

# An Introduction to Functional Medicine

By Toni Eatros, MS, Dipl Ac, AP

I am writing this article in June of 2020 and the world is in the midst of the novel coronavirus pandemic. We have lived through social isolation for weeks and months and have been told to stay away from other people. Our world is changing at a rapid pace and so is the way that we meet our medical needs. I don't know about you, but the thought of going into a doctor's office, an acute care clinic or the hospital has me feeling uneasy. Where do the people go who are suffering with moderate or severe symptoms of COVID-19? They go to the doctor's office, an acute care clinic or the hospital. Personally, I want to stay as far away from those places as possible.

Many of your personal doctors and clinics are starting to offer telemedicine services, which I think is great. However, many people are unsatisfied with the current status of their health. The average number of pharmaceuticals people over the age of 65 are taking is twelve. If you ask these same people how they feel overall, they say that they do not feel well. Each medication is addressing one symptom and each medication comes with a laundry list of side effects. Now, more and more medications are required to suppress the side effects symptoms. The person feels worse than they did before the first medication was started. Do the medications fix or correct the cause of the symptom? Unfortunately, most of the time, pharmaceuticals only suppress symptoms and do not correct the cause. This is where functional medicine comes in.

I believe that the reason for our existence on this planet is to experience emotional and spiritual growth, and we do this through our physical body. The purpose of functional medicine is to heal the physical body so that we can experience that growth

and fulfill our purpose. Functional medicine is a science-based approach to healing that is based, primarily, on natural health solutions to common health problems. The heavy use of labs, research and science embraces our country's current medical model and helps us to see objectively what is going on in your body. This is important for you science minded people.

The difference between our current western medical system and functional medicine lies in the treatment approach. Functional medicine attempts to find and correct the underlying cause of health problems, rather than medicating the symptoms of the dysfunction. We test to see what system is breaking down and then utilize natural remedies and lifestyle changes to fix the system. When the system function is restored, the symptoms disappear.

Do you feel rushed or unheard when you are talking to your doctor? It is not the doctor's fault, but insurance regulations dictate that your doctor spends only about eight minutes with you. That is generous, some only get five minutes. As a functional medicine practitioner, I take ample time to listen to your story, your challenges, and your goals.

During our hour long initial functional medicine consultation we discuss, at length, your entire health history, and identify in detail what your current symptoms and health concerns are. I take time to answer your questions, thoroughly. Based on this extensive intake, proper at home lab tests are ordered.

These test how the the body systems are functioning. A customized program is formulated based on the results of your lab tests. These individualized programs focus on correcting immune dysfunction, neurotransmitter imbalances, hormone imbalances, energy issues, detoxification issues, digestive disorders and many other symptoms.

Functional medicine is *systems* based health care, rather than *symptoms* based. All of the body systems boil down into three systems in functional medicine. The three systems that we test and correct are the neuroendocrine system (adrenal or fight/flight response), the gastrointestinal (digestive) system and the detoxification system. When these three systems are functioning optimally, you will experience good health, and more importantly feel so much better.

I will be writing a series of functional medicine articles in the future. I will dive deeper into the three body systems, the three main initiators of all chronic illness, the 4 horseman of disease, and the lab tests. Finally, I will discuss my treatment model and why I get such great patient outcomes in my clinic.

If you are interested in learning more about functional medicine or the other tools in my tool box, please check out my series of podcasts. The podcasts talk about a variety of topics and can be found at "[anchor.fm/anhs4566](https://anchor.fm/anhs4566)". Check out my recent podcast about how to test the strength and resilience of your immune system.

I am offering telemedicine functional medicine visits so you can stay safe at home and not expose yourself unnecessarily to potential infection. I am happy to offer a free 15 minute consultation to see if functional medicine is a good fit for you. Make your appointment today, **239-260-4566**, or online, [AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com](https://AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com). Now, while you are stuck at home, is the perfect time to focus on your health.

AD

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