

Lesson 3, teaching clients about tests. So in this educational process that we're going through with our clients, it becomes very important for their empowerment to be able to understand test results. Now we might have spent years learning how to interpret tests and understanding how different tests work. So that's not the education to which I'm referring. And we're offering, that they purchase, then they're going to be able to purchase this test in the future to continue to monitor what's going on with their health. So, let's start with the tests that we don't know about, meaning we don't know how to interpret them. And the first thing that I would say about this is do not use tests that you cannot interpret or with which you are not familiar.

Now we see this in two different scenarios. Number one, we might know about a test. We've heard about it. And we might speak in a consult to a potential new client and they say, okay, I've got all these different tests. I've got the Cyrex arrays testing and other tests that might be considered functional testing. And you stop and you think to yourself, well, I've never seen one of those. Absolutely, you should get your eyes on something that is unfamiliar to you. You could spend your time learning about it and understanding it. But this isn't necessarily the time that we want to explore using this test with the client if we do not understand how to interpret the test.

You work with what you know and then you continue to build on your education about the test and learn everything that you can about it and practice using it. And that's the second part to this equation. If you encounter some testing that you are not familiar with, then there is a way to approach your own education in learning about this and investigating this. You can start with a class or instructions in learning the basics of the test. Go ahead and order the test and use it with friends or family or even yourself to get comfortable with understanding what you're seeing on these test results. And once you've done this, then you can move on to clients once you have that solid grasp of the test concepts.

Because we never stop learning patterns. As an example, I've used blood chemistry for years and I learn something new and exciting about blood chemistry every day. Isn't that incredible? I look back on when I first started in practice and I'm thinking, wow, I must not have known much then, but it was beneficial then. It's beneficial today. So, a question that you'll need to ask, and I think this is probably one of the most important questions you can ask about any functional testing, is what will you learn from the test? Additional testing can offer insight, but it's not always necessary.

You think about this from the client's viewpoint. Most of these tests are very expensive. A lot of them are \$250, \$300 and more. Some of the mycotoxin testing is \$1,100. Some of the Cyrex array testing is \$8-1200. That's an awful lot of money just to be told that they can confirm that this client has a leaky gut. That's where I stopped considering that these tests would need to be in place for me to help the client. I went through a period in my practice where I chose not to use any type of testing except blood work, but just no testing, no functional testing for several months. What did that do for me? Well, I'll tell you, it probably was the most dramatic change in how I practice.

Why is that? Well, I stopped relying on what the tests were telling me. A lot of it was confusing anyway. But I started being able to look at that client history and timeline, listen to their story, listen to them at each session, and started hearing the things that were changing. And I started to understand what was necessary for healing. And it certainly wasn't a functional medicine test. Now granted, there are cases where I will use them.

I'm not saying that they don't have benefit, they do. What I am saying to you is to not rely on using many tests hoping that they're going to give you an answer. The answer is in the client. The answer is in the client's story. It's not in that lab work. I've never had a lab come back, a lab result show up that just gave me the immediate answer of every single thing that was wrong with that client. Sounds more like conventional medicine, doesn't it? You know, where they are using not functional testing, but many different forms of testing, to discover a condition, to make a diagnosis, to make a

confirmation of a condition. And that's not what we're trying to do.

You know, we've had a thorough discussion of what our goal is, and that's to educate. So, I always come back to blood chemistry testing. It has always been very near and dear to my heart because we can learn so much about that person's biochemistry. So, why use the testing? What does this blood chemistry testing tell us about the client? Well it's complimentary. It gives us a strong idea in many ways and through many various markers. How to support and how to confirm what we already know about the client. Will I continue to use organic acids testing, Dutch testing, and stool testing in my practice?

Yes, I will. As you should. But the question has to be asked. Why are you using the testing? What is it you want to learn from the test about the client. You have to ask that question every time you want to recommend a test. Now, we interpret tests to be able to teach the client not to diagnose. We are not interpreting testing from the position of a healthcare provider. So let's talk a little bit about that. When we use blood chemistry testing, it's absolutely 180 from how a doctor uses it.

So a physician, a licensed physician, is going to get some blood work back on a patient. And they are looking for highs and lows outside of this conventional range. Those highs and lows could support and constitute a diagnosis of something that they then treat. Functional medicine is looking for the shift in biochemistry, the nuance. And therefore, that's what we seek as well. So, when we use blood chemistry testing, we're using it under the boundaries of functional reference ranges. If glucose is sitting at 97 consistently, that's not going to be on anyone's radar.

Certainly not a doctor and certainly not a diagnosis of diabetes. But what does a level of 97 in the glucose tell us? Well, it tells us there's some imbalance. What is happening in the body to cause that glucose to go up like that? That gives us a point of reference. It gives us a place to start our investigation, To understand and map out what additional things could be driving this up. Is it infection? Is it inflammation? Is it anxiety? Is it poor sleep? I mean, the list can go on and on, but it provides us a starting point for asking questions and making these connections. Now, understanding the blood work doesn't just fall to us.

We're the teacher, right? We educate. And as I mentioned in the earlier lessons. It is up to us to be able to educate that client because there will come a time when they will leave us and they will go out on their own. You want them to have the tools that they need to continue to stay healthy. So if at a basic CBC or a CMP, we're not looking at the test results to diagnose the client with anything. Instead, we use our ability of resources to teach the client how to follow. You know, there's nothing wrong with getting three or four blood panels a year. So that allows you to see and to teach the client how to see trends in staying healthy. And they might need to book another session, you know, when they're done and say, hey, can you help me go over this? Can you help me figure this out? And when you understand the physiology of the body, you'll understand why the markers may shift the way they do, then you'll have the appropriate questions for the client.

Here's a great example. Let's say your client is healthy and you finished a program together and they're going on about their way and they get their blood work in three months. months and their LDL has gone from 90 to 180. Yikes! Total cholesterol went way up. Doctors freaking out. Oh, you know, you've got to do all these things. We're going to put you on a statin. It's a scary place to be. You know, because clients get scared when they see numbers zoom up like that. But you have the benefit of knowledge, you have the benefit of study and research. You understand the things that could drive LDL up. So you ask them the question, okay, you had your blood work done on the 10th of October. So what was going on in that last month before you had your blood work done?

Did you have any dental work done? And the client says, oh yeah, I did. I had this, this, and this done by my dentist and a little bit of oral surgery. And you could explain to them, well, a lot of times

when dental work is done, we see that LDL go up, and then you continue to explain to them, or go back to an earlier explanation you have already used with them, saying you know that cholesterol is used to repair the body and it's called out when inflammation is great. So, what we might be seeing here is just an expression of repair. And if you get your blood work done in another couple months, we might see that come down. And if so, then that's exactly what it was.

And then we will know. And that calming presence allows them to stop getting upset over highs and lows and to see that it has a meaning and it makes sense and that the body is telling us what it's doing what's happening there now if the LDL doesn't go down then we have to look at the rest of the markers from a deeper picture. But ultimately, we're not telling the client about their health so much as we are explaining to them what these markers mean, why it is important for them to understand it. You know, I tell my clients all the time, you don't have to be a biochemistry major in order to understand the benefit of using these markers and understanding how these markers can convey to us information about health.

Okay, now we are going to talk a little bit about the blood test form and how you can share this information with them in a very simplistic way and it's a way that I've been using with my clients for a long time. Over the years the resources have changed and they've become much easier to access than they were years ago when I first got into practice and I really changed my whole expression of who I am as an educator to the client I no longer wanted to create my own resources that would teach them about health meaning that I wanted to utilize expert resources that had nothing to do with me, that was just focused on the client learning. And in order to do that, I had to put together many different types of links and pages of information and things that they could locate like articles and webinars online to help teach them just some of the basic information also allowed us to have that discussion, you know, show up while they were also working to understand everything else going on in their health.

Okay, so it just fit in beautifully and it all fit together. is having a place to send a client that they can just go online and they can learn about any kind of lab test that they want to get. In the resource drawer, I have a form in there that does contain all of the links that you can share with your client so that they can just open this PDF and they can click on any of the links in there that will help you teach them exactly what they need to understand about these different lab tests. Now I'm not going into a bunch of different functional testing. And it's also for the very basic markers, meaning it will cover the entire test index.

So if they have a test that they want to understand better in blood work, this takes them right there and they can look it up themselves. They do the research. It also has very specific links for the CBC and for the CMP, for iron testing, the lipid panel, and some thyroid markers. Also homocysteine. So, using the blood chemistry form in this way to help teach your clients is not overwhelming for them. This is very basic information. It is designed to be shared with clients.

It is not for the practitioner. Or I should say, it's not exclusively for the practitioner. So it's designed to help them understand how the test works, what they should expect, what do the results mean, and there are plenty of links within this online resource to help educate them. Now that doesn't mean that they're not going to come back to you with questions, but at least you'll be able to give them the direction from that point forward.

It also takes you off of the expert seat. It takes you off of the seat that might make you appear to be, to them anyway, a physician acting in the role of a physician. When we've just finished you know a great discussion about acting in the role of an educator. form that was put together by Ryan Barrett that we can use with the individual markers and small descriptions of these markers that you may want to share with your client. Again, that was not from an online resource, but it's a good little handy cheat sheet to have just in case you do want to use it or to share with your client. Now there

is also the blood chemistry form that allows you to teach the client how to get their lab testing done.

So now we have the ability to see side-by-side results and you teach them how to do this, how to enter the information in and where to find it so that they can start seeing trends in the blood work and have an understanding of what is the picture of their healthy. And that's what we want them to understand. We use that same picture, but in a slightly different way. You know, when we're trying to suss out some of the imbalance that they might be experiencing that they have had complaints about or you know symptoms that are showing up and we have to be able to explain all of this to them and how it does connect to the blood chemistry in their body and those shifts that might be happening.