
Unravelling myths and beliefs in western medicine

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Western medicine has evolved hundreds of years to the state we practise today. There has been enormous amount of data which has descent over the generations of physicians. It has been strengthened by many other streams such as physics, chemistry and biology and it continues to do so.

In the early years it has been mostly the clinical experience of physicians which was used as guidelines in the management of disease conditions. This information has been passed through generations and altered with new experience of physicians. It is not uncommon to practise this paternalism even at present. Over the last century there were many inventions in to the field of medicine; investigations such as ECG, Ultrasound scans, CT, MRI and PET scans and many blood investigations; new therapeutic interventions such as monoclonal antibodies in the treatment of cancer and rheumatic conditions are some of them. In par with all these inventions, research came into the field of medicine creating a paradigm shift.

The clinical research has contributed massively to the current practise of western medicine. The pioneering health organisations of developed countries started producing clinical practise guidelines making the practise standards more generalised among the countries.

To date, we as physicians follow these guidelines to help in the management of our patients in the background of a holistic approach towards individual patient.

The major obstacles that we find in the management of our patients are myths and beliefs about the medical conditions. Some of these have a scientific background whereas the others are simple myths. The basis of these myths is sometimes difficult to explore and research. However, some of these can be discussed in the context of evidence-based medicine.

It has become the need of today than ever as we have a growing influx of medical information from the internet and social media. It is very important to address these issues as mush as possible to enlighten the community to improve their health status, health knowledge and to prevent clinical malpractices.

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