

What is Functional Medicine?

Functional medicine, also referred to by some providers as the ‘the medicine of the future’, is a patient centered system of healing. In comparison to mainstream (traditional allopathic) medicine, a functional provider focuses on finding the root cause of the patient’s health problem, rather than just managing the symptoms.

In other words, Functional Medicine is an approach to medicine that asks the questions: “*Why are you sick? Why did you develop these symptoms or conditions?*”

Rather than another prescription of drugs (to manage your conditions or symptoms), the Functional Medicine approach is used to address the factors that are leading to or aggravate chronic diseases.

How is Functional Medicine different from other forms of alternative medicine?

Each method in alternative medicine has its own unique approach. The Functional Medicine approach is unique in several ways:

- It seeks for the CAUSE of the disease, rather than focus on managing the symptoms. *For example, focusing on eliminating the factors that increase your inflammation, rather than just addressing the pain (often the result of chronic inflammation).*
- We focus on you (the patient), rather than just your diagnosis or condition.
- It uses a comprehensive evaluation process, which includes the physical, emotional, and psychological state of the patient. Information is gathered about your current and past lifestyle and dietary choices, emotional and physical traumas, and the way your body reacted to these.
- Do not harm! Avoiding potential harmful side effects by using natural alternatives instead of prescription drugs or surgeries (when possible).
- The treatment is personalized for each patient, rather than the same drug for all patients with the same disease or symptoms.
- The treatment protocol might include nutritional guidelines, lifestyle changes, herbal medicine, etc.

Is it scientific?

The evaluation and treatment methods used in Functional Medicine are based on clinical studies published in peer-reviewed medical journals.

The field of Functional medicine was initially developed by Dr. Jeffrey Bland, a former professor of biochemistry at the University of Puget Sound, a previous Director of Nutritional Research at

the Linus Pauling Institute of Science and Medicine, and an internationally recognized leader in the nutritional medicine field for over 25 years. Dr. Bland's interest and expertise in biochemistry and physiology led to a deeper and more accurate understanding of the factors that shift our body's function from health to disease.

Over time, many scientists and clinicians have been contributing from their experience to the field of Functional medicine.

How do Functional Medicine providers are trained?

Functional medicine providers learn about the external and internal factors that contribute to diseases. They learn how to identify these factors and how to address them by using specific recommendations from lifestyle, nutritional, and herbal medicine.

Can Functional Medicine replace my primary care provider?

No. The Functional Medicine approach is focused on improving the patient's health and function, but it does not replace the need for primary care. In some cases, it might be important to manage the patient's conditions by using prescription or surgery, which a primary care provider or a physician offers.

What happens during the Functional meetings?

During the evaluation process, you will be asked about your previous and current lifestyle, diet, and your external environment (work, home, etc.). You will also be asked about the function of different organs and we might look at your labs. During our meeting, we will go over your health concerns and the possible factors that might be aggravating your conditions.

In other words, we will try to understand 'what' is driving your inflammation, oxidative stress, hormonal imbalance, damage to the cells, and conditions. Throughout the process, I will provide you with guidance and education so you can move towards better function and health.

Is it covered by insurance?

Medical insurance was initially designed to cover emergency care, such as surgery after an injury. It was not intended to pay for doctor visits or preventative care. In many cases, providers who work under the insurance companies are still functioning in the same way. That is the reason why most primary care visits are done within 7 to 15 minutes.

While primary care services are important, it is almost impossible to complete and full evaluation and understand the external, internal, environmental, and nutritional factors that are aggravating your condition or are keep you ill in 7 to 15 minutes that insurance companies allow.

To spend 1-on-1 time with you, conduct a comprehensive assessment, develop treatment protocols that are personalized to your body, and educate you – we typically need between 30



to 60 minutes. Unfortunately, many insurance companies do not allow spending extended time with patients and many insurance companies will only cover prescription drugs or surgery.

Remember, this is your body and we believe that you should be the one to decide the type of care that you deserve to get to improve your health.

As Jim Rohn once said, *"Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live."*