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When it comes to health, you can take control of your wellbeing by making sustainable lifestyle changes to improve your health.

I knew that my annual medical check-up was long overdue. It had been more than two years since I last did my executive health screening at my usual hospital. And I had been experiencing more frequent bouts of aches and pains and more recently painful gastric episodes.

When I chanced upon Elements Wellness at Wisma Goldis, my interest was piqued when I discovered it offered a 360-degree medical check-up that allows one to understand his or her own current and potential health issues. Priced at RM2,100, the standard medical check-up included sessions with a mind therapist, physiotherapist, nutritionist. I was fascinated that I would be able to gather a more holistic view of my health beyond the urine, blood, x-rays and stress tests. The centre practises functional medicine, which is described as an integrative, science-based healthcare approach that treats illness and promotes wellness by focusing on the biochemically unique aspects of each patient, and then individually tailoring interventions to restore physiological, psychological and structural balance.

On the day of the medical review, I was asked to wear comfortable sportswear as there would be some physical

exercises. Well, sweat was aplenty, I soon found out.

After a stressful morning traffic rush, it was indeed pleasant to be greeted by a team of cheerful and friendly staff. Stepping into the clean and cosy ambience with wood flooring and soft tone design, I felt a sense of calm and relaxation.

After a brief registration and putting away my belongings in a locker, I was soon whisked into the modern and clean bathroom for my first test – urine.

As part of the medical check-up, I was required to give details of my medical history, family health history, lifestyle, early childhood illnesses, stress issues, and other recent health issues.

After a few body measurements and a quick draw of blood, I was escorted out for a rather pleasant complimentary breakfast at GTower Hotel, which is located just one floor above the centre.

Over breakfast, I filled up another questionnaire on my current activities, sleep patterns, money issues and possibly any emotional problems that I might be facing. This brought me to the next assessment – a consultation session with the mind therapist on the responses that I had given. I also did a test using a cute brain-sensing

gadget that tracks brain wave activity and mental calmness, according to the attending nurse.

Posture and Balance

Like most people edging towards 50, I have accepted that aches and pain are quite normal. Thus, it was edifying to meet Cindy Khong, a trained physiotherapist. She checked my posture and range of movements from my neck to my legs. With her trained pair of sharp eyes and experience, Cindy pointed out some areas of bad posture and weak body alignments that caused muscle imbalances which led to those aches and pains.

"Correcting your posture may not be easy initially as your body has become so accustomed to sitting and standing in a particular way," said Cindy. But she assured me that some physiotherapy sessions would help correct my poor posture and muscle tension.

She also assessed my fitness and endurance levels as we moved to the centre's gym area, showing me the proper way to perform each of the exercises before noting down the results. It reminded me of my early days in school where we were put to certain physical endurance tests with the results reflected in our annual report cards. It seems that we have stopped evaluating our physical ability over time, yet, these observations may be even more significant as we age.

As she further gathered information on my movements, strength, flexibility and balance, I realised that I need to work on my fitness and strength levels besides the poor body alignment. I made a mental note that I should find out more about physiotherapy.

Let Food Be Thy Medicine

We all know that good nutrition is one of the keys to good health and my next session with the wellness consultant further increased my awareness about the importance of good eating habits. After going through a series of questions about my diet and habits, she identified some areas of improvement like having better food selection

Dr. Krishnaveni Kanason



and affirmed the need to consume "real food" as well as having meals at more regular intervals.

My habit of not eating at regular times perhaps resulted in a compromised body metabolism and caused my recurrent bouts of gas and wind.

The wellness centre has programmes to provide assistance in designing individualised nutritional plans and help monitor the progress of each member, as opposed to the "one-size-fits-all" dietary approach that simply doesn't work for all.

Review

The centre's clinical doctor, Dr Krishnaveni Kanason, better known as Dr. Krish, presented my report a couple of weeks later. Compiled from the lab tests and assessments by the specialists, she patiently explained the results and helped me understand the reports which came with an evaluation from a functional medicine perspective along with recommendations for improvement and treatment options.

Overall, she gave me a thumbs-up for my health condition based on the results, although I did not fare too well on the physiotherapy and fitness assessment. According to Dr. Krish, there are other areas of tests that can be done according to individual needs, one being a hormonal assessment catering especially to women approaching perimenopause. The wellness centre also provides antioxidant and free radical testing, genetic risk profiling and many other programmes. ■

Find out more at www.elementswellness.com