

# WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE?



*Holistic treatment for  
pain & chronic disease.*

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OSTEOPATH

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# ***Dr. Steven Resic***

**Osteopath & Functional  
Medicine Practitioner**



# ***My Story***

I'm Steve, I'm 34 years old and born in Melbourne. I'm an Osteopath, nutritionist and functional medicine practitioner with 10 years experience in the health industry. Over the last decade I have worked with thousands of patients in private practice and aged care.

I love helping patients improve and overcome persistent health problems by taking a root cause, holistic and patient empowered approach to wellbeing and vitality.

Since age 18 I have had many of my own health problems and since overcome generalised anxiety disorder, depression, IBS, heartburn, constipation, eczema and persistent neck and lower back pain. In the end I found that each health problem and symptom to be linked to a deeper root cause.

I also found each aspect of health important and of course most importantly linked to each other. Funny that everything is connected and we intuitively know this but most people don't put it into practice or know how.

I slowly learnt I had to put each piece of the health puzzle together including sleep, exercise, stress management, nutrition, supplements, meditation, breathing as well as emotional, mental and spiritual health.



Its been a long journey and I'm now at a point where I want to help others elevate their health to overcome ongoing and debilitating health concerns and diagnoses.

I look forward to you reading my eBook on my holistic approach to health, wellness and vitality.

# ***What is Functional Medicine?***

Functional medicine is a **holistic** and **patient-centered** approach to healthcare that focuses on identifying and addressing the **root causes** of health issues, rather than just treating symptoms.



Functional Medicine is a science based approach that helps create health. We treat the whole system not just the symptoms, we treat the whole organism not just the organs. Its the medicine of why!?

We treat patients of various conditions and it's one of the reasons we are holistic doctors!

Practitioners of functional medicine spend an hour or more with patients during consultations to gather detailed information about their medical history, lifestyle, environment, stress and spirituality. This information helps create a more **personalized** and targeted approach to treatment.

Lifestyle change, treating the GUT, supplements and using food as medicine is a fundamental approach to Functional Medicine treatment.

Specific diets, foods and supplements become your main prescription towards healing! Food is information and medicine for your body to heal.

# Principles of Functional Medicine

- 1. Individualized Care:** Functional medicine recognizes that each person is unique, and factors such as genetics, environment, lifestyle, and personal history contribute to their health. Treatment plans are tailored to address the specific needs of each patient.
- 2. Holistic Approach:** Instead of focusing solely on a specific organ or symptom, functional medicine considers the interconnectedness of the body's systems. Practitioners seek to understand how various factors contribute to a person's overall health. **Everything is connected!**
- 3. Root Cause Analysis:** Rather than just managing symptoms, functional medicine aims to identify and address the underlying causes of illness. Using specific pathology tests to explore GUT health, GUT bacteria, nutritional deficiencies and hormonal imbalances.



**4. Patient Empowerment:** Functional medicine emphasizes the importance of patient education and involvement in the healing process. Patients are encouraged to make lifestyle changes and actively participate in their healthcare decisions.

**5. Integration of Therapies:** Functional medicine integrates a variety of therapeutic approaches, including nutrition, exercise, stress management, supplements, and sometimes conventional medications. The goal is to create a comprehensive and synergistic treatment plan.

**6. Preventive Focus:** Functional medicine places a strong emphasis on preventive care, aiming to identify and address health imbalances before they lead to chronic diseases.

# ***Common Conditions Treated?***

- **Acid Reflux (Heart Burn)**
- **Constipation & Diarrhea**
- **Fungal/Candida Overgrowth**
- **Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO)**
- **Indigestion & Bloating**
- **Irritable Bowel Syndrome**
- **Crohns Disease & Ulcerative Colitis**
- **Anxiety & Depression**
- **Lack of Energy and Malaise**



# ***Conditions Continued***

- **Obesity & Weight Loss**
- **Chronic Fatigue Syndrome**
- **Difficulty Sleeping**
- **Type 2 Diabetes**
- **Health Optimisation**
- **Sports Performance & Recovery**
- **Rheumatoid Arthritis**
- **Osteo-Arthritis**
- **Headache**
- **Burnout & Low Immunity**



# ***The Functional Medicine Process***

**Functional medicine** starts by understanding the **human experience of the patient** in front of me. Who are they as a person?

Understanding all aspects of the person including their **physical, emotional, mental and spiritual** health.

This entails taking a **long, detailed history of their entire life**. This leads to enquires about their health goals, previous injuries, surgeries, health problems, medication use e.g. antibiotics, work, family, stress, life purpose, alcohol, smoking etc.

Then we can dig deeper into the **pillars of health** that include **sleep, exercise, diet, relaxation, social life and spiritual and emotional wellbeing**.

**Lifestyle factors** always contribute to many presenting health problems. It is almost a given today that every second patient I see is highly stressed, rarely exercises and eats a diet of highly processed foods.

The next crucial step is **functional pathology investigations** such as stool tests to **analyse** the **GUT microbiome**. Stool tests are great for identifying a lack of diversity in gut bacteria and for **diagnosing** any disease causing bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites within the GUT.

Whilst waiting on test results, the next step is for the patient to complete a **food diary** for one whole week. This usually means taking photos of the meals and drinks they consume.

Next we examine **pathology test results** in relation to the patient's symptoms, food diary and lifestyle factors. This provides a full picture of what is occurring for this patient and how to **tailor their health program**.

Most patients will require as part of their **health program** a specific **dietary protocol**, a **supplement protocol** and lifestyle interventions such as regular **exercise program** and structured **sleep hygiene**.



The next part is the implementation of the health program. This can be tricky for patients to address because many people find it overwhelming. **Most patients lack the knowledge of how to exercise, what foods to choose, how to cook and how to implement breathwork and meditation.**

Hence, I have developed the **health coaching** service of functional medicine where I **guide** and **mentor** you through the implementation and finer details of your health program.

Health coaching is a **weekly check in** process via phone calls or emails. This allows us to make real time changes to the health program as needed.



Patient's find it easier if I **motivate** and inform them on how to best implement the new **health advice**. This approach helps to remove any mistakes and confusion when making health changes because life is already busy with family and work commitments.

# ***Summarised 12 Week Process***

- **1 Hour Initial Consultation.**
- **Pathology Tests (eg. vitamins, minerals, hormones, microbiome).**
- **Investigate Food Diary (1 week).**
- **Receive Pathology Test Results.**
- **Design Health Program (nutrition, sleep, exercise, supplements, relaxation techniques, lifestyle advice).**
- **Follow Up Consultation to Explain Health Program.**
- **Ongoing Health Coaching and Follow Up Consultations.**





# ***A Real Life Case Study***

A recent patient of mine, lets call her Mia, presented to me with ongoing reflux and constipation for the past 2 years with the symptoms worsening in the last 6 months.

After a detailed history I found that Mia's lifestyle, anxiety and food choices were contributing to her chronic reflux and constipation issues.

Mia was eating a diet too high in carbohydrates and processed foods, she wasn't exercising regularly and lacking in daily destressing practices. In addition, upon testing we found some bacterial and fungal overgrowth in her stool test. All of these factors were contributing to her symptoms of reflux and constipation.

Before we even addressed any dietary changes or use of anti-microbial supplements. I got Mia to start 3 weeks of regular daily exercise, breathing exercises in the morning and meditation at night before bed.

Just from regular exercise and destressing techniques Mia's reflux and constipation improved by 25%. Mostly because Mia's anxiety and stress was compromising her digestion amplifying her reflux and constipation.

Once I received Mia's stool test results and I had investigated her food diary. I was then able to design a specific food and supplement protocol to address the bacterial and fungal overgrowth in her GUT.

Fast forward another 6 weeks and her reflux and constipation had completely resolved.

But not only had Mia's reflux and constipation resolved from the functional medicine approach she had many other improvements in her overall health. Such as feeling **lower levels of anxiety, improved mood** with more frequency of **happiness and positivity**. Her daily **energy had increased**, she was getting **deeper quality sleep** and she **lost 2kg** from regular exercise and improved diet over 9 weeks.

**Time and time again I see this, when you approach the patient from a complete holistic approach many health metrics improve across board even things you never expected to change. Everything really is connected and the human body's ability to heal never ceases to amaze me!**

# *Why Focus on GUT Health?*

The reason functional medicine focus's on **optimising and treating** GUT health is because around **70% of the immune system** is located in the gut cells.

As a result the immune system is influenced by the **diversity** and health of the **microbiome** including **bacteria, fungi and multiple other organisms** that make up the GUT flora.



A reduction in our **GUT microbiome diversity and GUT health** will result from antibiotics, eating a diet high in sugar, alcohol, processed foods, as well as poor lifestyle choices like high stress, lack of exercise and sleep.

**Therefore, the reverse is true!** We can create a diverse and healthy GUT microbiome by eating a diet that contains many different **vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes and animal products.**

Eating a **diverse range of healthy foods** will feed and help many different forms of micro-organisms to thrive. We can think of the amazon jungle as an example, it is one of the most bio-diverse rain forests in the world and home to a thriving community of animals, insects, fungi, plants and people.

We want a **gut biome** with as many **beneficial micro-organisms** as possible so they can help provide us with a **healthy, symbiotic, Amazon forest like GUT microbiome.**

A healthy micro-biome can help positively influence the **70% of the immune system** housed in the GUT. **Always look to the GUT first and foremost! Food literally is medicine!**

# ***Signs of Poor GUT Health!***

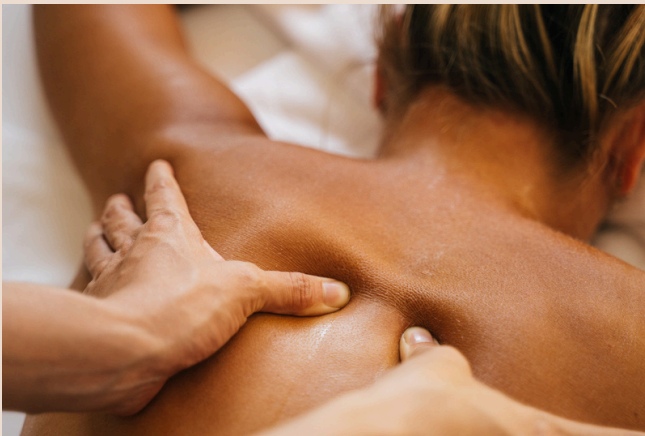
- **Constipation**
- **Haemorrhoids**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Heart Burn**
- **Indigestion**
- **Increased Gas**
- **Bloating**
- **Cramping**
- **Food Intolerances**
- **Malabsorption of Vitamins & Minerals**
- **Nausea & Bad Breath**
- **Foul Smelling Stool**
- **Strange Coloured Stool**
- **Painful Bowel Movement**



# ***Osteopathy & Functional Medicine***

Even in **Osteopathy** I see an overlap with **functional medicine**. The more **chronic conditions** a patient presents with the more difficult and prolonged the **physical pains and injuries** they ultimately have to deal with.

If a patient presents to me with ongoing back pain and I take a detailed health history I can normally predict how quickly someone will recover.



When a patient reveals multiple of the following including eating processed foods, smoking, drinks alcohol, rarely exercises, has digestive problems, headaches, chronic fatigue, sleep disturbances, has high levels of stress, depression or anxiety or has an autoimmune condition then I know they likely won't recover as quickly and will also most likely have a pain flare up during the treatment process.

**This is because of their overall health is already compromised slowing their bodies ability to recover from injury and inflammation.**





The inverse is true as the patient who has no underlying chronic health conditions, eats a balanced **whole food diet**, **regularly exercises**, **sleeps 8 hours** a night, has **low stress** and **positive outlook** on life will have a high chance of a **quick and successful recovery** after injury.

This means you can return to work quicker, enjoy your sport sooner and enjoy social activities with your family and friends as soon as possible. **All because you had a good base line of health to begin with compared with the person who did not.**

This is why I **fell in love with Osteopathy** its the **holistic approach** to looking at the patient. Osteopathy taught me to treat the whole patient not just the presenting injury or symptoms.

# ***Are You Dealing with Chronic Illness?***

**Do you find yourself operating at only half your potential during the day or throughout the week??** It could be due to a lack of energy, poor sleep quality, heightened stress levels, digestive problems, uncertainty about dietary choices, persistent physical pain, or a lack of understanding of your own health and wellbeing.

If you're seeking **better manage of your chronic illnesses** and to enhance your productivity throughout the week then **now** is the **opportune moment to explore Functional Medicine.**

Functional Medicine offers the **essential building blocks** for transitioning to a life with **reduced pain** and **increased joy** enabling you to engage with the people and activities you love more frequently!

# ***Work with Me!***

I provide a **complimentary 20-minute phone consultation** for those interested in exploring functional medicine. During this session, we can delve into your health objectives and address any concerns you may have.

I offer my functional medicine consultations **online or in person** from my clinic **Hoppers Crossing Sports & Spinal**.

I offer various functional medicine health packages to **cater to your needs**.

## ***How to contact me***

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