



essential
HEALTH



Precision Health Care

A New Approach to Better Health

There is no denying that conventional medicine has its limitations. Prescribing pharmaceuticals as a primary defense against disease can swiftly disregard underlying issues that lay at the root of a health condition. Many turn to alternative forms of health care only to face confusion about the myriad options. And for good reason: the road to health outside of conventional medicine has been complicated with a confusing mix of alternative care approaches that can feel vague, overlapping, or unregulated. It can often be difficult to tease through the nuances of different approaches to care, much less decipher which is the most appropriate to pursue. A full understanding of what types of care are available is a vital first step toward choosing which path will benefit your health the most. The following provides a clear explanation of the different types of health care available, as well as comprehensive information on precision health care, a new approach to better health.

Forms of Health Care

Several forms of health care exist, each with nuanced definitions and applications in patient health. These include:

Conventional Medicine

This approach evaluates and treats diseases and symptoms based on a modern scientific understanding of the body's biology. Conventional medicine tends to treat disease and illness reactively after it has manifested in the body. Pharmaceuticals, radical therapies, and surgery are the most common types of treatment used in conventional medicine. Insurance companies typically have a large influence on conventional medical practices and primary care providers often see upwards of 30 patients a day.

Holistic Medicine

Holistic medicine considers the mind, body and spirit to improve health and wellness. Holistic practitioners emphasize a patient's mind-body connection and typically favors techniques including acupuncture, massage therapy, mental health counseling, herbal medicine, and nutrition counseling.

Naturopathic Medicine

This form of care relies on natural remedies to promote healing by treating a patient from a whole-person perspective. In addition to lifestyle changes that improve health, naturopathic techniques may be offered to patients, include homeopathy, herbal medicine, and other complementary therapies.

Precision Medicine

Precision Medicine is a medical model that customizes treatment based on a genetic or molecular profile of a subgroup of patients. Instead of a "one-size-fits-all" approach to care, it tailors disease prevention and treatment to a patient's genes and environment.



Functional Medicine

Like conventional medicine, this approach is based on a scientific understanding of the body's biology. However, rather than treat symptoms of a disease, functional medicine utilizes robust labs and diagnostics to identify and eliminate the root cause of disease using a more personalized, systemized form of care that takes into account each individual's genetic background, environment, lifestyle, and more.

Integrative Medicine

This approach focuses on the whole person in a more global sense, rather than just specific symptoms or diseases. Integrative medicine seeks to address an even broader combination of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs, and understand how all of these factors impact health. It also emphasizes an equal partnership between the patient and the provider.

A New Approach: Precision Health Care

The term "precision health care" was developed to represent a combination of the best aspects of conventional, functional and integrative medicine. This hybrid primary care practice model makes it possible to not only manage disease and address symptoms, but actually target the root cause of disease to eliminate it all together (in some cases), and improve an individual's *health span*, or the number of high-quality years of life added due to improved health.

The goal in precision health care is not limited to eliminating disease, but to help each patient achieve optimal long-term health. Precision health care providers do this by focusing first on gaining a deep understanding of their patient. This includes their current, comprehensive health profile, as well as their lifestyle, personal health goals, and any other factors that may be affecting their health. Only through establishing a deep relationship with each patient can a provider understand how work, family life, finances and other factors can affect health. Based on this understanding, the provider will work with their patient to develop a personalized health plan.

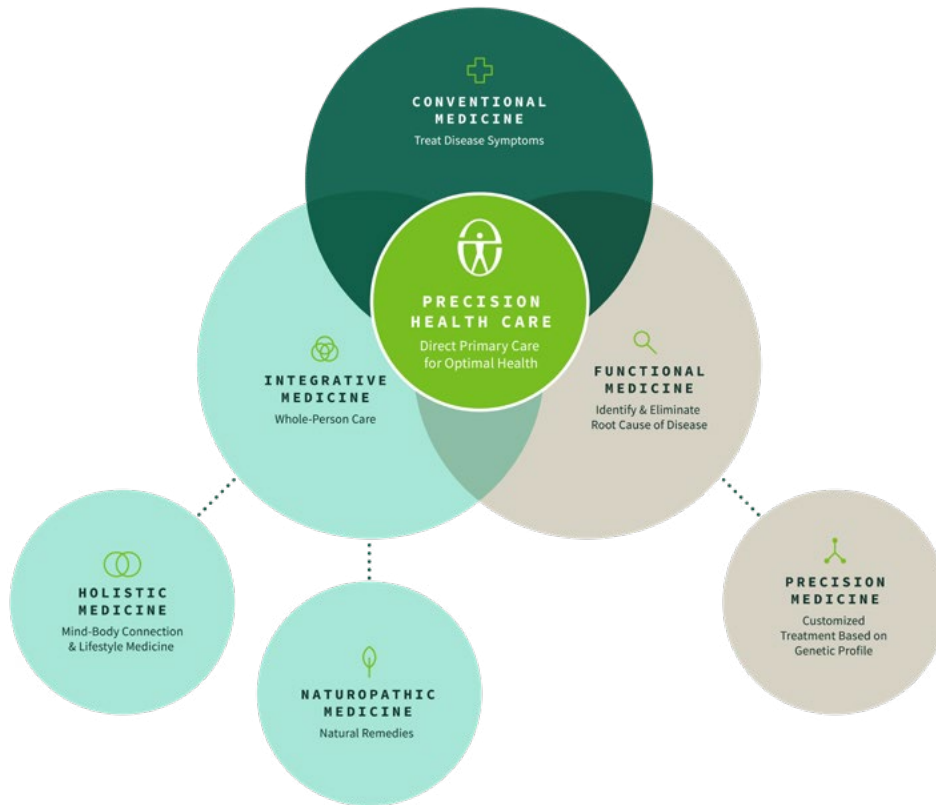
This plan provides a specific approach that combines aspects from conventional, functional and integrative medicine in order for patients to alleviate a health condition, and build and maintain better health. For example, a provider may prescribe medication to help reduce acute inflammation, but also order tests to locate the root cause of this inflammation. In addition, they may also identify proactive lifestyle or nutritional changes the patient can make to provide long-lasting benefits that may eventually negate the need for medication. Underlying all of this is a commitment toward working in partnership with the patient to continuously monitor, evaluate, and make progress around their health goals.

Why Is Precision Health Care Beneficial?

Precision health care is a direct response to the shortcomings of conventional medicine. To fully understand the benefits of precision health care, it is important to first understand the needs it addresses.

Although conventional medicine has made invaluable contributions to health care, it is nevertheless designed to treat disease, rather than people. This limits its reach by only addressing conditions through conventional means, such as pharmaceuticals or surgery. As a result, chronic and inflammatory conditions, as well as diseases that don't yet fit into neat categories, often get overlooked and are left unresolved.

This is a major problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control, [six in 10 Americans](#) now suffer from at least one chronic disease. Despite the fact that chronic diseases account for [nearly 90 percent](#) of health care spending, the number of people suffering from them continues to grow. This is because chronic disease can be the result of factors that largely go unaddressed by conventional medicine, such as poor nutrition, sleep problems, anxiety, and a



lack of physical activity. While many advancements in medicine help manage symptoms and extend life, they do not necessarily address the root cause of symptoms or improve quality of life.

In addition, the current infrastructure and policies within the health care system in the U.S., including hospitals, insurance companies, and the pharmaceutical industry, has created economic conditions that have rendered primary care inefficient and unsustainable.

Precision health care is designed to meet these challenges. It does so by incorporating necessary conventional medical approaches alongside functional and integrative medicine that consider the larger reasons why disease occurs with the goal of eliminating root causes of illness, all while emphasizing more personal, long-term relationships between providers and their patients. Other benefits of precision health care include:

- **More treatment options:** In addition to conventional treatments, precision health care offers a variety of non-pharmaceutical, therapeutic, and alternative pathways.
- **More time with providers:** With an emphasis on long-term health and longevity, it is typical for precision health care providers to spend an hour or more with each patient at least quarterly so that they have a more complete understanding of their health and goals.
- **Personalized treatment plans:** Precision health care providers and their patients work together to develop a pathway toward optimal health that takes into account a range of factors, such as current health, lifestyle and longevity goals.
- **Comprehensive assessments:** Precision health care providers regularly conduct comprehensive assessments of each of their patients' health in order to identify any underlying conditions and track progress. These assessments typically include physicals, blood work and detailed conversations about lifestyle.



- **Lifestyle management:** To help increase health span and quality of life, precision health care providers work closely with each patient to develop healthier lifestyle habits, such as regularly exercising, eating a balanced diet, getting high quality sleep, and more.

Who Are Precision Health Care Providers?

Precision health care providers are a set of unique, highly trained and passionate individuals who agree that conventional medicine contains shortcomings and does not fully benefit the patient (or their practices). Instead, they practice with a diverse medical perspectives and a set of tools from multiple disciplines to deliver the highest level of care to patients.

The field of functional and integrative medicine has many different forms of training that differ in complexities and clinical practice preparation. What sets precision health care providers apart from many integrative and functional medical professionals is their level of training and credentials. All precision health care providers are board certified in a conventional medical discipline (typically primary care) and have completed, or made substantial progress toward, a second board certification from the most respected institutions within functional and integrative medicine, such as The Institute for Functional Medicine and the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine.

How Does Precision Health Care Work?

While precision health care is capable of adapting to the unique needs of each patient, it nevertheless follows a defined framework. This helps ensure each provider delivers personal, comprehensive, and effective care.

1. Consultation

Each patient begins their precision health care journey with a comprehensive consultation. This is their opportunity to meet with a provider and discuss their current health status, medical and family history, personal health objectives, and any concerns. Providers will answer any questions, measure biometrics, and conduct a thorough functional and physical exam. The goal of consultations is to not only diagnose any diseases or conditions, but also to begin identifying their root causes.

2. Testing

In addition to the functional and physical exams, comprehensive lab tests are also an important element of precision health care. Precision health care providers make use of 16 different reference laboratories depending on need. The incredibly detailed results from these labs “tell a story” and allow providers to gain an even fuller understanding of each patient’s health profile to help identify any underlying issues that may be contributing to disease.

3. Personalized Care

After consultation and testing, precision health care providers work with their patients to develop a thorough plan customized to the patient’s individual needs. While the specifics will vary, the goals of this medical plan can be divided across three categories:

- **Address current disease or illness:** Providers will address any diseases or symptoms that can be treated immediately. While this may involve a conventional medicine approach, non-pharmaceutical pathways may be utilized as well.
- **Define root cause of disease:** Based on consultations and lab testing, providers will focus on addressing and reversing any drivers of disease by adding functional and integrative medicine components to a patient’s plan. This involves addressing anything that may be causing imbalances in the body’s biological systems or core



physiological processes, such as molecular and cellular function, assimilation of nutrients, inflammation or energy production.

- **Improve health span and long-term quality of life:** Using a multimodal strategy involving lifestyle factors like diet, nutrition, exercise, stress management, and various other restorative and reparative therapies, providers will focus on preventing disease in order to help optimize health and improve a patient's health span.

4. Monitoring

Precision health care providers will regularly check in with patients to monitor their progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their personalized care plan. While the frequency of these check-ins will depend on the unique circumstances of each patient, they ultimately allow providers to gain a better understanding of the cause of disease, helping them develop an approach that best fits a patient's needs. The typical plan includes no less than quarterly check-ins with the provider.

5. Annual Assessment

Once a year, precision health care providers will conduct a full reassessment of each patient. This includes a physical and functional exam, biometric measurements, and lab tests. All metrics are compared to prior years, providing a clear indication of progress. This helps ensure each patient remains on track with their personal health care goals and gives the provider the necessary information they need to monitor and continue optimizing health for their patients.

Can Precision Health Care Work for Me?

Precision health care is a good choice for anyone looking for a more personal, comprehensive, and effective form of primary care, and especially those who are dissatisfied with the conventional health care industry. In particular, the precision health care approach is well-suited for anyone with short-term medical issues or long-term chronic conditions, including Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, gastrointestinal problems, or issues that stem from hormone imbalances, such as menopause/andropause thyroid disorders, cortisol imbalance, weight gain, or decreased energy. Typical pathways to better health may include bioidentical hormone replacement therapy, IV therapy, peptide therapy, supplementation, lifestyle changes and possibly prescription medications, if required.

Precision health care not only addresses short-term conditions, but also helps optimize overall long-term health through lifestyle changes. In addition to relief from disease, in time, many patients may also experience improvements such as in a reduction in fat mass and an increase in lean muscle mass, lowered cholesterol levels, and improved A1C readings. Benefits of this form of whole-person care may also include improved cognition and an alleviation from the physical impact of stress.



SUCCESS STORIES:

“JD,” a 51-year-old science researcher and married mother of two, was struggling for years with chronic health conditions that left her eating through a nasojejun (NJ) tube with such severe weight loss, fatigue, and brain fog, it was impossible for her to work or function. After seeking relief from specialists and pharmaceuticals that only masked her symptoms (and led to new ones), she was ultimately placed on an anti-depressant and told her symptoms were “in her head.” She sought out Essential Health’s precision health care to explore a new approach to care to help put the pieces together about what was going on inside her body. She met with an Essential Health provider who looked at her entire health profile and completed specialty testing that determined her fatigue, acid reflux, Hashimoto’s hypothyroidism, and food intolerances were stemming from elevated mercury, gut inflammation with multiple food sensitivities, genetic mutations of MTHFR, hormone imbalance, and multiple nutrient deficiencies. From there, she and her provider sat down for a series of long visits to discuss her labs and other lifestyle factors that might be contributing to these issues. Together, JD and her provider put a comprehensive plan together with an effective blend of conventional and functional medicine strategies, including IV therapy, food sensitivity tests, elimination diets, meditation and stress management, and supportive prescription medications. Along the way to healing, she had full 24/7 access to her provider to discuss her progress and could meet at any time to overcome any challenges. Over a year of care, they corrected her nutrient deficiencies, healed her gut dysfunction, balanced her hormones, resolved her heavy metal toxicity, removed her NJ tube, and helped her regain her life. Now, her symptoms have significantly reduced and she is back to working full-time, has started her own business, and enjoys a fulfilling lifestyle with her family.

“BG” is a 46-year-old father of three sons and is a partner in a growing business. He came to Essential Health with hypertension, hyperlipidemia, hair loss and a high body fat percentage. Beyond his diagnoses, he felt as though he had hit a wall in his health: he had brain fog, daily fatigue, was unable to make changes in his health, body, or labs, despite a generally healthy diet and active lifestyle. He came to Essential Health to regain his health without relying on heavy pharmaceuticals. After speaking in-depth with his provider about his health conditions and his lifestyle, they developed a strategy to break through his plateaus with a precision nutrition plan and optimized exercise regimen for his body composition goals, along with IV antioxidant therapy, supplements, and treatment for yeast overgrowth. By the following year, he had lost 13 pounds of fat mass, improved every aspect of cholesterol, including lowering his total cholesterol by 20 points, increased HDL by 15 points, cut his triglycerides in half, resolved his high uric acid risk for gout, and dramatically improved his blood pressure. He also reported renewed energy, mental clarity, and dramatic exercise gains. He continues to work on this overall health with his Essential Health provider and aims to come off of his last prescription medication, while continuing to optimize his body and mind.



The Key to Long-term Health & Longevity

The continued rise of chronic health conditions and the unsustainable practice of conventional primary care has paved the way for a new approach to patient care. A sole reliance on conventional practices that treat disease symptoms with pharmaceuticals drains the health care system and provides little long-term improvements in population health outcomes. Precision health care is different. It fuses the best of conventional, functional and integrative approaches to health care based on a patient's unique needs to improve health over the short- and long-term. Precision health care also puts as much emphasis on building productive relationships with patients as it does on managing and eliminating disease. In the end, maintaining symptom relief is not health. Rather, a high-quality health span is made possible through whole-person care, leaving patients free from disease and able to live their lives feeling their absolute best.

Choosing the right type of health care is a very personal decision. To explore whether precision health care might be right for you, we invite you to [schedule a Meet & Greet with an Essential Health provider.](#)