

# The Family Physician: Treating the Duo ‘The Mind and Body’

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**Abstract:** This paper presents an overview on role of family physician. Treating the duo ‘The Mind and Body’.

**Keywords:** Family physician, treating the duo, the mind and body.

## 1. Introduction

Family physicians play a crucial role in promoting the overall well-being and health of the patient by providing continuous and comprehensive care. However, despite increasing awareness about the importance of mental health, there is still a consistent decline in the number of people seeking mental health care. Family practice is person oriented as it is intended with treating a person ‘as a whole’. So, inclusion of a person’s mental health is also equally important in the routine health evaluation.

## 2. Comprehensive Care in Family Practice

In Family practice there is no ‘mind-body split up’; thus caring for a person means, caring for both physical and mental health. A complete family profile is readily available at the family clinic, making it much easier to evaluate a person’s mental health during routine health checkups. Mental health screening can reduce the impending psychiatric morbidity if diagnosed and treated earlier. Referrals to the psychiatrist must be made whenever needed.

## 3. Mental Health and its Relation with the Overall Health of the Person

Mental health refers to a person’s emotional, psychological and social well-being, and plays a critical role in determining a person’s overall health and quality of life. Despite the increasing awareness of mental health there still exists a stigma unfortunately, leading to many psychiatric illnesses going undiagnosed and potentially becoming serious over time.

## 4. The Importance of Early Detection

If a psychiatric illness becomes severe, it can not only harm the patient but also have a significant impact on his/her family! psychiatric illnesses are usually presented late due to lack of awareness in the general public on the importance of mental

health screening. It is of Paramount importance to help people understand the fact that psychiatric illness is not just a mere weakness of mind that can be controlled by willpower, rather an illness of concern which must be treated appropriately by a trained mental health professional. The right and early treatment of mental health disorders like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, generalised anxiety disorder etc., can be life saving for the patient as it can prevent the mortality from those disorders like suicide or homicide when diagnosed and treated early.

## 5. The Role of Family Physician

Family physicians have a dual role in promoting the overall well-being of a patient: to treat a person’s physical health and prolong the quantity of life, and to improve their quality of life by being a compassionate physician.

Running simple mental health screening during routine health checkups can help diagnose psychiatric disorders earlier and referral to psychiatrist can be done whenever needed.

Counselling the patients with high risk of developing mental health disorders like lack of sleep, family history of psychiatric illnesses or exposure to stressors, to cope up with these risk factors and seek professional help at the earliest and to receive help and support from the friends and family.

## 6. Conclusion

Mental health deserves attention and care! Mental health screening deserves acceptance!

Visiting a psychiatrist should not be stigmatized, but rather seen as a sign of strength and insight.

Family physicians play a crucial role in promoting overall health and well-being by providing comprehensive care that treat the whole person: The mind and body.

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