

TESTING, NOT GUESSING: THE FUTURE OF PERSONALIZED WELLNESS

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ASK DR. HIBA

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In an age where health information is widely accessible and supplements are available at every pharmacy, health food store, and Instagram feed, it's never been easier—or more overwhelming—to “take control” of your wellness.

People are self-supplementing in record numbers, often with good intentions. But as a physician working in the functional and integrative medicine space, I see firsthand how wellness without guidance can backfire.

Despite dozens of bottles and a sincere desire to feel better, many individuals still report fatigue, digestive discomfort, brain fog, skin issues, or mood imbalances. They've done the research, taken the pills, avoided certain foods, and even adopted complicated wellness routines—yet they're still stuck.

Why?

Because healing isn't just about what you take. It's about what your body actually needs—and what it can do with what you give it.



The Limitations of Self-Diagnosing with Supplements

Self-diagnosing with supplements has become common in our wellness culture. Influencers, blogs, and algorithms often make recommendations that seem science-backed and personalized—but in truth, they're often general, oversimplified, or incomplete.

Here are some patterns I often see in clinical practice:

- People taking supplements that aren't necessary for them—based on trends or symptoms without understanding the root cause

- Others taking supplements that are poorly absorbed, incompatible with their medications, or even worsening their symptoms
- Many relying on general protocols without any assessment of their specific biological needs

On top of this, gut dysfunction—such as inflammation, enzyme deficiency, or microbial imbalance—can prevent the body from absorbing nutrients effectively, no matter how high the dose or how “high-quality” the supplement.

In these situations, it’s not a lack of effort that’s the problem. It’s a lack of precision.

Precision Begins with Testing

Personalized wellness starts when we stop assuming and start investigating. In functional medicine, we use data—not trends—to guide interventions. This includes lab testing that looks beyond the basics, to assess what’s really happening inside the body.

Some of the most informative clinical tools include:

- **Comprehensive stool testing**, which gives insight into digestive function, the microbiome, inflammation, and gut immunity
- **Micronutrient testing**, which measures the functional status of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants inside the cells—not just in the bloodstream
- **Food sensitivity testing**, which can reveal immune responses to specific foods that may be driving inflammation or symptoms

This kind of testing helps us connect the dots: symptoms, systems, root causes, and therapeutic targets. With this clarity, we can approach supplementation not as a gamble—but as a strategy.

A Better Definition of “Wellness”

When we move away from guessing and toward personalized care, several things happen:

- We reduce the noise and complexity around health decisions
- We avoid wasting time, money, and energy on interventions that don’t match our needs
- We see health as something measurable and adaptive, not mystical or rigid
- And most importantly, we create space for true healing to occur—because we’re no longer working in the dark

Looking Ahead

As conversations around gut health, functional nutrition, and the supplement industry continue to grow, it’s essential that we balance empowerment with responsibility. Access to tools is important. But access to insight—rooted in science, clinical experience, and personalized care—is what really moves the needle.

We don’t have to guess.

We can test.

We can learn.

We can understand.

And from that understanding, we can begin to heal.

**To Your Health,
Hiba Georges, MD**