go down, scroll down below and drop questions in the comment area. Feel free to give us an email, obviously you guys know where to reach me on social media or on my website directly. Thank you very much, that's it for now. Roland Pankewich, I appreciate you being here, man, and we'll definitely talk to you soon.

**ROLAND**

It's been my pleasure Ben, thanks for having me. Looking forward to!

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