



Chronic Pain & Functional Medicine

There are 100 million Americans today suffering from some form of chronic pain. That's one in ten people in America who have experienced daily pain for 3 months or more and a staggering 1.5 BILLION people worldwide who are consistently dealing with chronic pain.

The most common forms of chronic pain are:

- Lower back pain
- Neck pain
- Facial Pain
- Migraines

These pains can be caused by a variety of issues, including past injuries, muscle strains, underlying illnesses, and more. However, one of THE largest contributing factors to chronic pain that doctors rarely address is simply LIFESTYLE. Things as seemingly harmless as working in a static environment, such as sitting at a desk for long periods at a time, working in poorly lit rooms, and living each day with minimal movement and poor nutritional choices. These together all create a recipe for chronic pain and further health complications.

These are only a few examples of how lifestyle factors can contribute to chronic pain. One important thing that functional medicine highlights is that this pain does not need to be a forever issue. It can be prevented, lessened, and even reversed!

How Can Functional Medicine Help Chronic Pain?

By getting to the root source, that's how.

Learning about your pain - where it comes from, what it's caused by, and how to prevent it - is the solution to addressing chronic pain. Functional health providers work with you as partners in your health in order to implement a personalized course of action to help alleviate your chronic pain. Instead of simply muting the symptoms and physical manifestation of the pain, functional medicine seeks to get to the bottom of your discomfort.

With the goal of solving the cause of the pain, patients can expect to receive not just short-term relief from their discomfort, but also insights on how to prevent further progression of the problem or onset of others later in life.

For many instances of chronic pain, there are underlying causes which might not be initially obvious to the patient. Things such as allergens, environmental toxins, an inflammatory diet, stress, and activity habits can contribute to pain and its lasting effects, so it's worth becoming aware of (or 'literate' as the functional health world labels it) what could be affecting your pain.

Our hope is to enable all patients to become more 'literate' and confident in functional health, so as to maximize their chances of preventing the onset or reversing the effects of chronic pain.

Diet

While there's no 'one size fits all' diet plan that will work for all chronic pain sufferers, there has been significant scientific evidence to suggest that following vegan, anti-inflammatory, and paleo diets have resulted in an overall decrease in pain.

These diets help promote the healthy functioning of cellular growth and repair, minimizing the instances of the excess inflammation.

Some foods to include in your diet to lower inflammation include:

- Tomatoes
- Olive Oil
- Leafy greens (*such as spinach and kale*)
- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Salmon
- Pineapple
- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Citrus fruits
- Pineapple
- Turmeric
- Ginger

Pro Tip: Juicing turmeric, ginger, and pineapple together will give you a fantastic tasting anti-inflammatory drink that you can enjoy at any time of the day.