

## Foreword

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When I was asked to assist with adapting a series of articles written by Doctor Georges Mouton MD into English, I jumped at the chance. Not because I relish the idea of translating anything (I'm British after all, and just like most Brits do not generally 'do' other languages, or not very well anyway). Rather, it was because I wanted to help get an important message out there, namely to give people a real taste of Functional Medicine and what it has to offer.

Maybe you are already wondering what **Functional Medicine** is and why we even need it? Well, I am not about to spoil a good story before it's even got started. All that, and much more, will become apparent as you journey through this book. But what I will say is that despite the incredible advances of modern medicine, our health is, in many ways, 'broken'. You only have to think about the terrible burden of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, dementia, osteoporosis, and arthritis to realise the extent of the tsunami of chronic disease that engulfs modern society. And that's before we even consider the plethora of other ailments such as allergies, IBS, IBD, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, depression, auto-immune conditions, and so on, that are so rife today.

In my award-winning book, *The Health Delusion*, I made the point that 'if you are a healthy person in today's society, you are in the minority'. As well as being a terrible indictment of the state of our health in the modern world, it also implies that if we really are to move forward, we need a new paradigm through which to understand health. It has to be one that is not limited purely to treating disease symptoms with pharmaceutical drugs (although that is clearly sometimes necessary), but one that is instead concerned with promoting wellness, disease resistance,

and addressing the imbalances in the body that ultimately give rise to symptoms and disease in the first place.

My passion is nutritional medicine, and that offers one route to sorting out the mess our health is in. Yet despite its powerful effects, it has its limitations. After all, nutrition cannot solve every health problem, and it would be foolish to think it could. What we urgently need is a new system of sophisticated individualised medicine that integrates nutrition into its core principles, but goes further and deeper. This new paradigm is **Functional Medicine**, of which you will learn much more in this book.

What better way to learn about this than from one of the foremost, prolific and pioneering doctors in the field? Doctor Georges Mouton MD has been, and continues to be, one of the single biggest influences on my career, constantly forcing me to challenge and evolve my perspective about health and wellness and how we can help patients achieve it. Transforming people's health is just a normal day in the office for Doctor Mouton MD, and doesn't that pretty much say it all? That I can help to mine some of the treasure from his vast labyrinth of knowledge and deep clinical experience, and bring it to a wider audience, brings me great satisfaction.

I wonder how many people who read this book feel they, or members of their family, have been let down by conventional medicine in one way or another? Sometimes of course, it works wonders, performs miracles, and saves life. But often it doesn't. We have a system of medicine that does not really know how to promote health and prevent disease. So, above all else, I hope that by sharing the 52 articles that make up this book, we can introduce a broad audience to the principles of **Functional Medicine** and in so doing, take a step closer to the more individualised and health-orientated system of medicine we so badly need.

Glen Matten, MSc Nutr Med

# Introduction

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The beauty of structuring this book into short easy-to-read articles is that it offers a new and dynamic way of communicating; especially as I appreciate many people no longer have the time to read a book in its classic form nowadays! In a world where information can be found at the click of a button, people want to learn and acquire knowledge, without spending masses of time, at least not all at once, hence the need for a more concise format to better meet this demand.

I also wanted to challenge myself to write for patients, having written for health professionals these past twenty years. It requires a different style, and importantly, it is a matter of finding appealing analogies, which are accessible to all and expressed in less technical vocabulary. After all, it is all too easy to resort to jargon when drawing heavily from the medical literature.

This book therefore represents a bold venture to communicate differently and speak to a wider audience. That is important because I now believe that the future change in medicine will be driven more by patients than by doctors. Among doctors, many have no interest in a more natural approach to the art of healing, opting instead for an approach that ultimately just causes more symptoms. They are accustomed to thinking on a symptomatic level: the response to a symptom is to give an anti-symptom drug, whether that is for constipation or diarrhoea, pain, inflammation, depression, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol. It is reductionist behaviour, but like it or not, that is just the way it is.

As a result, the majority of doctors are not willing to dedicate the necessary time to learn or be informed in these new areas. Besides, it must be said, the main sources of informa-

tion and education are largely dominated by the pharmaceutical industry, inevitably with the existence of self-serving priorities or bias.

However, if a patient calls upon a doctor regarding one of the themes developed in my articles, I can only hope that this will encourage the doctor to ask questions and open their eyes to other approaches. If more and more patients adopt this approach, the doctor may eventually decide that he or she must find out more on the subject (and maybe even read the article in question...).

It is not my intent to give carte blanche to patients to read these articles in order to practice self-diagnosis, much less self-treatment. On the contrary, I repeatedly stress the need to individually customise any therapeutic approach, including most dietary changes (even if, when it comes to diet, there are some fundamental principles that should be respected by everyone). This customisation is always based on objective information obtained by a doctor or other health-care professional. The articles have no other purpose than to create new ways to understand why a person is suffering with or presenting troublesome symptoms and conditions.

The goal is to change attitudes, slowly but surely, while allowing each patient or doctor freedom of choice and the ability to evolve their approach. I do not dispute the fact that some subjects have a certain complexity, but we can also find in all these articles small tricks or simple diagnostic procedures (the level of vitamin B12 or performing a thyroid ultra-sound, for example) that could greatly contribute to the better understanding, and therefore more effective management, of clinical situations that are unresolved despite numerous failed attempts...

In the majority of the topics discussed, I have made sure to cite reference to texts or lectures that can be accessed freely

on my website and ensure the scientific validity of the information presented through reference to articles published in medical journals listed on PubMed. This does not prevent me from laying claim to the reasoning that derives from them, especially recognising that innovative strategies are often controversial and polemic, but that the scientific basis duly published in peer reviewed journals cannot be contested.

As for the inevitable coexistence of different, even conflicting opinions, to what I present here; does not that represent the guarantee of progress? Do we all have to share a single thought? I do not think so.

