

An Overview and Differences between General Medicine and Internal Medicine

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Those who have studied medicine or those who have sound knowledge about medical field (paramedics) can easily spot the difference between general medicine and internal medicine. But it is often a source of scepticism for an average person who is trying to decide which doctor to visit for their concerned problems/illness. In these modern times it is essential to have/understand the basic knowledge on medical related queries due to unhealthy lifestyles that we follow. So, having knowledge on basic aspects of medicine is of primary importance in these days. Knowing about the differences between general medicine and internal medicine not only help us to consult the right medical practitioner but can also provide us with the most efficient and accurate way of treatment. General medicine is a branch of medicine whose treatment does not involve any surgery and the person who studies is commonly called as general medicine practitioner. Coming to the internal medicine, it primarily deals with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of injuries and diseases and the person who studies internal medicine is generally called as internists. Cardiology, pulmonology and neurology comes the branches of internal medicine.

General medicine practitioners also called as General Practitioners (GP) have knowledge on all types of medical branches and are concerned with the treatment of all age groups which include adults, adolescents, and children but some practitioners might choose to become family doctors. Thus, people who are looking for primary care physician who can treat all the age groups can provide with the regular body check-ups and preventive healthcare are advised to consult general medicine practitioners. Whereas internal medicine or internists

specialize in certain field of internal medicine such as cardiology, pulmonology and neurology. These internists are concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of common, acute and chronic illness as well as complicated diagnostic procedures. It is of primary importance to evaluate that internists specialize themselves in the treatment of adults within general medicine, even though they have trained in sub-branches such as infectious diseases.

So, the general practitioners provide frequent health care, physical examination and provide treatment for the different types of injuries and illness. The primary aspect of GP's include the early detection, treatment of acute non-life threatening diseases and referring those patients who are suffering with serious illness to the internists. The essential services in general medicine include pulmonary check-ups, eye check-ups, ear check-ups, routine check-ups for known chronic diseases, examination of musculoskeletal system diseases, nervous system or neural disorders, intestinal or digestive system diseases/disorders, examination of upper respiratory and lower respiratory tract infections etc. In generally the role of GP's can vary between or even within the countries. In developed countries they focus mainly on chronic health problems, acute non-life threatening diseases, and early detection of the diseases as mentioned in the previous paragraph. In developing countries a general practitioner involves with the pre-hospital emergency, performing low complexity surgical procedures, and community hospital care etc. Therefore it is essential for the people to have basic knowledge and should have the minimum knowledge on whether to visit a GP or internists based on their particular illness or health issue.

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