

PATH TO WELLNESS:
INFORMED CONSENT TO NATUROPATHIC TREATMENT

Naturopathic medicine is the treatment and prevention of diseases by natural means. Naturopaths assess the whole person, taking into consideration physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of the individual. Gentle, non-invasive techniques are generally used in order to stimulate the body's inherent healing capacity.

A number of different approaches are used. Diet and nutritional supplements, botanical medicine, homeopathy, Traditional Chinese Medicine and acupuncture, hydrotherapy, physical medicine and lifestyle counseling are the mainstays of naturopathic medicine.

Individual diets and nutritional supplements are recommended to address deficiencies, treat disease processes and promote health. The benefits include increased energy, increased gastrointestinal function, improved immunity and general well being.

Botanical medicine is a plant based medicine using herbal teas, tinctures, capsules and other forms of herbal preparations to assist in the recovery from injury and disease. These compounds are also used to boost the body's immune system and prevent disease.

Homeopathy is a form of medicine based on the Laws of Similars – that is the use of tiny doses of the very thing that causes symptoms in a healthy people. These minute doses of plant, animal or mineral origins are used to stimulate the body's ability to heal itself. Homeopathy is a powerful tool and affects healing on a physical and emotional level.

Traditional Chinese Medicine includes acupuncture, as well as the use of botanical formulas and dietary changes to eliminate disease and balance body functions. Acupuncture refers to the insertion of sterilized needles through the skin into underlying tissues at specific points on the surface of the body. Sometimes moxa (a compressed herb in the form of a stick) is burned over an acupuncture point to help relieve symptoms. Botanical formulas may be given in the form of pills, tinctures or decoctions (strong teas) to be taken internally or used externally as a wash. Herbal formulas may include shell, mineral and animal materials as well as plants. Dietary advice is based on traditional Chinese medical theory.

Physical medicine refers to the use of hands-on techniques such as soft tissue and spinal manipulation. Hydrotherapy refers to the use of hot and cold water application to improve circulation and stimulate the immune system.

As Naturopathic Medicine is a holistic approach to health, lifestyle is considered relevant to most health problems. We will help you identify risk factors and make recommendations to help optimize your physical, mental and emotional environment.

A thorough case history, a screening physical examination, including a breast exam will be performed. If your case requires, blood and urine samples will be ordered to supplement your health history.

Even the gentlest therapies have their complications in certain physiological conditions such as pregnancy and lactation, in very young children, or those with multiple medications. Some therapies must be used with caution in certain diseases such as diabetes, heart, liver or kidney disease. It is very important therefore that you inform us immediately of any disease process that you are suffering from, if you are on any medication or over the counter drugs. If you are pregnant, suspect you are pregnant or you are breast-feeding, please advise us immediately.

There are some slight health risks to treatment by Naturopathic Medicine. These include but are not limited to:

- Aggravation of pre-existing symptoms
- Allergic reactions to supplements or herbs
- Pain, bruising or injury from acupuncture
- Fainting or puncturing of an organ with acupuncture needles, accidental burning of the skin from the use of moxa
- Muscle strains and sprains, disc injuries from spinal manipulation

I understand that a record will be kept of the health services provided to me. This record will be kept confidential and will not be released to others unless so directed by myself unless law requires it. I understand that I may look at my medical record at anytime and can request a copy of it by paying an appropriate fee.

I understand that the naturopathic doctor will answer any questions that I have to the best of her ability. I understand that the results are not guaranteed. I do not expect the naturopath to be able to anticipate and explain all risks and complications. I will rely on the naturopath to exercise judgment during the course of the procedure which she feels at that time is in my best interests, based on the facts then known. With this knowledge, I voluntarily consent to diagnostic and therapeutic procedures mentioned above, except for: (please list exceptions below):

I intend this consent form to cover the entire course of treatment for my present condition. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in these procedures at any time.

Patient Name: (Please Print) _____

Signature of Patient or Guardian _____

Date: _____