



medical transformation center

Discover your personal best with personalized medicine

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Heart health: Finding the root of cardiovascular disease

February is American Heart Month — functional medicine offers advances in prevention and early detection for heart disease through genetic testing

(LOUISVILLE, KY) – Functional medicine, with its unique, systems-oriented approach to heart health and other common chronic conditions, has made significant advances since the late 1990s in treating the underlying causes of heart disease. This specialty is now being used to assess cardiovascular disease risk, facilitate prevention and early detection. Through genetic information and other biomarkers, functional medicine identifies preventive and therapeutic strategies that go beyond traditional treatments.

About 600,000 people die of cardiovascular disease in the United States every year — one in every four deaths — and it is the leading cause of death for both men and women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Functional, or personalized, medicine endeavors to identify the root of the problem largely through genetic testing, then manage and reverse it when possible. Research in genomics (the use of the genetic information to guide medical decision-making) has increased the understanding of the relationships between genes, proteins and disease. Advances in this area have provided improved diagnostic tools that are driving a shift in medical practice to one that addresses the whole person, not just an isolated set of symptoms. Currently, genetic testing is recommended or required for many of the FDA-approved drugs specifically prescribed for cardiovascular conditions.

“The personalized medicine approach to heart health is primary prevention — we work to prevent the development of disease in the first place. First, we evaluate your genetic risk factors for the development of heart disease, then ameliorate or manage them as early as possible,” said Carl Paige, M.D., of Medical Transformation Center, one of a select group of providers in the country to offer this type of health care. “Our diagnostic testing goes way beyond routine blood work.”

For example, functional medicine physicians can use genetic markers to detect a patient’s predisposition for atrial fibrillation, coronary artery disease, ventricular arrhythmias and thrombosis/clotting, then use this data to create a customized approach to prevention. Genetic testing can also benefit patients already suffering from chronic conditions, such as in identifying heart transplant patients’ probability of rejecting a transplanted organ. Before such testing was available, the primary method for managing heart transplant rejection was an invasive heart biopsy. Ongoing testing also may be used in longer-term transplant management by guiding customized immunosuppressive drug regimens.

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In addition to extensive diagnostics, functional medicine seeks to manage lifestyle and behaviors that contribute to the onset of heart disease. One of the most important and often overlooked causes of heart disease is chronic stress — which triggers the body's fight-or-flight response. Each time the response is triggered, the body releases biochemicals that promote blood clotting, inflammation, arterial constriction, elevated blood pressure, deterioration of heart cells and dangerous changes in heart rate. Recognizing and reducing the sources of stress can decrease the risk of angina, heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure and other issues.

A personalized medicine physician can identify whether a patient is genetically at risk for cardiovascular disease and implement a customized wellness plan. General guidelines include: don't smoke, control your blood pressure, achieve your ideal body weight, exercise several times per week with mix of aerobic and resistance training, follow a diet individualized for genomics and keep your blood sugar within an ideal range.

For more information about the personalized medicine approach to heart health or to schedule an appointment, call the Medical Transformation Center at 502-262-4936.

About Medical Transformation Center

The Medical Transformation Center is dedicated to the practice of personalized medicine, which evaluates the special circumstances surrounding each patient and offers highly individualized, effective guidance. Personalized medicine integrates traditional Western practices with complementary medicine. It incorporates prevention through nutrition, exercise and lifestyle choices; use of the latest laboratory and diagnostic testing; and prescribed combinations of drugs, supplements, therapeutic diets and detoxification programs. The Medical Transformation Center represents a successful shift from disease-orientation to patient-orientation, addressing the whole person, not just an isolated set of manifestations. For more information, visit <http://medicaltransformationcenter.com>.