

How to Prepare for Your Functional Medicine and Functional Nutrition Visits

Welcome to the practice of Functional Medicine. This may be a new experience for you so let us briefly introduce you to this type of medicine. This is about creating or restoring health by addressing the underlying causes of health problems. The basic principles of Functional Medicine are grounded in the concept that our bodies know how to create health if we restore the balance and harmony to our body, mind and spirit. We look at the body as a whole and at each person as a uniquely different “ecosystem”. To create real change in your health generally requires profound change in how you look after yourself.

There is a lot of information we collect to help us make your health program and this requires a number of things. We ask you to consider your health in ways and in details you may not have done in the past. This is a completely different approach to healthcare and cannot succeed without your ongoing participation.

There are homework assignments given at each visit or conference and an important series of questionnaires to complete before each and every visit (*Vitamin & Supplement sheet, Medication sheet and Medical Symptoms Questionnaire (MSQ)*). We are always available to help you with your health program.

On your first visit plan to have a detailed conversation about your specific goals for your health and to review your past health in detail. This appointment is approximately 1.5 full hours and will include a physical exam. For women we ask that you **do not wear makeup or nail polish to this appointment. For all patients, please do not wear any fragrances to your appointment [this includes perfumes, cologne, personal care products with scent, etc.] because a number of our patients are highly sensitive to all chemicals.**

Please bring the original bottles of all of your medication, supplements and any protein powders, fibers, etc. that you currently take. If you have previous test results please bring a copy of these tests to the appointment that you plan to leave with us.

At the conclusion of this appointment we will decide what additional testing we may need to complete your health plan and also discuss what your path along this journey might look like. We will provide you with the appropriate test paperwork, kits and instructions. Some kits are for you to take home and do at home. These come with postage-paid labels. You will ship these directly to the individual laboratories from your home or office. When the test results are completed, we receive your results in time for your next scheduled appointment. If your results are not completed, we will call you in advance of your appointment and reschedule.

Since this is a completely different approach to healthcare, you may be asked to think about your health and pay attention to your health and stay involved in the process of creating health. In order for our approach to work we need your full cooperation with a number of things on an ongoing basis.

These include the following:

1. You are responsible to schedule your follow-up appointments. After each appointment we will provide you with a written homework assignment. It is your responsibility to review this and let us know if you need assistance. The homework will outline the next steps you are to take in working on your health that you and your provider worked through on your visit and will indicate when your next appointment should occur.
2. You may need to keep an ongoing and current “Health Calendar” on which you record several things (Dr. Mack requires a health calendar):
 - a. **Any changes** you make in your supplements or medications. This includes starting or stopping anything as well as a change in dose, number of capsules, etc.
 - b. Any changes in how you feel, either improved or not.
 - c. Any major events, such as the flu or vacation.

- d. There may be additional items we ask you to record over the course of time such as your exercise routine, bowel movements, hours of sleep, headaches, etc. The assignment is kept to what is currently relevant for your health plan, so if we ask you to monitor it please make this a priority.
3. We require you to prepare in advance for your follow up appointments. This includes completing the **“patient appointment forms”** sent in an appointment reminder email by our office staff before your appointment. Please set aside plenty of time to fill it out in advance of your appointment. On this form you will be asked to list the details of your current supplements and medications – these may have changed since your last appointment, and answer a new medical symptom questionnaire.
4. At the beginning of each appointment we will review the progress you have made on the previous homework assignment so plan to have this available.
5. In preparation for follow up visits, it is vital that you complete all the paperwork and return this to us at least 24 hours in advance of any phone consultation or bring it with you for your in-person visit.
6. If we do not know what you are taking or how much of your previous homework you have completed, it will limit the progress we can make during the appointment. **You must complete these forms in advance of your appointment to bring with you or send before your telephone consult.**
7. **Do not make any changes in your supplement protocol or diet without consulting with us first please.** Many patients have set their progress back by listening to advice that is well intended but wrong for them!
8. If you have a medical emergency, you should go through the usual emergency management channels.
9. We are available every weekday in the office from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM central Monday through Thursday and 9:00 to 1:00pm on Friday. Dr. Mack is available from 10:30-6:00pm on Tuesdays. You may contact us by telephone or email. Generally your questions will be answered within 24-48 hours. However, please bear in mind that this is a unique practice where our providers are always ones who respond to your needs and questions.
10. We do not provide primary-care services. All of our medical and complementary services are adjunctive to your primary care team. There is no “on call” doctor that will be answering emergency calls. Emergencies should be called into 911 or directed to your primary care physician. We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

Functional Medicine is a unique opportunity to either improve or restore your health. It teaches you to become better informed about both basic and cutting edge science you can use to maintain your health throughout your life. Our goal is to help you move through this process and help you accomplish what you have put on your health wish list.

Email Questions Policy

Due to the highly popular demand of email questions and to the often lengthy research and response requirements, our office will be following the policy outlined below for email and phone inquiries between office visits.

Email is very efficient for you and for us, especially if we can be prompt in replies and save you time in the car and away from work and family. Handling incoming email questions and between visit communications is a great value for you and for us; we would like to nurture it without getting buried by it.

This is a way for you to have short questions answered in between your regular appointments to keep you moving forward on your health goals. Email questions for simple clarifications on your last visit homework and are considered usual and complimentary if they can be reviewed and answered by our office staff and do not require additional research and time by the provider.

Status updates and questions that require responses outside of the previous visit instructions and require time by the provider to research, review your chart and respond constitute a new encounter. Short question emails that would take no more than 15 minutes to answer including research time by the provider are reasonable for email encounters. And email encounters are a

good way to get your questions answered.

If your question is very lengthy or there are several questions that may take well over 15-minutes to answer, the most prudent and economical choice would be a short telephone 30-minute consult or a short 30-minute in-office consult instead as it will provide additional time for discussion that is beyond what is effective in email format.

Here's how it works:

1. You determine you have a question that cannot wait until your next scheduled appointment or you have a status update that has arose that will require input, time and more than a few sentence response from your provider.
2. Open an email and address it to ty.daily@livingwelldallas.com
3. You will put "**patient question for _____(your provider, i.e. Dr. Mack)**" at the beginning of the **subject line** of your email. This will move your question to the top of the incoming email list.
4. Our providers (doctors and nutritionist) will take care of such emails at the top of their daily agenda and all email inquiries will be answer within 48 hours.
5. In the body of the email, write your message including the questions you want answered.
6. Your provider (doctor or nutritionist) will start their stopwatch when they open your email and stop it when they have answered your questions, pasted the exchange into your medical record, and completed any other chores that are needed (call the pharmacy, order any additional lab test, or consulted with any other health care provider).
7. Your account number will be kept on file and charged for the total number of minutes spent. The number of minutes will be noted at the top of the email response as \$/per minute – Provider_Name.
8. You will be emailed a receipt separately. The charges will be coded like a phone consultation for insurance purposes.

The adoption of new technology such as email and web services has allowed us to become more responsive and available to you without getting in the car. Becoming more efficient and precise with our services allows us to provide better overall services to you. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Explanation of fees:

- Our physician fees are \$500 per hour for office visits, telephone consultations, and email consultation responses. You will be provided with a receipt document that explains the nature of the charges and the medical diagnosis for those of you submitting these to insurance carriers.
- Our Nutritionist fees are \$115 per hour for established patients office visits, telephone consultations, and email consultation responses.
- In many cases, lab test fees are paid directly to the lab performing the testing based on your insurance company coverage of tests. If your insurance will not process the labs for you, we may often can pass along discounted practitioner pricing for your testing. In those cases, lab tests are paid to our office and we give you a receipt to submit for insurance reimbursement.

In health,

Betty Murray
Founder Living Well Dallas, Inc.
cc. Dr. Claudia Harsh, Dr. Suzanne Mack, Dr. Guy Francis