

Vital Stream Naturopathy

The Principles of Naturopathic Medicine

Naturopathic medicine is a distinct form of primary health care. Naturopathic physicians are primary health care practitioners, whose diverse techniques include both modern and traditional methods of treatment. The principles of naturopathic medicine are part of what distinguishes the naturopathic approach to health care from the conventional approach and are based on objective observation of the nature of health and disease. The following principles are the foundation of naturopathic medical practice:

The Healing Power of Nature *Vis Medicatrix Naturae*

Naturopathic medicine recognizes an inherent self-healing process in the body that is ordered and intelligent. Naturopathic physicians act to identify and remove obstacles to recovery as well as to facilitate and augment this healing ability.

First Do No Harm *Primum Non Nocere*

Naturopathic medicine follows three principles to avoid harming the patient: (1) Utilize methods and medical substances that 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.

Find the Cause *Tolle Causam*

Underlying causes of illness must be identified and removed before complete recovery can occur. The naturopathic physician seeks to identify and remove the underlying causes of illness, rather than to eliminate or merely suppress symptoms.

Treat the Whole Person

Naturopathic physicians treat each individual by taking into account physical, mental, emotional, genetic, environmental, social and other factors. Since total health also includes spiritual health, naturopathic physicians encourage individuals to pursue their personal spiritual development.

Prevention

Naturopathic physicians emphasize disease prevention, assessment of risk factors and hereditary susceptibility to disease and making appropriate interventions to prevent illness. Naturopathic medicine strives to create a healthy world in which humanity may thrive.

Doctor as Teacher *(Docere)*

The original meaning of the word "doctor" is teacher. One of the main objectives of naturopathic medicine is to educate the patient and emphasize self-responsibility for health. Naturopathic physicians also acknowledge the therapeutic value of the doctor-patient relationship.

Wellness

Wellness follows the establishment and maintenance of optimum health and balance. Wellness is a state of being healthy, characterized by positive emotion, thought and action. Wellness is inherent in everyone, no matter what dis-ease(s) an individual might experience. If wellness is truly recognized and nurtured within that individual, he/she will more quickly heal, as compared to their healing with direct treatment of the dis-ease alone. (This principle was adopted by Bastyr University and added to the original six principles.)