MEDICINE TODAY

Prof. Marija Definis-Gojanović, MD, PhD
University of Split School of Medicine and
University Hospital Centre Split
Department for Medical Humanities
What is medicine?

Medicine is the **science** and art of **healing**
Contemporary medicine applies **health science**, **biomedical research**, and **medical technology** to **diagnose** and **treat** injury and disease,

It is a vocation and way of life.
It is challenging, at times demanding but can be highly rewarding.
It is all about teamwork.
It is a very hard and intense profession.
It is exciting and satisfying.
Modern vs. traditional/alternative medicine

Why is it that Modern Western Medicine has come to be seen as 'traditional', whilst Indian Ayurvedic or Traditional Chinese Medicine have been deemed 'alternative', or at best 'complementary'? 

When an alternative medicine therapy is used in addition to — not instead of — conventional therapy, it's called complementary. And when you use a complementary therapy in addition to a conventional one, it's called integrative medicine.
Examples of complementary and alternative medicine?

1. Whole medical systems
2. Mind-body medicine
3. Biologically based practices
4. Manipulative and body-based practices
5. Energy medicine

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, USA
Whole medical systems

1. Ancient healing systems

2. Homeopathy

3. Naturopathy
Mind-body medicine

Mind-body techniques strengthen the communication between mind and body.

Examples of mind-body connection techniques:

1. meditation,
2. prayer,
3. relaxation
4. art therapy
Biologically based practices

These treatments use ingredients found in nature.

Examples include:

1. dietary supplements,

2. herbal remedies.
Manipulation and body-based practices

These methods use human touch to move or manipulate a specific part of the body:

1. chiropractic,

2. osteopathic manipulation and massage.
Energy medicine

The goal of these therapies is to unblock or re-balance energy force.

They include:

1. qi gong,
2. therapeutic touch,
3. reiki,
4. magnet therapy
Why are some doctors hesitant about complementary and alternative medicine?
Evidence-Based Medicine

- Definition:
“The conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients“.

- It is the process of systematically reviewing, appraising and using clinical research findings to aid the delivery of optimum clinical care to patients.
Evidence-Based Medicine

The main elements are:
- Production of evidence through research and scientific review
- Production and dissemination of evidence-based clinical guidelines
- Implementation of evidence-based, cost-effective practice through education and management of change
- Evaluation of compliance with agreed practice guidance through clinical audit and outcomes-focused incentives.
The history of EBM

- 1972, Professor Archie Cochrane, Cardiff,
- practical methodology in the late 1980s and early 1990s,
- following year it expanded into an international collaboration of centres.

Basic principle of EBM: we should treat where there is evidence of benefit and not treat where there is evidence of no benefit.

Value of education: the use of ineffective, costly or potentially hazardous interventions can be reduced.
Quackery

That is a derogatory term used to describe the promotion of unproven or fraudulent medical practices. That is "a person who pretends, professionally or publicly, to have skill, knowledge, or qualifications he or she does not possess; a charlatan".

The history of quackery

- theatrical performances
- quack remedies often contained no effective ingredients
- the majority of them originated in Britain
The history of quackery

- United States, slang term snake oil and "snake oil salesmen,",
- quackery continues even today (internet!); it can be found in any culture and in every medical tradition,
- quackery is often aimed at the aged or chronically ill.
Quackery today

- "The U.S. Congress determined quackery to be the most harmful consumer fraud against elderly people. Americans waste $27 billion annually on questionable health care, exceeding the amount spent on biomedical research."

- governmental agency, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the US.
- Zhang Wuben, a quack who posed as skilled in traditional Chinese medicine based his operation on representations that raw eggplant and beans were a general cure-all. Zhang, despite negative publicity on the national level, continues to practice.

- Hu Wanlin, who did hold himself out as a doctor, was exposed in 2000 and sentenced to 15 years in prison.
Presence and acceptance

Ignorance
The placebo effect
The regression fallacy
Conspiracy theories
Fear of side effects

Cost
Desperation
Pride
Fraud
Notable historical persons accused of quackery

Thomas Allinson (1858–1918)
Johanna Brandt (1876–1964)
Samuel Hahnemann (1755–1843)
John Harvey Kellogg (1852–1943)
Ignac Semmelweis (1818–1865)
Louis Pasteur (1822–1895)
Linus Pauling (1901–1994)
Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957)
Instead of conclusion

- most promoters are unwitting victims
- much quackery is involved in telling people something is bad for them and selling a substitute
- quackery is also involved in misleading advertising of dietary supplements, homeopathic products, herbs, and some nonprescription drugs
- quackery is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon
Quackery vs. malpractise and other methods

- quackery and poor medical care
- malpractice
- unproven methods
- methods not compatible with established scientific concepts = nonsensical or disproven rather than experimental
- methods that sound scientific but are nonsensical = pseudoscientific
- folk medicine
What is medical humanities?

The purpose is to improve the delivery of effective health care through a better understanding of disease in society, and in the individual. The influences of medicine on the humanities and vice versa are all around.
Humanity is hard to define, and even harder or almost impossible to measure.
What is medical humanities?

“It is an important To know the person who Has the disease as it is To know the disease the person has.”

Sir William Osler
Why to teach medical humanities?

• "If you want to understand what someone who is dying is going through, the highs and lows, the emotions, read Tolstoy's `The Death of Ivan Illyich.'"
Why to teach medical humanities?

- "The humanities can remind them that they're dealing with very complicated, whole individuals with their own needs and opinions."

- Elizabeth Sinclair, coordinator of the Maine Humanities Council's literature and medicine program.
THE ONLY MEDICINE I EVER NEEDED WAS YOU
Background Information

- Students and
- Professors:
- Learning and
- Innovating
- Together
A proposal of Medical ethics curriculum at the Split University School of Medicine (2008)
Longitudinal; 120 h, i.e. 6x20 h; 8 ECTS;

• Year I.
• Introduction: the medical profession; historical overview of ethical reasoning
• Phylosophical foundations
• Teological and sociological foundations
• Cultural and socioeconomic aspects of ethical judgment
• Alienation (depersonalization, administration, insurance, technology)

• Year II.
• Basis of bioethics
• Ethical issues in the health system organization
• Relationships (doctor-patient, doctor-doctor/other health practitioners, physician-the public, the media)
• Ethics of communication
• Justice and human rights
When and what to teach?

- Humanities form an integral part of undergraduate medical curricula at numerous medical schools all over the world.
- Dept. of Medical Humanities and Bioethics, Des Moines University, Iowa, is proud to be unique in osteopathic medical education with a number of both required and elective courses. The goal is to prepare physicians of the future to be competent, ethical, caring professionals.
Program in Split
Program in Split

- Clinical skills
- Early clinical contact
- Integrated

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Attitude

- Life long learning skill
- Communication skills
- System based
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities I: Introduction in Medicine
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities II-A: Medicine in Community
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities II-B: History of medicine
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities III: Communication and social skills
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities IV: Medical ethics and bioethics
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities V: Clinical ethics
Medical humanities

• Medical humanities VI: Palliative care
Program in Split

Narrative medicine class listens to a student describing his experience with illness.
What are the threats?

- Critiques of medical humanities may be grouped as responses to three broad questions:
  1. Is the content irrelevant?
  2. Are humanities teachers and their methods the problem?
  3. Is the positioning of humanities coursework within the curriculum proper?
What are the threats?

• For most medical students, staring at their first cadaver in anatomy lab triggers a rush of emotions, ethical questions and revelations. Most students have dreams about the dissection, carrying the experience with them throughout their lives.

• It was therefore appropriate – and therapeutic – for first-year medical students enrolled in UF College of Medicine’s narrative medicine class to read and discuss the book, “Body of Work: Meditations on Mortality from the Human Anatomy Lab.”
How to measure possible a long-term impact?

• Literature & Medicine: *Humanities at the Heart of Health Care* engages diverse groups of health care professionals with literary texts that invite them to step into worlds outside of their own experience. Program participants between 2005 and 2008 reported a great or medium increase in:

  Empathy for Patients – 79%
  Interpersonal Skills – 64%
  Communication Skills – 58%
  Job Satisfaction – 62%
  Cultural Awareness – 67%
Instead of conclusion!

The patient's story will come to you
Like hunger, like thirst

*John Stone, M.D., physician-poet*
Taking a history is black and white. Listening to the patient’s story adds the colour.

Thank you for your attention