

What Is Functional Medicine?

Functional medicine is an evolution in the practice of medicine that better addresses the healthcare needs of the 21st century. By shifting the traditional disease-centered focus of medical practice to a more PATIENT-CENTERED APPROACH, the whole patient is identified rather than the individual symptoms. Functional medicine practitioners SPEND TIME with their patients listening to their histories and looking at the interactions among genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors that can influence long-term health and complex, chronic disease. In this way, functional medicine supports the unique expression of health and vitality for each individual.

Why Do We Need Functional Medicine?

- OUR SOCIETY IS EXPERIENCING A SHARP INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO SUFFER FROM COMPLEX, CHRONIC DISEASES, such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, mental illness and autoimmune disorders like arthritis and fibromyalgia.
- TODAY MOST MEDICAL TREATMENT IS BASED ON ACUTE INTERVENTIONS.
- UNFORTUNATELY, THE ACUTE-CARE APPROACH LACKS THE ABILITY FOR PREVENTING AND TREATING COMPLEX CHRONIC PROBLEMS. In most cases it does not address the unique genetic makeup of each individual, or factors such as environmental exposure to toxins, or lifestyle factors that can lead to chronic diseases.

How Is Functional Medicine Different?

* PATIENT-CENTERED CARE. The patient is a PARTNER, promoting health beyond just the absence of disease. By listening to the patient and learning to his or her story, the practitioner brings the patient into the discovery process and tailors treatments that address the individual's unique needs.

* AN INTEGRATIVE, SCIENCE-BASED HEALTHCARE APPROACH. Functional medicine practitioners consider the complex web of interactions in the patient's history, physiology, and lifestyle that can lead to illness. The unique genetic makeup of each individual patient is considered, along with both internal (mind, body, and spirit) and external (physical and social environment) factors that STRESS total functioning.

* INTEGRATING BEST MEDICAL PRACTICES. Functional medicine integrates traditional Western medicine practices with what are sometimes considered "alternative" or "integrative" medicine, creating a focus on prevention through nutrition, diet, and exercise; use of the latest laboratory testing and other diagnostic techniques; and prescribed combinations of drugs and/or botanical medicines, supplements, therapeutic diets, detoxification programs, or stress-management techniques.

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