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Reducing exposures. To reduce the toxic load, patients are encouraged to read labels, evaluate their personal beauty products, make wiser choices in terms of bottled water, and become aware of other significant sources of exposure in their environment. The goal is to reduce overall toxic load by buying more organics, and when animal protein is consumed, selecting free-range poultry and animals with less exposure to hormones, pesticides, and other contaminants.

Ensuring a safe detox. Today we have access to extensive detoxigenomic and toxicant testing that was not available in clinical practice a few years ago. Factoring in details from an extensive patient case history with results from lab tests and relevant genomic studies, clinicians are provided with a deeper understanding of the biochemically unique needs of the individual patient, enabling them to create a more personalized approach to reduce the body burden. These emerging assessment tools, in combination with advanced nutraceuticals, will help us manage detoxification protocols more safely and effectively, particularly for our most sensitive and vulnerable patients.

NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE AND THE FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE PARADIGM

As many of you know, key leaders in naturopathic medicine were instrumental in the creation and evolution of functional medicine more than twenty years ago. Currently, many naturopathic providers are involved in the global expansion of functional medicine, both in clinical practice and in the dissemination of advanced clinical strategies to other health care professionals. The therapeutic partnership taught in naturopathic medicine is congruent with the patient-centered approach of functional medicine. Today naturopathic physicians are leading the way in providing advanced detoxification and personalized programs for patients as they master the art and science of detox medicine.

Resources

Institute for Functional Medicine. IFM provides a philosophical and scientific framework in metabolic medicine that focuses on the underlying causes of disease, and supports early diagnosis and effective early intervention to improve patient outcomes. www.FunctionalMedicine.org

Metagenics. Metagenics' FirstLine Therapy is a clinically driven approach focused on well-defined protocols, nutritional products, and real-world case histories. These functional medicine interventions are now being disseminated around the globe. www.Metagenics.com

Metametrix. A clinical laboratory recognized in the development of metabolic, toxicant, microbial, and nutritional testing. www.Metametrix.com

Genova. Functional laboratory testing that supports personalized medicine, including panels of individual genomic evaluations. www.gdx.com

Environmental scorecard. A website that enables consumers to check the sources and severity of toxic exposures in their own community by zip code. www.scorecard.org

Books. *Healing the New Childhood Epidemics: Autism, ADHD, Asthma, and Allergies* by Dr. Kenneth Bock effectively describes the impact of toxins on our children, including gut-induced endotoxicity, environmental factors, methylation defects, and resulting neurotoxicity. Additional resources include *The Sinatra Solution: Metabolic Cardiology* by Stephen Sinatra, MD; *Textbook of Functional Medicine 2010* published by the Institute for Functional Medicine; *Detoxification and Healing: The Key to Optimal Health* by Sidney MacDonald Baker, MD; and *Advancing Medicine with Food and Nutrients*, 2nd ed., Ingrid Kohlstadt, MD, MPH, editor.

Dr. Kristi Hughes, ND

Dr. Hughes serves as Associate Director of Medical Education for IFM, where her role includes the development and supervision of teaching teams in the Functional Medicine Certification Program and the Functional Nutrition Course. She is also the developer of the Functional Medicine Matrix for IFM and co-developer of the FirstLine Therapy Certification Program for Metagenics. As a trainer on lifestyle and functional medicine, she has lectured internationally for more than a decade and has been instrumental in providing functional medicine resources for clinicians and nutrition professionals in South Africa.

Founder and director of the Dynamic Healing Centers in Minnesota, Dr. Hughes manages an integrated team of health care providers. Her clinical sites also support preceptors, host a naturopathic residency program, and model the integration of functional medicine with a naturopathic foundation. Through the centers she provides distance consulting to physicians and to patients in conjunction with their physicians' participation, with an emphasis on therapeutics such as supervised detox.

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Editorial
Our thanks to Jerry Stine, NC, Director of the Lifespan Institute (www.Lifespan-Institute.com) for technical support.

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