



# FAQS

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## **What is Functional Medicine?**

Functional Medicine works to correct biochemical imbalances with an emphasis on treating the individual for optimal cellular health. Blood, urine, stool and other tests hone in on specific individual deficits and a skilled practitioner prescribes therapeutic doses of minerals, vitamins, amino acids and essential fats.

In general, there are 4 key components:

1. gut health
2. dietary intervention
3. nutritional medicine
4. detoxing.

Health professional who work in Functional Medicine usually are a Naturopath, Biochemist, General Practitioner, Nutritionist or have a degree in Health Science or Medical Science. Post graduate studies is required in Functional Medicine is needed.

## **What if my GP does not support Functional Medicine?**

Functional Medicine is a highly specialised and emerging field. Numerous research studies are underway in order to provide the peer-reviewed research required for GPs to adopt the Functional Medicine protocol on a broad scale. Functional Medicine is accepted in the field of Biochemistry and human biology.

In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of patients are following Functional Medicine practices inherent in Complementary Medicine that focus on digestive health, nutritional medicine and diet. Most patients conclude that there is virtually no risk to a change in diet and supplements and that the upside is significant.

## **What is the difference between a Naturopath, Herbalist, Nutritionist and a Health coach?**

A Naturopath is trained in both nutritional medicine, herbal medicine, Homeopathy and Massage Therapy. A Naturopath uses several different techniques to assist you in working with your health issues. A Nutritionist uses nutritional therapy to correct health issues, where a Naturopath uses nutritional therapy and several different techniques to heal the body. A Herbalist uses herbal medicine to correct health issues, where a Naturopath will use herbs, natural medicine and other techniques to heal the body on a whole looking at diet, lifestyle and environment.



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Check the qualifications and see if they are a degree trained practitioner in Australia belonging to an Australian association. There are a number of short courses offered where you can get a 6-12 month certificate to be able to practice as a nutritionist and health coach. These short courses may compliment some people in their work, although they have very little science background and clinical practice to be able to look at the body as whole and see the biochemical pathways and physiology of the body.

### **How long will it take me to get better?**

It depends on what is wrong and how long you have had the health issue for. Sometimes you can start feeling results within a couple of weeks to a few months and even longer in some cases. It is important to understand the healing process once the cause has been found we begin to heal the area that requires healing. Often patients start to feel good in the healing stage, it is important to continue onto the restorative and nourishing stages even if you feel better to ensure you have lasting results and do not relapse.

It takes time to replenish the soils in the garden and have a healthy garden. Likewise the same goes towards you, it can take time regenerate new cells. Liver cells can take 12 weeks to 12 months to regenerate, red blood cells take 4 months, skin cells 6 weeks, digestive cells 5 days, healthy fertile eggs and sperm can take 2-3 months to form, bones and some other organs can take up to 2 years to heal and repair.

### **Can I use supplements from the health food store or supermarket?**

General supplements may be alright for general health and maintenance, but therapeutic dispensing of "Practitioner only" products is necessary for therapeutic results. Some supplements on the market are synthetic, not natural, poorly absorbed and have little to no impact on healing the body.

### **What type of pathology test do you do?**

Some testing can be done through conventional laboratories, and others are only available through specialty laboratories. Testing is frequently done to assess nutritional status, including amino acids, fatty acids, oxidative stress, vitamin levels, mitochondrial function, food sensitivities, and microbiome health. Some testing can be performed at home with test kits to collect urine or stool. Others may require a blood draw. In all cases, we will assist you in coordinating initial and follow-up testing.



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### **What is a leaky gut?**

Leaky gut or gut permeability is a condition in which the mucosal lining (gastrointestinal epithelium) of the GI tract has holes in it (often created by candida). Undigested molecules (such as peptides before they are broken down into amino acids) pass through the holes and into the blood, triggering allergic response to foreign molecules.

These foreign invaders can also travel to the brain and cause "brain-fog" as well as attention and behavioural issues. Symptoms of leaky gut include food sensitivities, fatigue, poor sleep, hyperactivity, irritability, poor concentration, memory issues, mood swings, and muscle and joint pain.

### **What causes a leaky gut ?**

It is estimated that 70% of the general population has leaky gut. Triggers include a diet high in refined carbohydrates, overuse of antibiotics, junk food, food allergies, parasites, candida, bowel bacteria, heavy metals and the birth control pill. Babies naturally have leaky gut in the first year of life.

Modern diets high in refined carbohydrates and sugar contribute in large part to an overgrowth of pathogens (gut dysbiosis) and a lack of beneficial bacteria to fight off these pathogens. Traditional cultured foods like miso, yogurt, kefir and fermented grains can supply beneficial microbes.

### **What is gut dysbiosis?**

Gut dysbiosis is an imbalance of naturally occurring microbes in the GI tract. Bacteria such as streptococcus and yeast such as candida outnumber more beneficial bacteria such as bifidus and lacto bacillus and adversely affect immunity and metabolism. This condition makes people more vulnerable to outside infections from parasites, fungus, virus and bacteria.

### **What is the brain-immuno-gut connection?**

Our gastrointestinal tract ("gut") serves 2 basic functions, to absorb nutrients and to screen out toxins. If the gut is not working, then cell health is compromised as too few nutrients and too many toxins enter the blood and penetrate cells.

In turn, gut permeability ("leaky gut") and gut dysbiosis can trigger metabolic, neurologic and immunologic disorders such as allergies, attention deficit, and anxiety.

The brain and gut are also directly linked in that 70% of the neurotransmitters found in the brain are also found in the gut. So, the gut can have an immediate impact on brain function.