

what is NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE?

Naturopathy is a holistic (whole body) health system which promotes the healing power of nature and the body's inherent ability to heal itself as obstacles to health are removed.

Conventional medicine views the individual as a series of parts (organs, tissues, etc.), treating the part to effect the individual's health. In contrast, Naturopathy approaches the individual from a holistic perspective, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts," and recognizes that, in addition to each patient's unique biochemistry, there is an important subtler realm of health as well – their energy, emotions, mind and spirit. This holistic approach to health is implemented using traditional therapies validated by years of scientific evidence.

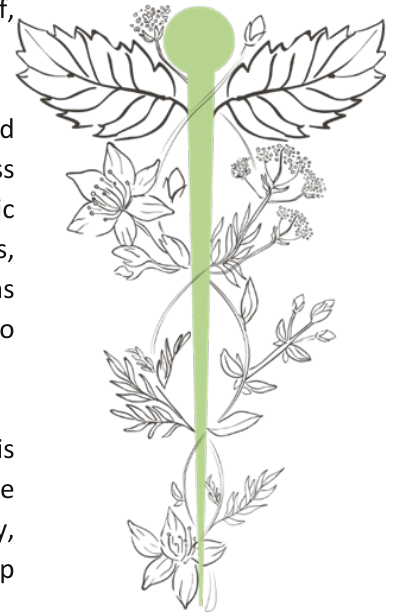
Naturopathic medicine builds the patient up, giving their body the materials it needs to reestablish health. The body is a self-repairing machine - in order to self-heal it needs the proper nutrients and lifestyle choices. Conventional treatment generally does not recognize the body as such and therefore works to suppress or modify the body process that is causing the symptoms. This method is like putting duct tape (medication) on a leaky pipe (symptom) – the leak may stop temporarily, but it will require constant application of tape as the cause of the problem is never truly fixed. Naturopathic medicine foregoes the tape and gives the body the material it needs to repair itself, eliminating the leak altogether.

Conventional medicine's approach excels at treating acute medical emergencies and stabilizing chronic disorders, conditions where shutting down or modifying a body process will save the patient's life (bleeding, heart attack, etc.) or delay the progression of chronic disease (high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.). For non-emergency acute or chronic conditions, side effect management no longer cuts it. This is where naturopathic medicine truly shines as it does not seek to suppress symptoms, but rather gives the body the materials it needs to eradicate the symptoms altogether.

A common example of this is chronic nasal congestion. Conventionally, nasal congestion is treated with decongestants, antihistamines and occasionally antibiotics. Eventually, if the problem persists long enough, surgery may be recommended to clear the sinuses. Generally, the problem never goes away – it is a constant game of symptom management (keep applying the duct tape). Naturopathic medicine, on the other hand, recognizes the body's innate ability to heal itself by giving the proper building blocks through nutrition, herbs, and supplements to clear the sinuses and restore healthy balance. When the body has what it needs, the duct tape can then be removed as the symptoms are no longer there.

Another common example is type 2 diabetes. This is a disease which carries very serious consequences if it is ignored including loss of limbs, organ destruction, coma and eventually death. Conventional medicine is able to manage this disease to help delay its progression through the use of various medications. Naturopathic medicine, on the other hand, gives the body the materials it needs to self-repair and addresses the lifestyle changes necessary to throw off the disease so that conventional management will eventually no longer be necessary.

Naturopathy has existed as a profession in the United States for over a century. It draws from thousands of years of natural medicine experience and has seen recent renewal and growth in the United States in the past two decades. Connecticut law licenses naturopathic doctors to diagnose and treat disease using various natural therapies, including botanical medicine, nutrition, homeopathy, diet, exercise, lifestyle modification, counseling, etc. Naturopathic doctors must complete a four year undergraduate education as well as a four year naturopathic medical education at one of seven federally accredited schools. Naturopathic medical education includes the medical sciences as well as years of clinical work. Doctors are then required to pass a series of nationwide board examinations before licensure. In order to maintain the license, continuing education is required annually.



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