



Health Matters

Great Smokies Medical Center of Asheville

A small, occasional publication

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Introducing Mark Hoch, M.D.

Welcome

We are very pleased to announce that Dr. Mark Hoch will join GSMC as a full time staff physician on December 1, 2010.

Dr Hoch (rhymes with “folk”) brings 19 years of experience in holistic medicine to GSMC.

Education/Certification

Dr. Hoch majored in biology with a concentration in neurobiology and behavior in his undergraduate studies at Cornell University. He continued his studies in the northeastern United States, completing his medical degree at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and his residency in Family Medicine at the University of Connecticut. He is Board Certified in Family Medicine.

A devotee of lifelong learning, Dr. Hoch has been involved in medical education as a faculty member of residency training programs, including the University of

Connecticut and Columbia University. Most recently, he served as adjunct Assistant Professor of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine and as community faculty at the Center for Spirituality and Health at the University of Minnesota’s Academic Health Center.



Dr. Hoch is a past president of the American Holistic Medical Association (AHMA), has served on its Board of Trustees for nine years, and stays actively involved as a frequent presenter in AHMA symposia.

Post-Graduate Education

Post-graduate expansion of Dr. Hoch’s medical skills has included extensive training in osteopathic manual therapies that assist in the diagnosis and treatment of many health conditions through a hands-on, holistic assessment.

This approach fosters a higher level of wellness through assisting the body’s ability to heal and stay in a balanced state, which in turn help prevent injury and disease. Some common health concerns that may have structural causes or contributors include musculoskeletal concerns, sciatica, recurrent ear infections, tension headaches and migraines, and disorders of organs, including intestinal adhesions, gallbladder problems, constipation, and breathing problems.

Dr. Hoch was certified in Milton Trager, M.D.’s ground-breaking movement therapy and neuromuscular re-education work in psychophysical integration. Other areas of post-graduate study include nutritional medicine, mindbody medicine, Western herbal medicine, functional medicine, tai chi, and qigong. Dr. Hoch also has special interest, training, and experience in the influence that mind and spirit have on physical health. (cont.)

Applied Mindbody Medicine: Three Cases

Holistic Nature

The holistic nature and interplay of body, mind, and spirit inherent in all people has been apparent and accepted across the globe for thousands of years.

However, a nearly singular emphasis on the physical body came into popularity and practice in the mid-20th century in Western cultures. Pharmacological, technological, and scientific advances took the focus from the whole person and placed it on the physical body. Further emphasis on the body occurred through specialization of healthcare in systems and parts of the body (e.g., urology, endocrinology, psychiatry, etc.).

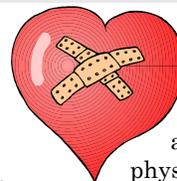
Remarkable advances, especially in diagnosis and surgery, have resulted:

open heart surgery, joint replacement, CT, MRI, and PET scans, organ transplantation, fetal surgery, etc.

In recent decades, the mind and spirit are once again rejoining the body in clinical practices of holistic practitioners.

A 2003 article in the Journal of the American Board of Family Practice concluded, “There is now considerable evidence that an array of mind-body therapies can be used as effective adjuncts to conventional medical treatment for a number of common clinical conditions.”

Decades of documented scientific evidence suggest that psychosocial factors can directly influence both physiologic function and health outcomes.



Even so, few doctors are trained in ways to intervene in the influence that experiences, attitudes, and emotions have on physical health.

Not uncommonly, inquiry into people’s lives can reveal hurts, injuries, lack of fulfillment or conflict between wishes, desires, or beliefs and their lives. Research shows that many mechanisms which link the immune and nervous systems and psyche are involved in healing. Not all health problems respond to any one therapeutic approach, be it drugs, surgery, nutrition, etc., and that is the case with mindbody interventions.

Three mindbody cases follow. (cont.)

Introducing Mark Hoch, M.D., cont.

Past Experience

Dr. Hoch described his position as staff physician at the renowned Atkins Center for Complementary Medicine in New York City with Dr. Robert Atkins and Dr. Patrick Fratallone (an integrative cardiologist) from 1999 to 2001 as “exciting and dynamic.” He was part of a diverse team of researchers and clinicians who employed a nutritional medicine focus to prevent and treat cardiovascular disease and a wide variety of other health conditions for national and international clients in a research and clinical setting.

Dr. Hoch and his wife, Kathy Jennings, were involved from the ground floor up in visualizing, designing, and setting up a 10,000 sq. ft. cutting-edge, holistic family practice in Phoenix, the Arizona Center for Health and Medicine. The holistic model of the day, it was complete with office surgery, osteopathy and a full cadre of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) therapies including naturopathy, nutritional IV therapies, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), homeopathy, yoga, tai chi, etc.

For the last 9 years, Dr. Hoch practiced in Minneapolis in a private holistic family practice setting with a consortium of practitioners.



Career Influences

An interest in biology was fostered early in Dr. Hoch’s life through opportunities to help in his father’s veterinary hospital and again when he volunteered at a science museum to care for animals including tarantulas, rabbits, and pythons.

His decision to go to medical school came in college when he found that, for him, research biology lacked the life essence and consciousness that was important to him. He felt that a career in medicine would be better suited to his particular interests in science, and that it would be a profession through which he could be directly involved in service to others.

When asked why he practices holistic medicine, he replied “Because it works. It is safe and effective and is a model in which individual contributors to disease matter and in which the unique ways each person and personality interacts with the world-at-large are respected.”

Dr. Hoch is most interested in whatever an individual needs to be well. He is not biased for or against any health system or modality of treatment. He seeks the safest and most effective treatment for his patients irrespective of the healthcare system the solution falls under.

Dr. Hoch strives to empower all patients he sees to be able to take good care of themselves by teaching them specific, practical skills that they can use in their daily lives.

Family and Interests

Dr. Hoch, his wife Kathy and their daughter Ari live in Asheville.

Kathy has a long and distinguished career as a dancer, choreographer, performer, and teacher. She is a practitioner and certified trainer in the Trager Approach in which she works with individuals. She is certified in and teaches classes in Continuum Movement that focus on the flow of all body fluids (blood, lymph, cerebrospinal fluid) to improve health and well-being.

Ari is an aspiring chef who treats friends and family to much-anticipated, delicious hand-crafted meals.

In his spare time, Dr. Hoch enjoys spending time with his wife and daughter, being out in nature, back country skiing, motorcycling, writing poetry, and exploring the healing potential inherent in the holistic nature of body, mind and spirit.

Looking Ahead

As evidence of the connectedness of life’s events, it was Dr. John Laird, GSMC’s founder, who told Dr. Hoch of the GSMC’s opening for a physician earlier this year.

When asked about his thoughts of his move to Asheville, Dr. Hoch said, “Ah, Asheville!” He said that he already knew of Asheville’s appeal and natural beauty and was also in a period of transition. These factors added together to make the timing of joining GSMC feel like the right opportunity for him.

Getting to know Drs. Wilson and Shuler and the rest of the staff

during a two-day clinical interview in August sealed the deal. He is eager to join GSMC’s team, learn new skills, refine old skills, and bring his own unique skill set into the mix of services already offered.

Dr. Hoch is looking forward to seeing patients for consultations at GSMC starting December 1, 2010.



Applied Mindbody Medicine, cont.

Case # 1

A patient concerned about a lingering cough consulted Dr. Hoch, wondering if she needed antibiotics. During further inquiry into what was going on in her life, the patient became aware of the impact of a life-long issue that came up. During the session, she experienced grief from not having the relationship with her mother that she always wanted. Grieving the loss was facilitated and the cough was much better in 24 hours without medication. *Note: The lungs are linked to grief, taking in life, and a sense of freedom.*

Case # 2

A patient with stage 4 stomach cancer consulted Dr. Hoch. Shortly after being diagnosed, her oncologist told Dr. Hoch with absolute certainty, “She has a death sentence.” While exploring what was going on in her life, the patient expressed that she “couldn’t stomach the thought of going back to work.” She hated her job

and would literally rather die than have to go back to it. Dr. Hoch and the patient worked together and came up with creative solutions for a fulfilling life without her having to return to that job. More than five years later, she is in excellent health. Her oncologist was astonished that she lived longer than 6 months. *Note: The stomach is linked to self worth, personal identity, assimilating new things, and over thinking things.*

Case # 3

A physician colleague developed heart disease early in life, in his late 30’s. His own inquiry into his life at the time of his diagnosis revealed that he had a misunderstanding of what love really is. When he tapped into the issues in his life, he came to deeply understand and experience what divine love is and let love come to him, his symptoms of heart disease resolved. *Note: The heart is linked to joy, love, hurts, and connectedness.*

All content in this newsletter is intended to be informational and is not to be taken as medical advice or to replace medical care.