



Eric Balcavage DC, CNS, CFMP, BCIM

BIO:

Dr Eric Balcavage is the owner and founder of Rejuvagen, a functional medicine clinic in Chadds Ford, PA. He is a Functional Medicine Practitioner, Board Certified in Integrative Medicine, along with being a licensed Chiropractor in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Balcavage is the host of Thyroid Answers Podcast. The podcast focuses on answering the pressing questions those suffering with chronic hypothyroid symptoms can't get answered elsewhere. You can find his educational Thyroid Thursday videos on Vimeo and YouTube.

Dr Balcavage has made it his mission to change the way medicine looks at hypothyroidism. He is the co-author of the book, The Thyroid Debacle, The book co-written by Dr. Kelly Halderman addresses the problems with current allopathic and functional medicine approaches to hypothyroidism as well as the solutions to restoring thyroid physiology.

LECTURE TITLE: The Thyroid Debacle – Could a paradigm shift be the answer to changing the neurological and mental health crisis?

ABSTRACT:

According to the American Thyroid Association, an estimated 20 million Americans have some form of thyroid disease, which causes symptoms such as extreme fatigue, weight gain, constipation, and hair loss but also many symptoms that result in the diagnosis of neurologic and mental health disorders. Unfortunately, conventional Western medicine views thyroid conditions as solely a glandular problem, and doctors are taught to employ a simplistic model of testing TSH and fT4 to evaluate patients' thyroid health. By the time a true glandular disorder presents itself, the literature indicates that greater than 90% of thyroid gland function has been lost. Meanwhile, due to this model of evaluation and testing people often struggle with the signs and symptoms of tissue hypothyroidism for months, years or decades. It is often those symptoms that are diagnosed as a neurological or mental health disorder which is attempted to be managed with pharmaceuticals. According to the most recent Global Burden Disease Study, one in three people in the world is now suffering with a neurological disorder. One in four Americans is afflicted by a mental disorder according to NIH. By the time a true glandular disorder presents itself (after 90% destruction of the gland), many prior opportunities to address the condition have been missed. Many of the people are already being treated for

neurologic and mental health disorders because of undiagnosed thyroid allostasis. Thyroid allostasis is the adaptive changes in thyroid regulation occurring at the cell and tissue level, often long before glandular hypothyroidism is diagnosed. Often thyroid allostasis results in hypothyroid signs and symptoms long before a TSH and fT4 are out of the reference range. This “cellular hypothyroidism” is an undiagnosed and unrecognized epidemic. Evaluating the activators of cellular hypothyroidism requires an exploration into the various factors that contribute to the cell danger response—an evolutionary mechanism by which cells and organisms attempt to protect themselves from harm triggered by chemical, physical, or biological threats—as well as tools to reverse it. When we look at thyroid physiology, neurological and mental health disorders through the lens of the cell danger response, it gives us the opportunity to not just mitigate the disorders but to potentially eliminate the disorders. This presentation includes the evidence-based teaching points from his book “The Thyroid Debacle” including:

- What really causes hypothyroid symptoms and thyroid gland dysfunction
- Why allopathic medicine is failing with an outdated model of thyroid physiology evaluation and treatment.
- The role of thyroid hormone in the Cell Danger Response
- The Hypothyroid Spectrum and the Multi-System Adaptive Disorder
- The common factors contribute to cellular hypothyroidism, including physical, chemical, emotional, and microbial stressors
- Strategies for detecting cellular hypothyroidism
- Considerations for addressing the cell danger response and the chronic hypothyroid signs and symptoms including neurological and mental health disorders.

SYNOPSIS: The way we evaluate, and address thyroid physiology is antiquated and failing our patients. By relooking at thyroid physiology from a cellular perspective we can start to shift the paradigm from managing broken physiology to supporting adaptive physiology. In doing this we may prevent millions of people from being prescribed medications to manage neurological and mental health disorders caused by excessive cell stress, the cell danger response and adaptive thyroid physiology.