

Holistic Medicine: What is It?

I practice holistic medicine and I'm often asked what that means. Here's how I define it. **The Gift of Time.** I set aside 90 minutes for the first visit to permit time to listen to my patient's story. This way, I learn the many different factors influencing my patient's well-being and can get to the root causes. I can't do this in twelve, even 20 minutes. Sometimes a potential patient will ask why my appointments are longer than usual. I explain that my conventional medical training taught me to listen for symptoms then quickly order tests or write prescriptions. This model lets physicians see a large number of patients in a short amount of time. However, drugs and surgery silence symptoms, but rarely change the underlying disease. This never made sense to me, and I sought a different approach. **Restoring Health.** I don't fight disease. I help my patients restore their health. Each patient leaves with a regimen designed to create the causes and conditions for health. With that, their own self-healing ability, an idea that goes back to at least Hippocrates, cures their ailments. I have a special interest and faith in diet to do this, but I also use bioidentical hormone replacement, nutritional supplements, homeopathy, and cranial osteopathy. I often advise patients to learn mindfulness meditation, yoga or tai chi to cultivate mind and body awareness, and to calm their overtaxed nervous systems. I refer when other modalities seem appropriate, such as acupuncture or psychotherapy. This model of restoring health is the model of the future. My hope is that more physicians will adopt it.

About the Author

Web site for Psychosomatic Medicine. Psychosomatic Medicine is the official journal of The American Psychosomatic.

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