



Healthy
Pregnancy
SUMMIT



Shazi Visram

Reducing Exposure To Toxins During Infancy

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Baby, healthy, parents, learn, food, exposure, toxic pesticides, reducing, served, environment, infants, families, pesticides, neurological, child, health, pregnancy, urine, foundation, organic baby food

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Welcome to our session on reducing exposure to toxic chemicals. I'm Professor James Adams and with me is Shazi Visram, the sound founder and CEO of healthy nest, a company that makes healthy products for pregnant women and infants. Shazi. Thanks so much for joining us today.

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It's such a pleasure to be with you. Thanks for having

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me. Can you tell us a little bit about your interesting background and your personal interest in minimizing infant exposure to toxic chemicals?

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Sure, it's, there's a lot of irony here, but I am always happy to share because I think, you know, being vulnerable and sharing really helps a lot of other people feel empowered to take knowledge and, and really do something with it that can change lives. So I am, my story is that when I was 26, I started a company called Happy Family and happy family started with happy baby And the whole idea is to really change our food system for babies by giving them access to organic, clean, healthy food. And my dream was kind of to change the world by getting



babies started, you know, from day one on the healthiest, cleanest food possible and reduce the amount of, you know, toxic pesticides and chemicals that are going into their bodies and also going into, you know, our soil. And that business took off. And it's been, it's been quite a journey. And I along the way, I also started my journey as a parent. And when I became a parent, many of the things that I've been talking about, which I knew were, you know, sort of logically always right and became emotionally even more resonant. And the biggest irony is that understanding the effects of so many of these pesticides and chemicals on our infant's brains and bodies. I became apparent how to have a son in 2010. And then in 2012, he was diagnosed with autism. And while I've been building the sort of empire around organic baby food and ensuring that all of our babies have the right to clean, healthy, you know, food free from pesticides and toxins and all sorts of sort of nasties that we as parents would not expect to be in food in the first place. I really had this kind of awakening to an even more wrong environmental exposure that was happening to all of us, as we as human beings navigate this planet that's becoming increasingly toxic. And I recognize that, you know, food is one of the first pillar in terms of focusing on reducing chemical exposure because you're literally digesting and as a baby, ounce for ounce and pound for pound exposure can have, you know, far more detrimental effects on a growing brain and a growing body because you're literally you becoming what you eat. And so, yes, I not only have been focused on the field of, you know, improving sustainable organic agriculture and the food supply for babies, I recognize personally that there's even so much more to do beyond that, and that it really starts with with all of us and, you know, particularly at that preconception and pregnancy phase, when you're kind of laying this foundation for lifelong health. There is a really critical moment to focus on reducing exposure. And so, you know, with saying his autism diagnosis, has brought about quite a bit of pain and a lot of challenges for my husband and myself, our whole world, we had to kind of recognize and learn to be okay with a new normal. And we also wanted to have another child. And part of the reason for wanting that other child, I see her behind me that Sasha, that's name is that we, you know, we wanted someone to be there for him. And when I met you many years ago, I had already been very active with the Environmental Working Group, I'd already been very focused on reducing pesticides in our food. And I began to learn about so many other things that we could do to kind of protect and ensure the healthy development of our babies and I wanted to apply every single possible, you know, detail

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in terms of prevention and in terms of Supporting myself to have a healthy baby. And so we we did that and you know, your list is pretty long. And then urological health foundations healthy child guide is, is pretty long. And the thing is, though it's doable, it's not daunting, and I found it very empowering. And, you know, to make a long story short, I started with saying, and I've learned so much that I believe Asha has become the beneficiary of in many ways. She's a healthy, bright, very engaged in a very connected and empathetic child, and it's what I would



want for every parent. And so, really, what what I'm working on constantly is saying, well, I've gone through something. It's been quite painful, and yet enlightening. I've taken the time that I can to learn about so many of the effects of these pesticides and toxins in our environment that are an food but elsewhere, and, and I've really tried to find a way to reduce exposure to myself and I've seen the benefit in my own and one study and how can I as a mother, and as a business person who knows that if you can create products that live in a child's home, when they're first come when they first come into this world and you actually really can affect behavior you can you can make social change by families making choices that are better for themselves. And I don't know any parent that doesn't want to make a choice that's better for themselves. The whole thing is they just need to know that there's a reason to to get the information and be empowered and make a better choice. And I actually think that's how you know change happens. So when I started happy family, the funny thing is I you know, I set out to kind of change the world. And I feel like on some level we have done that in in the sense that we have been providing these families with healthy food so their babies could grow up to be these changemakers one day. And with healthy nests, the idea is to take that even even beyond food, and to consider the entire environment that we're growing and developing in and including ourselves, because we as mothers, especially, we are the first environment for the baby. And

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yeah, I think it's so exciting that you started happy family to produce organic baby food just because that so important as a source of pesticides and chemicals to the children. And I think it's important for families to know that within just a few days, they can stop taking if they switch from pesticide Laden, commercial food, organic food, their urine will stop showing those pesticides within just a few days. So it's never too late, that people can start Right away. And then after that, I think it's so exciting that you went on to find a second company, happy nest to make other products would also be very helpful healthy for pregnant women and infants. So can you tell us a little bit now about healthy nest?

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Sure. And so healthy nest is is really the culmination of that story that I just told, in the sense that I wanted to take everything I've learned and make it actionable and easy for parents to digest and, and become a part of their life in a way that really can drive change. And so healthy nest is a safe space for parents to learn. And, you know, as you said, it takes just a few days of making changes and you can actually test your urine and see if you were pesticides and toxins in the urine. And you know, it's also like, this is a really important message for any any new new mom Or, you know, a couple who are thinking of becoming parents to not feel guilty or stressed or worried, um, as much as feel like I want to learn, and I want to make choices and be empowered, because this is it's, it's, you know, guilt doesn't serve us. And so helping us is partially, you know, it's a safe space where you can learn these things without feeling any kind



of judgment, or any kind of guilt. And I think that it's, it's really critical for today's parents to feel supported because on some level, we're, we're, we're quite isolated from the ways our families were traditionally kind of reared. And, you know, you kind of have the village around you. And so what we've done is we've worked to create a safe space where parents can navigate all of the information that I wish I had before my first pregnancy that I did have for my second that really, I believe, made a Radical difference, a profound difference in the health of my daughter. And it's a place to get the products that you can feel truly comfortable knowing that they are, you know, fully non toxic and, and truly supportive for neurological health and well being, but in a way that is digestible. So for instance, helping us to have a prenatal that you are very familiar with. And I went into take a moment we've with neurological Health Foundation, and Dr. Adams developed what I believe is the most comprehensive prenatal on the planet. And the truth is, it's a lot of pills, and that's okay, because that's what you need. And we're really so proud of this. And it you know, rings true to me personally, and so we have these sachets that are easy to use, or every day, mom can take, you know, two sachets of what she needs for the day and then There's messaging. And the messaging is what is like really empowering and brings you in and says, Oh, I didn't realize I could check my water quality at the EWG database. And sure enough, you go online, type in your zip code and you can find out your municipalities water quality. And then you might kind of be like, Wow, I didn't know that there was lead in our water. I didn't know that this was, you know, there are a number of chemicals you will be surprised to learn about, but you don't have to get scared. The EWG also recommends, you know, here's the water filter to help to help make your water healthy and natural so that you can drink the water at home. And so, you know, a healthy nest is this place to bring together here's the information and then here's the solution and we're here for you and we're doing it from a place of love. So that's that's really kind of the the concept we are so mission driven that for me it's you know, I've always said I, you know, put babies before business and it's absolutely true. I also believe that if you do, right, by families, you know, success is just a symptom of doing the right thing. And we're really excited to be working on that, that project with you. We also have a full line of diapering and development, which is really exciting sort of bringing to life the concept of environmental enrichment, by a removing biologically anything that could be a challenge in the environment that could hurt baby's brain or body through it from development, but also by enriching the environment with things that you know, provide novel stimuli and create the

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space for baby to expand and learn and create deeper connections. And then we have a cleaning system that also protects your baby's entire environment from harsh chemicals, which you know, are on every surface depending what you're cleaning with, including inside baby's bottle, and there's just so many areas that we've we've tried Focus on well what you know, in this tiny little bubble around the baby's environment? What can we do to ensure that the foundation is strong? biologically, there's nothing that could probably that could possibly, you



know, be a challenge to neurological health or just the health of the body growing? And then what can we do to enrich and, you know, create the potential for a really healthy and engaged child? And yes, it's definitely been a journey. And I'm excited about this second company in many ways. It feels like a second baby, you know, um so

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sure. Well, again, you had such tremendous success with your happy family company becoming one of the leading providers of organic baby food and we're very excited that but your dedication to try to help make safe products for pregnant women and infants so that way, we can really try to minimize their exposure to toxic chemicals, and toxic pesticides. Overall, you've served on the boards of several major organizations you've served on. EWG, the Environmental Working Group dedicated to assessing consumer products and we've done an interview on them. You served on the board of ovia, which has two of the leading pregnancy apps apps for pregnancy and for conception. And also thank you so much for serving on the board of neurological Health Foundation, which is founded, which is sponsoring this healthy pregnancy series. Thank you so much for your time and sharing all your personal experience and thanks for all the work you're doing and trying to make better products for pregnant women and infants.

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Thank you Dr. Adams.

