

Dr. Linda L. Brown, BA, ND,
Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine

Informed Consent

Naturopathic medicine is the treatment and prevention of disease by natural means. Naturopathic doctors 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 can be used. Diet and nutritional supplements, botanical medicine, homeopathy, oriental medicine and acupuncture, hydrotherapy, physical medicine and lifestyle counselling are the mainstays of naturopathic medicine.

Individual diets and nutritional supplements are recommended to address deficiencies, treat disease processes and to 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 Law of Similars (the use of tiny doses of the very thing that causes symptoms in healthy people). These minute doses of plant, animal or mineral origin are used to stimulate the body's ability to heal itself. Homeopathy is a powerful tool and effects healing on a physical and emotional level.

Oriental 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, as well as various types of electrical stimulation and therapeutic ultrasound for the purpose of treating musculoskeletal and neurological problems. Hydrotherapy refers to the use of hot and cold water applications to improve circulation and stimulate the immune system.

As Naturopathic Medicine is a holistic approach to health, any combination of the above modalities or others may be used during diagnostic assessment and treatment. This will be determined by the Doctor, according to the condition of the patient. As lifestyle is considered relevant to most health problems, your Doctor will help you to identify risk factors and make recommendations to help you optimize your physical, mental and emotional environment.

Even the gentlest therapies can have complications in certain physiological conditions such as pregnancy and lactation, in very young children, or those on 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 your Doctor 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 may be pregnant, or you are breastfeeding, please advise your Doctor immediately.

Although unlikely, there may be some slight health risks to treatment through 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 venipuncture or acupuncture
- Muscle strains, sprains or disc injuries from spinal manipulation

I, the undersigned, will rely on the Doctor to exercise judgment during the course of assessment and treatment, according to my best interests and the facts then known. I understand that my health records are kept confidential, and not released to others unless so directed by myself or my representative, or unless it is required by law. I have been informed of financial costs, expected benefits, potential risks and side effects, the likely consequences of not having/following the procedures, and alternative courses of action available to me. With this knowledge, I voluntarily consent to diagnostic and therapeutic procedures required for my health treatment. 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 _____