

# NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS: NATURAL MEDICINE. REAL SOLUTIONS.

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) are physicians trained as specialists in natural medicine. In practice, naturopathic physicians perform physical examinations, take thorough health histories, and order lab tests, imaging procedures, and other diagnostic tests. Referrals are made to specialists for additional testing or treatment when necessary.

Naturopathic physicians provide natural treatments that are effective and safe. Since they are also extensively trained in pharmacology, NDs are able to integrate natural treatments safely with prescription medications, often working with conventional medical physicians and osteopathic physicians to ensure you the most comprehensive and safest care possible.



Naturopathic physicians attend four-year, graduate level programs at institutions recognized by the US Department of Education. There are currently seven such schools in North America. Naturopathic medical schools provide the same foundational coursework as conventional medical schools. In addition, ND programs provide extensive education unique to naturopathic treatment approach, emphasizing disease prevention and wellness.

Some of the modalities involved in Naturopathic Medicine are:

## ❖ **Clinical Nutrition**

Naturopathic physicians understand that diet is the basis for health. Adopting a healthy appropriate diet is often the first step towards correcting health problems. Naturopathic physicians may use specific individualized diets, fasting, and nutritional supplements with patients.

## ❖ **Lifestyle Counseling and Stress Management**

Mental attitudes and emotional states can be important elements in healing and disease. Naturopathic physicians are trained in counseling, stress management, hypnotherapy, and biofeedback. They also attend to environmental and lifestyle factors that affect patient health.

❖ **Botanical Medicine**

Plants have powerful healing properties. Many pharmaceutical drugs have their origins in plant substances. Naturopathic physicians use plant substances in varied forms for their healing effects and nutritional value.

❖ **Natural Childbirth**

Naturopathic physicians, with additional specialty training, provide natural childbirth care. They offer prenatal and postnatal care using appropriate diagnostic and treatment techniques.

❖ **Physical Medicine**

Naturopathic medicine includes methods of therapeutic manipulation for muscles and bones. Naturopathic physicians also employ therapeutic exercise, massage, hydrotherapy, bio-electrical therapies, ultrasound, and applications of heat and cold.

❖ **Oriental Medicine**

Naturopathic physicians are trained in the fundamentals of oriental medicine and diagnosis. They may use acupressure, and Chinese herbal medicine to promote healing. With additional training and licensure they may also perform acupuncture.

❖ **Minor Office Procedures**

Naturopathic physicians perform in-office minor surgery including repair of superficial wounds and removal of foreign bodies, warts and cysts with local anesthesia.

❖ **Homeopathic Medicine**

Homeopathic medicines are very small doses of natural substances that stimulate the body's self-healing response without side effects.

Naturopathic physicians have expertise in drug/herb/nutrient interactions. Many NDs receive additional certification in disciplines such as midwifery, acupuncture, Oriental medicine, cancer treatment, and environmental medicine.

Naturopathic physicians work in private practice or in integrated settings with other medical providers such as medical doctors, osteopathic physicians and chiropractic physicians. Other NDs work as teachers, writers, researchers and on the administrative side of naturopathic medicine.

The result is a patient-centered, comprehensive approach that provides the most appropriate treatment for an individual's needs. Naturopathic physicians educate patients about why they are unwell and provide the tools for achieving optimal health.

# PRINCIPLES OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

## ***The Healing Power of Nature (Vis Medicatrix Naturae)***

Naturopathic medicine recognizes the body's inherent self-healing ability, which is ordered and intelligent. Naturopathic doctors identify and remove obstacles to recovery and facilitate and augment this healing ability.

## ***Identify and Treat the Causes (Tolle Causam)***

The Naturopathic doctor seeks to identify and remove the underlying causes of illness, rather than eliminate or suppress its symptoms.

## ***First Do No Harm (Primum Non Nocere)***

Naturopathic medicine follows three principles to avoid harming the patient: 1) utilize methods and medicinal substances which minimize the risk of harmful side effects; 2) avoid, when possible, the harmful suppression of symptoms; 3) acknowledge and respect the individual's healing process, using the least force necessary to diagnose and treat illness.

## ***Doctor as Teacher (Docere)***

Naturopathic doctors educate the patient and encourage self-responsibility for health. They also acknowledge the therapeutic value inherent in the doctor-patient relationship.

## ***Treat the Whole Person***

Naturopathic doctors treat each patient individually, taking into account his or her physical, mental, emotional state as well as genetic, environmental and social factors. Since total health includes spiritual health, naturopathic doctors encourage individuals to pursue their own spiritual paths.

## ***Prevention***

Naturopathic doctors emphasize disease prevention, assessment of risk factors and hereditary susceptibility to disease and make appropriate interventions to prevent illness. Naturopathic medicine seeks to improve conditions through preventative measures so that we all may live healthier.

## ***Wellness***

Wellness follows the establishment and maintenance of optimum health and balance. It is a state of being healthy and is characterized by positive emotion, thought and action. Wellness is inherent in everyone, no matter what the disease(s) he or she may have. If this fact is recognized and experienced by an individual, he or she will heal quicker than if the disease were only treated.

**American Association of Naturopathic Physicians**

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# American Association of Naturopathic Physicians

## Our Vision

To transform the healthcare system from a disease management system to a comprehensive health program incorporating the principles of naturopathic medicine.

We believe that every American has the right to choose a naturopathic doctor and every naturopathic doctor has the opportunity to be a successful practitioner.

## How NDs Practice

Approximately 4,400 naturopathic doctors (NDs) who have graduated from accredited 4-year medical colleges are currently practicing in the U.S.

- Total enrollment in the medical colleges has increased nearly 10% over the past decade.
- In 2012, new applications were up 8.2% from the previous year.
- Accredited naturopathic medical schools graduate nearly 500 new doctors each year.

Naturopathic physicians are unique in that:

- Fully 50% work with underserved populations.
- Two-thirds have instituted 'green living' into their practices; more than 60% are members of various environmental groups.
- 69% are in solo practices or are principals in a clinic environment.
- 73% of physicians are women.
- Approximately the same percentage of patients are women.

The top 5 ailments that patients seek care from a naturopathic physician are:

- Women's Health
- Gastroenterological Issues
- Fatigue
- Endocrinological Issues
- Allergies/Asthma

## Naturopathic Medical Colleges

There are currently seven accredited naturopathic schools in North America. Each of the schools is accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME), the U.S. Department of Education-approved accrediting agency for Naturopathic colleges and programs in the United States and Canada.

Students and graduates of Naturopathic colleges and programs accredited or pre-accredited by CNME are eligible to apply for the Naturopathic Physician Licensing Examinations (NPLEX) as administered by the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (NABNE), and are generally eligible for state and provincial licensure in the U.S. and Canada. Our U.S. schools are also accredited by the U.S. Department of Education regional institutional accreditors.

# 10 REASONS NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE LOWERS HEALTH CARE COSTS

## **1. Offers more treatment options.**

Naturopathic physicians provide consumers with a broader range of safe, cost effective care.

## **2. Offers less expensive treatment.**

Naturopathic treatments are inherently less expensive than those in conventional medicine and many naturopathic treatments incur no cost whatsoever.

## **3. Reduces need for expensive surgical procedures.**

Naturopathic physicians often suggest non-surgical options to patients, while referring for surgery when it is indicated.

## **4. Decreases prescription drug costs.**

Naturopathic physicians typically prescribe less expensive botanical or nutritional supplements to effectively care for medical problems.

## **5. Decreases in costs associated with drug prescriptions**

About two percent of drug prescriptions result in hospital admission. Adverse drug reactions may add as much as \$5 billion annually to health care costs and are considered the 5th leading cause of death in the U.S. 100,000 people died in 2003 of adverse reactions from correctly prescribed pharmaceuticals.

## **6. Reduces the incidence of iatrogenic (doctor-induced) illnesses.**

As many as one-third of patients admitted to hospitals contract another illness while there, resulting in longer stays. Fatal pharmaceutical adverse reactions combined with iatrogenic fatalities are the 3rd leading cause of death in the U.S.

## **7. Lowers malpractice rates, resulting in reduced patient costs.**

Malpractice insurance rates are much lower for naturopathic physicians than they are for conventional doctors. Patients of naturopathic physicians do not have to absorb high malpractice costs.

## **8. Addresses the cause of illness thus eliminating expensive ongoing care.**

By addressing and treating the cause of disease, the need for repeated, expensive and often ineffective symptomatic treatment is eliminated. Naturopathic physicians use state-of-the-art diagnostic testing, thorough history and complete physical examination to diagnose underlying causes of disease.

## **9. Offers true disease prevention.**

Naturopathic physicians emphasize health-building practices, reducing the high future cost of preventable degenerative diseases.

## **10. Reduces insurance costs.**

Naturopathic medical billing is far lower per patient than conventional medical billing.

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# NATUROPATHIC LICENSING AND INSURANCE COVERAGE

Naturopathic physicians are currently licensed in 16 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and six Canadian provinces.

Approximately 30% of Americans – and nearly three-quarters of Canadians – thus live in a locale that permits access to safe, effective, and affordable natural medicine treatments provided by licensed physicians who have graduated from an accredited four-year residential naturopathic medical school. (Graduates must also pass the Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examination Board (NPLEX) examination before they can practice.)

These states, territories, and provinces include:

- Alaska
- Alberta
- Arizona
- British Columbia
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- District of Columbia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Kansas
- Maine
- Manitoba
- Minnesota
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- North Dakota
- Ontario
- Oregon
- Puerto Rico
- Saskatchewan
- Utah
- Vermont
- Washington
- Virgin Islands

At any given time, efforts to license naturopathic physicians are underway in several states. In 2013, these have included Arkansas, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania.

Under Section 2706 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, insurers are required to include and reimburse any licensed health care provider, including naturopathic physicians, in health insurance plans. The provision does not affect reimbursement rates. This becomes effective in January 2014 although enrollment of patients in state health insurance exchanges begins in October 2013.

In two states, i.e., Oregon and Vermont, naturopathic medical services are covered under Medicaid.

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## AANP LEADERS & STAFF CONTACTS

### Michael Cronin, ND – President



Dr. Michael J. Cronin serves as president of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP).

He is a 1980 graduate of the National College of Naturopathic Medicine. Dr. Cronin completed his residency in Physical Medicine integrated with Family Practice. He is also the founder of the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine and served as its president from 1992 to 1997.

Dr. Cronin has been practicing naturopathic medicine in Arizona since 1982. His practice in Scottsdale, Arizona includes family practice and environmental medicine but emphasizes physical medicine. Dr. Cronin works with his patients by listening intently to their health story and designing a therapeutic program that addresses the cause of their problem in the most direct manner.

In addition to being a founding board member of AANP, Dr. Cronin is a diplomate of the American Association of Pain Management. His hands-on approach to chronic pain includes soft tissue work, spinal manipulation, and injection therapy to align and stabilize the physical structure of the body.

Dr. Cronin is coauthor of the book *Herbal Solutions for Healthy Living*, and a contributor to the textbook *Naturopathic Physical Medicine* (Elsevier 2008).

### Kasra Pournadeali, ND – President Elect



Dr. Kasra Pournadeali (pour-na-deli) is director of the Northwest Center for Optimal Health. He has been a healthcare provider since 1992, and is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and Bastyr University. He holds faculty appointments at Bastyr University and the University of Washington.

Dr. Pournadeli was the first naturopathic doctor to create a university-endorsed offsite clinic shift dedicated to integrating conventional and naturopathic approaches for patient care. As president of the Washington Association of Naturopathic Physicians, he led the effort to modernize the naturopathic scope of practice in Washington State in 2004 and again in 2005.

Dr. Pournadeali speaks and writes extensively, and has made more than 1,000 radio and television appearances locally and nationally. He has also published hundreds of articles explaining the benefits and limitations of naturopathic medicine. Listen to “Dr. P’s” radio show, *Healthy Living*, Thursdays at 3:00 pm (PT) on 90.7 FM or at [www.kser.org](http://www.kser.org).

### Jud Richland, MPH, MPA – Staff CEO



As AANP’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Richland is responsible for the organization’s federal and state advocacy efforts, for increasing public awareness of naturopathic medicine, and for helping to expand the body of naturopathic medicine research. He is likewise committed to helping AANP members build successful practices, expanding

naturopathic medical education offerings, and collaborating with organizations that share AANP's mission of advancing prevention-oriented, whole person care.

Mr. Richland's experience includes two stints as president of Partnership for Prevention. The Partnership is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization whose mission is to advocate policies for national health promotion and disease prevention. Before that, he served for seven years as executive director of the American College of Preventive Medicine, the national specialty society for physicians trained in preventive medicine.

Earlier, Mr. Richland served for eight years as deputy director and acting executive director of the Public Health Foundation, a group committed to improving public health through research, training, and technical assistance.

Mr. Richland earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of California at Berkeley, a master's degree in public health from George Washington University, and a master's degree in public affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas.

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