



Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences

The Naturopathic Physician Philosophy

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) are primary care physicians clinically trained in natural therapeutics and whose philosophy is derived in part from a Hippocratic teaching more than 2000 years old: *Vis mediatrix naturae*---nature is the healer of all diseases. Their practice is based on the same basic bio-medical science foundation that allopathic practice is; however, their philosophies and approaches differ considerably from their conventional counterparts. Naturopathic physicians diagnose disease and treat patients by using natural modalities such as physical manipulation, clinical nutrition, herbal medicine, homeopathy, counseling, acupuncture, and hydrotherapy, among others. They choose treatment based on the individual patient, not based on the generality of symptoms. This approach has proven successful in treating both chronic and acute conditions.

Depending on state licensure regulations, naturopathic physicians may perform physical exams, laboratory tests, X-rays, nutritional and dietary assessments, metabolic analysis, allergy testing, gynecological exams, and other diagnostic methods. Naturopathic physicians also understand their limitations and refer patients when necessary.

Licensure and Education

In states that license naturopathic physicians, including Arizona, the profession is regulated.¹ In these states, naturopathic physicians must pass either national or state board examinations and must have received an education from an accredited four-year, graduate level, naturopathic medical school. Their actions are subject to review by a state board of examiners to ensure protection of the patients.

In states where NDs are not licensed, NDs can still practice naturopathic medicine, however the practice is not regulated and people who have not been adequately trained can use the title of naturopath or ND. Some companies offer the degree of “ND” via correspondence coursework, for example. In these unregulated states, it is important for

¹ Other licensing states include Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Alaska, Hawaii and Vermont. The Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario also have licensing for naturopathic physicians.

patients to understand the risk factor involved and to be certain that they understand the education that their chosen health care provider has received.

Naturopathic medical education involves integration of many different medical traditions. The wide range of modalities utilized allows naturopathic physicians to tailor treatment to the needs and beliefs of their patients. Meanwhile, they have the clinical experience and skills to guide their patients through the healing process.

Naturopathic physicians are experiencing extensive success, especially with difficult cases and chronic illness. Take responsibility for your health today and call one of the many qualified naturopathic physicians in your community so you can begin enjoying your gift of life to the fullest!

The Naturopathic Oath

I dedicate myself to the service of humanity, as a practitioner of the art and science of naturopathic medicine.

First of all, to do no harm

To act in cooperation with the Healing Power of Nature.

To address the fundamental causes of disease.

To heal the whole person through individualized treatment.

To teach the principles of healthy living and preventative medicine.

I will conduct my life and the practice of naturopathic health care with vigilance, integrity, and freedom from prejudice.

I will abstain from voluntary acts of injustice and corruption.

I will keep confidential whatever I am privileged to witness whether professionally or privately, that should not be divulged.

As a doctor of Naturopathic Medicine, I pledge to remain true to this oath.

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