



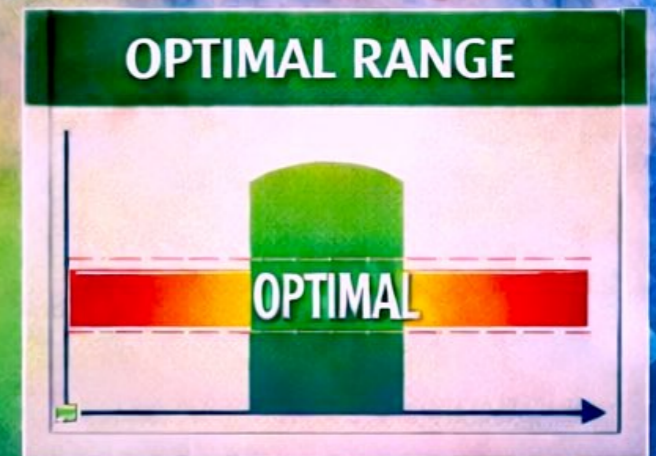
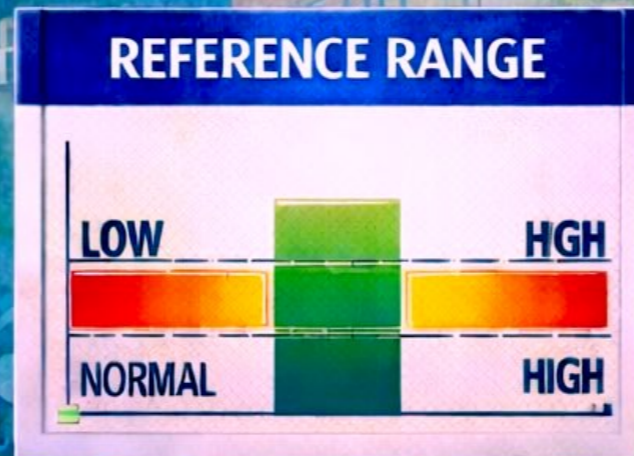
Dr Arno Kroner  
DAOM IFMCP

# WHY YOUR LABS ARE NORMAL & YOU STILL FEEL SICK

Reference Ranges vs. Optimal Function

*A Functional Medicine and TCM Perspective*

Vitamin D	<30	<30	30-100	>100
Glucose	<70	LOW	NORMAL	HIGH
Ferritin	<70	<70	70-100	>100 ng/mL
Iron	<20	LOW	NORMAL	HIGH
Hemoglobin A1c	<20	<20	20-150	>150 ng/dL
TSH	<45	LOW	NORMAL	HIGH
Free T4	<5.3	<5.3 <sup>3</sup>	5.3-5.7%	
ALT	<0.5	LOW	NORMAL	HIGH





# WELCOME

## **This Is A Common Issue**

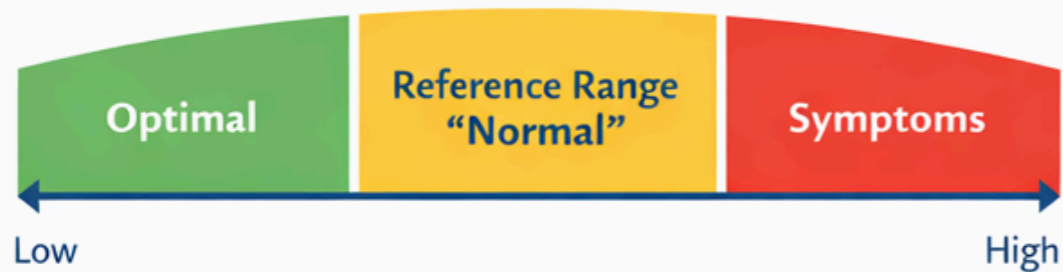
- **When “Normal” Doesn’t Mean Optimal**
- **The Functional Medicine Perspective**
- **The TCM Perspective: Pattern Before Disease**
- **Two Systems, One Reality**
- **Case Study: When Labs Are Normal but Energy Is Not**
- **What You Can Do Next**

If you’ve been told your test results are “normal” but you still don’t feel well, you’re not alone.

This short booklet is designed to help you understand why standard labs often miss early dysfunction—and how a Functional Medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) lens can reveal what’s really going on.

This guide is educational and empowering. Its purpose is not to diagnose, but to give you clarity, language, and a new way of thinking about your

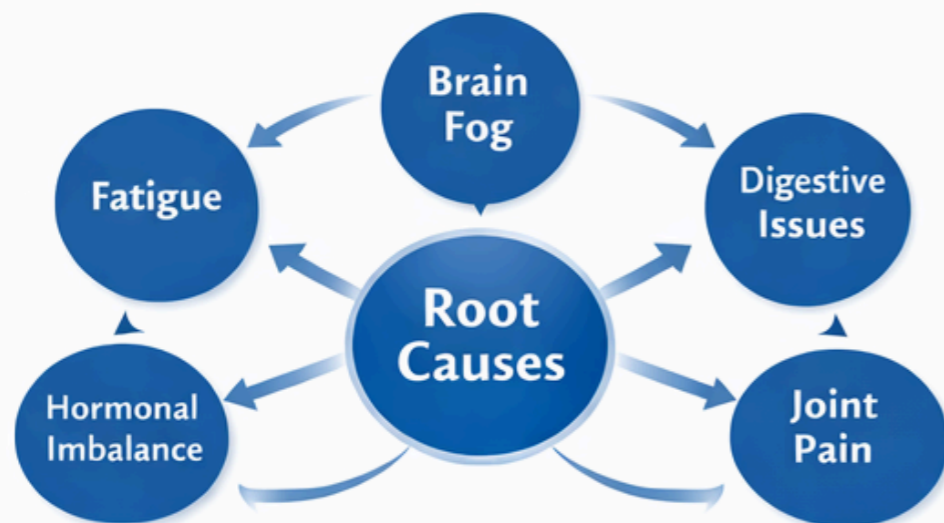
## Reference Range vs. Optimal Function



*"Normal" doesn't mean "Optimal"*

*Compensation can mask dysfunction*

## From Symptoms to Systems



Gut • Hormones • Immune System • Metabolism • Nervous System

## The Functional Medicine Perspective

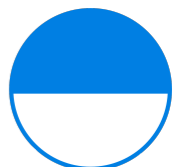
Functional Medicine asks a different question: How is your physiology functioning—and why?

Rather than focusing on diagnoses, it looks for root causes such as:

- Gut dysfunction or microbiome imbalance
- Hormonal signaling issues
- Chronic low-grade inflammation
- Nutrient insufficiency at the cellular level - Stress and nervous system dysregulation

## Why Labs Can Look "Fine"

- Blood values are tightly regulated and may not reflect tissue-level needs
- The body compensates for dysfunction – sometimes for years
- Single markers are often interpreted without context or pattern recognition



# WHAT ARE REFERENCE RANGES?

## When "Normal" Doesn't Mean Optimal What Reference Ranges Really Measure

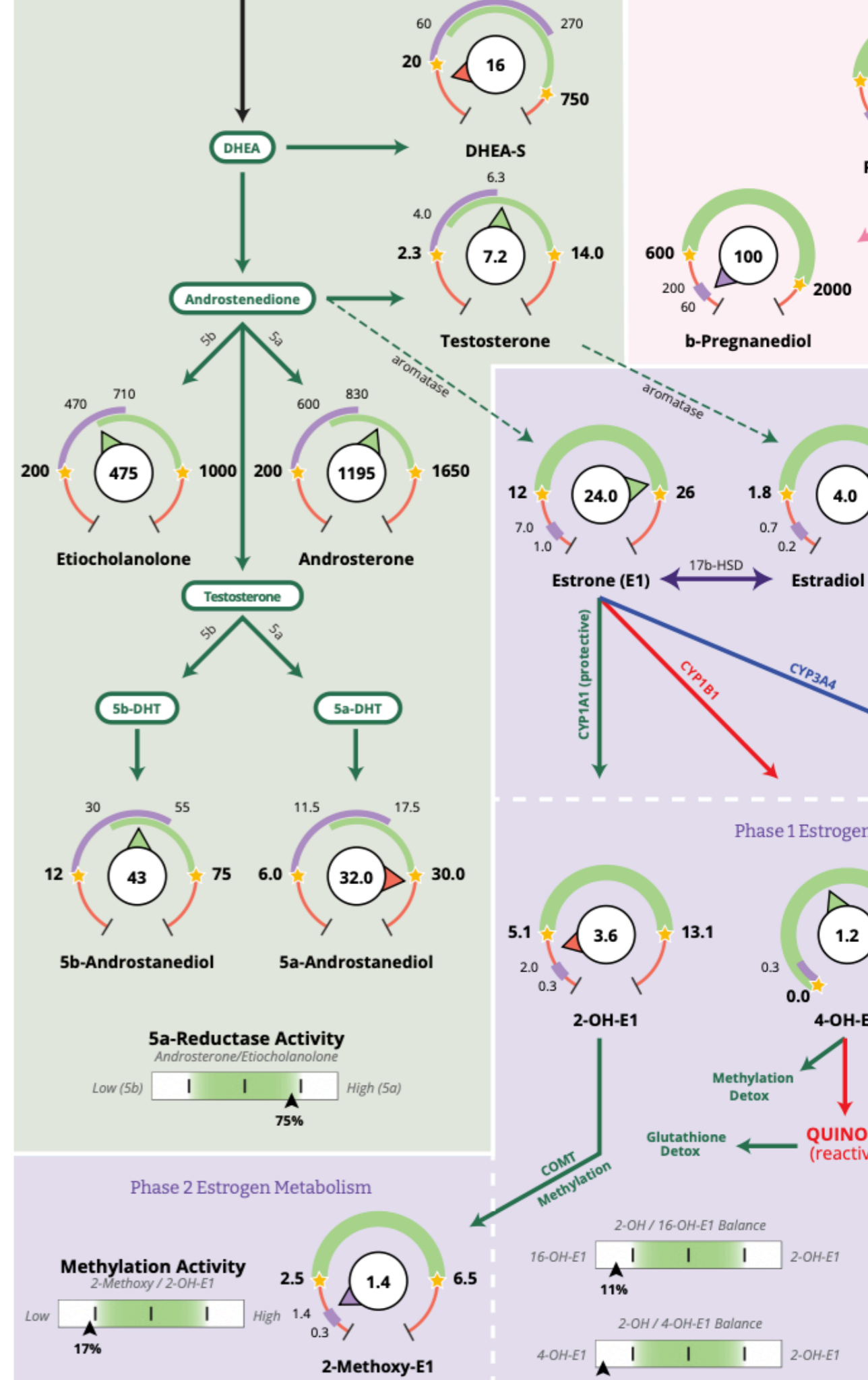
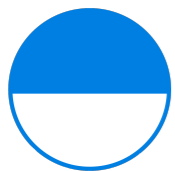
Lab ranges are statistical averages, not optimal targets. They are designed to detect disease, not early imbalance. You can be inside the range and still experience dysfunction.

## Why You Still Have Symptoms

Conventional labs provide a snapshot in time.

They rarely capture:

- Trends over months or years
- Subclinical deficiencies or excesses
- How systems interact and compensate



## TCM Patterns and Imbalances



## The TCM Perspective: Pattern Before Disease

Traditional Chinese Medicine recognizes imbalance before pathology appears. Instead of isolated markers, TCM evaluates patterns such as:

- Qi deficiency or stagnation
- Blood deficiency or stasis -
- Yin-Yang imbalance -
- Organ system disharmony (e.g., Liver-Spleen)

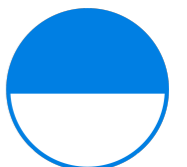
## Mitochondria & Qi: Energy at the Cellular Level



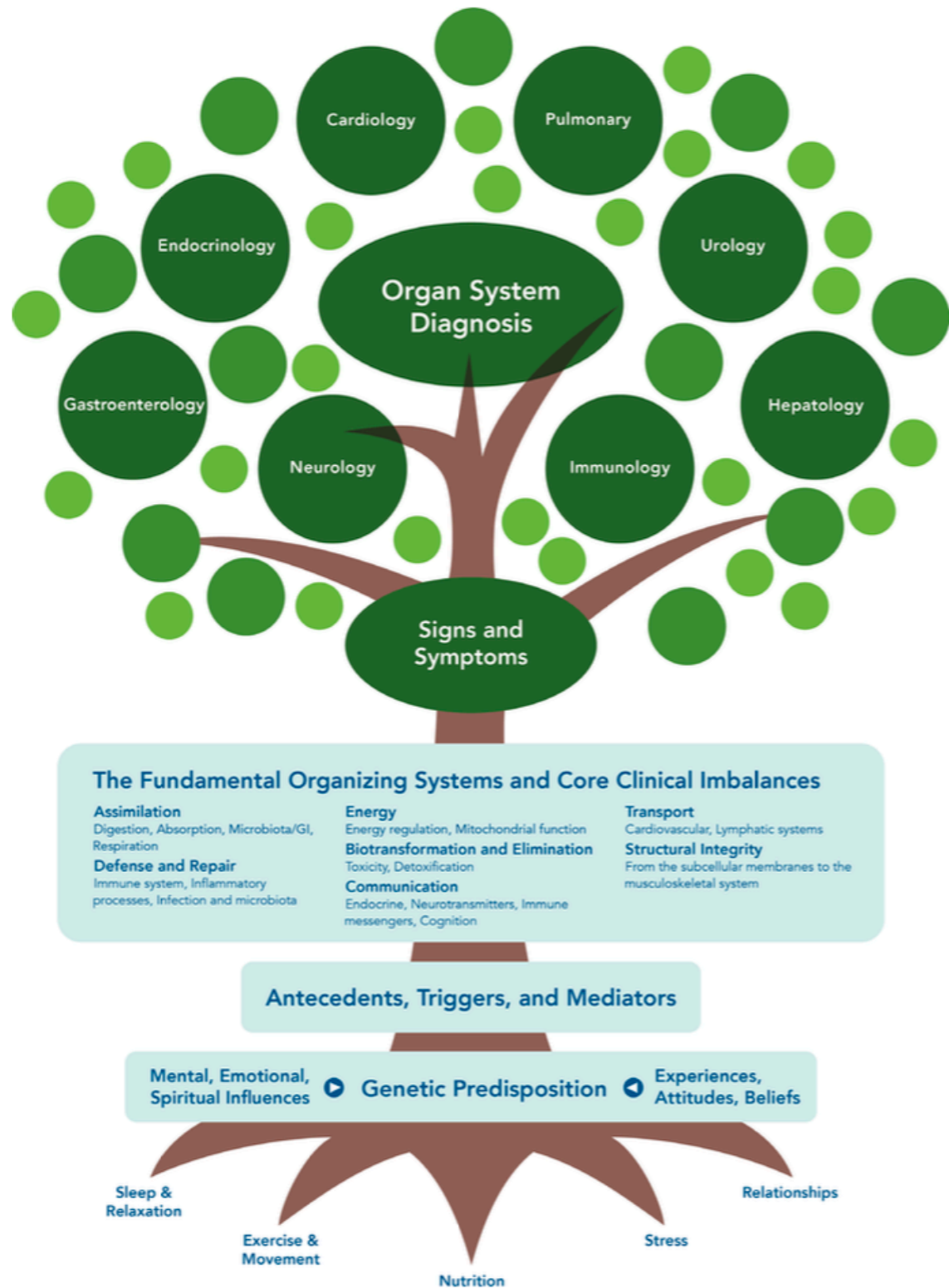
## Tools Beyond Blood Tests

- Tongue and pulse observation
- Symptom patterns over time
- Emotional, environmental, and lifestyle influences

In TCM, symptoms are signals – not errors to suppress.



# The Functional Medicine Tree



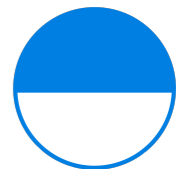
## Two Systems, One Reality

Functional Medicine and TCM use different languages to describe the same reality

- **The Network Effect:** FM recognizes that gut health impacts brain function, while TCM views the body as a flow of energy where a blockage in one meridian affects distant organs.
- **Proactive Prevention:** Both systems identify "gray area" imbalances—such as insulin resistance or Qi stagnation—long before they manifest as a diagnosable disease in conventional medicine.
- **Precision Care:** Rather than relying on population averages, these systems focus on why a specific individual is experiencing symptoms, allowing for earlier and more effective intervention.

## The Result

By combining the biochemical "what" of Functional Medicine with the energetic "why" of TCM, patients receive a truly personalized map to optimal vitality.

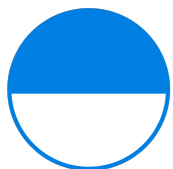


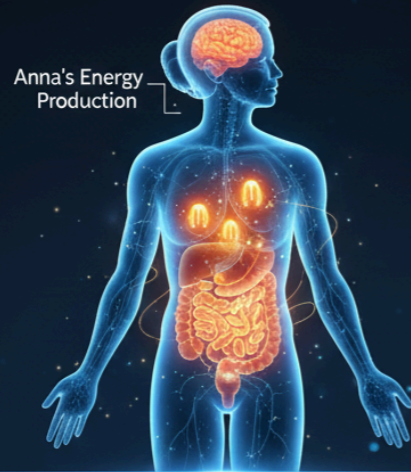
# CASE STUDY

## When Labs Are Normal but Energy Is Not - A Short Clinical Story

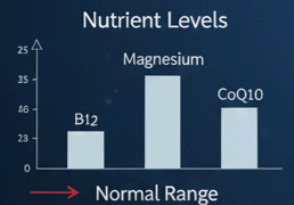
When Anna, 42, came in, she didn't say she was sick. She said she was tired of being tired. For years, she had felt a steady decline in her energy. Mornings were slow, afternoons required caffeine to function, and exercise—once restorative—now left her exhausted for days. Brain fog had become her baseline. Stress, even minor, felt overwhelming. She had done what most patients do: she ran tests.

Her blood work came back reassuring. Complete blood count, metabolic panel, thyroid markers, iron, B12— everything was reported as normal. She was told she was healthy, perhaps stressed, maybe burned out. No plan was offered. Yet Anna knew something wasn't right.





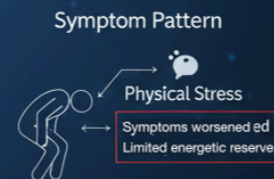
### Looking Beneath “Normal” Masked by Compensation



• Nutrients critical for mitochondrial function clustered toward the end of normal



• Subtle inflammatory signals suggested increased energy demand.



• Symptoms worsened with physical action, Depleted energetic reserve.

Rather than *disease*, this case illustrates **mitochondrial dysfunction** masked by **systems compensation**.

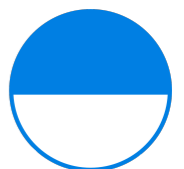
There is depletion of key **mitochondrial cofactors** such as B12, CoQ10 & Mg.

## Looking Beneath “Normal”

From a functional perspective, the question was not whether Anna’s labs were within range, but whether her cells were producing energy efficiently.

Although no single marker stood out, a broader pattern emerged:

- Nutrients critical for mitochondrial function clustered toward the low end of normal
- Subtle inflammatory signals suggested increased energy demand
- Her symptoms worsened with physical or emotional stress, pointing to limited energetic reserve rather than disease, this picture suggested mitochondrial dysfunction masked by compensation

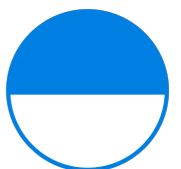




## The Same Story, Told in TCM Language

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, Anna's story sounded familiar. Her symptoms aligned with patterns such as: - Qi deficiency (persistent fatigue,

reduced resilience) - Spleen Qi weakness (difficulty generating energy from food) - Kidney Qi or Yang decline (poor recovery, deep exhaustion) No pathology was required to name the imbalance. Her body was signaling depletion long before breakdown.



# WHAT YOU CAN DO NEXT

If you don't feel well but your labs are normal, **the right question isn't:**

***"Is something wrong?"***

**It's:**

***"What is out of balance?"***

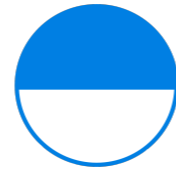
A deeper approach may include:

- Functional interpretation of existing labs
- Timeline and systems mapping
- TCM pattern differentiation
- Personalized nutrition, lifestyle, and botanical strategies

## **Ready for Clarity?**

If this perspective resonates with you, the next step is a brief Discovery Call to explore whether a functional, systems-based approach is appropriate for your situation. **Book your Discovery Call**





# FINAL THOUGHT

Your symptoms are real.

Your body is communicating.

Healing begins when we stop asking whether labs are normal and start asking whether physiology is optimal.

In Health,

Dr Arno Kroner

