



# Naturopathic Medicine (N.D.)

## Career Description

- Naturopathic Physicians are primary care providers who treat the whole person.
- The naturopathic scope of practice includes laboratory and clinical diagnosis, botanical medicine, nutrition, homeopathy and other traditional healing methods.
- Every year more than 80 million Americans turn to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Naturopathy combines many of these healing techniques in one field.
- NDs tailor their treatment protocols to suit each patient and place a strong emphasis on preventive care and self-care.
- Naturopathic Physicians collaborate with other branches of medicine and refer patients to conventional healthcare practitioners as needed.
- The emphasis in naturopathic medicine is on disease prevention and optimizing wellness.
- Although new to many Americans, naturopathic medicine began in the late 19th century and came into its own in the United States in the early 1900s.

## Becoming an N.D.

- To practice as an ND, you must attend an accredited naturopathic medical school (Council on Naturopathic Medical Education [CNME]-accredited).
- These 4 year programs require all the same basic sciences as are required at traditional medical schools, but students also study holistic and nontoxic approaches to therapy.

- Students generally must complete 4 years of training in clinical nutrition, acupuncture, homeopathic medicine, botanical medicine, psychology, and counseling.
- Graduates of these institutions are eligible to practice in any state in which they meet the licensing requirements. Not all states, however, allow naturopathic physicians to be fully licensed but the field is rapidly gaining recognition and acceptance.
- Even in states where naturopathic is not fully recognized, you can still practice but will be limited to the treatments allowed by the state.
- Undergraduate prerequisite courses resemble those for traditional medical schools.
- After completing a bachelor's degree, students who have been accepted into a naturopathic program then complete 4 years naturopathic medical school.
- NDs must also pass a board exam (the NPLEX) to be eligible for licensure at the end of their training.

## Prerequisite Courses

- Naturopathic schools typically require courses similar to those listed below.
- Also highly recommended are anatomy and physiology, biochemistry, botany, developmental psychology, biomedical ethics, philosophy of science, and public speaking.
- All required courses must have a minimum grade of C. Additional information on each college's requirements can be found on their websites.

### Common Prerequisite Courses (pre-reqs determined by each program but similar to this list)

Requirements	Purdue Equivalents (specific courses may vary by major)
Biology with labs	BIOL 11000-11100 <b>or</b> BIOL 13100 & 23100 & 23200 (lab)
Anatomy & Physiology (recommended)	BIOL 20300-20400 <b>or</b> BIOL 30100-30200
General Chemistry with labs	CHM 11500-11600 <b>or</b> 12500-12600 <b>or</b> 12300-12400 <b>or</b> 12901
Organic Chemistry with labs	CHM 25500-25600 <b>or</b> 26100-26200 <b>or</b> 26505-26605 <b>or</b> MCMP 20400-20500
Biochemistry	CHM 33300 <b>or</b> 33900 <b>or</b> 53300 <b>or</b> BCHM 30700 <b>or</b> 56100 <b>or</b> MCMP 20800
Physics (at least 1 semester)	PHYS 22000-22100 <b>or</b> 23300-23400 <b>or</b> 17200-27200 <b>or</b> 17200 & 24100
English (at least 1 semester)	ENGL 10600 <b>or</b> ENGL 10800 <b>plus</b> upper level writing <b>or</b> literature course
Psychology (1 semester)	PSY 12000 required (more recommended, including a lifespan course)
Humanities and Social Sciences (at least 2 courses), other recommended courses: medical terminology, biomedical ethics, public speaking, microbiology	
<b>Pre-Med Planning Seminar (optional)</b>	<b>BIOL 39600: Pre-Med Planning Seminar</b> -covering how to apply

## Job Outlook

- As so many Americans make use of complementary and alternative therapies, naturopathy is a growing field.
- More [states are licensing professionals](https://aanmc.org/resources/licensure/) <https://aanmc.org/resources/licensure/>.
- Average salary is about \$85,000 but ranges from \$60,000 to \$200,000.

## Preparation

- Generally naturopathic schools will expect to see you have spent time observing (shadowing) a naturopath or holistic healer.
- You should have a record of service to others.
- Research, while not required, is viewed favorably.
- Health care experience, both hands on and observational, is important.
- Naturopathic schools seek applicants who are curious, capable, flexible, and imaginative who also have empathy and integrity. As several of the healing methods used by naturopaths are based in traditional healing methods, a healthy respect for the variety of cultures in the world is also needed.
- Prospective students should also have a strong belief in the efficacy of natural medicine.

## Applying

- A common application is available for some of the programs. The system is called [NDCAS](https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login). <https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>
- For schools not yet participating in NDCAS, application is made directly to those programs.

## Fee Assistance

- Visit specific school websites to learn if fee assistance is offered.

## More Information

[American Association of Naturopathic Physicians](http://www.naturopathic.org) (AANP) <http://www.naturopathic.org>

[Council on Naturopathic Medical Education](http://www.cnme.org) (CNME) <http://www.cnme.org>

[National Center for Complementary & Alternative Medicine](https://nccih.nih.gov/) <https://nccih.nih.gov/>

[NDCAS](https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login) <https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>

## Programs

- [Bastyr University](http://bastyr.edu/academics/naturopathic-medicine) San Diego, CA or Kenmore, WA <http://bastyr.edu/academics/naturopathic-medicine>
- [National University of Health Sciences](http://www.nuhs.edu/admissions/naturopathic-medicine/) Lombard, IL <http://www.nuhs.edu/admissions/naturopathic-medicine/>
- [National University of Natural Medicine](http://nunm.edu/academics/school-of-naturopathic-medicine/) Portland, OR <http://nunm.edu/academics/school-of-naturopathic-medicine/>
- [Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences](https://www.scnm.edu/academics/doctor-of-naturopathic-medicine/) Tempe, AZ <https://www.scnm.edu/academics/doctor-of-naturopathic-medicine/>
- [University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine](http://www.bridgeport.edu/academics/graduate/naturopathic-medicine-nd/) Bridgeport, CT <http://www.bridgeport.edu/academics/graduate/naturopathic-medicine-nd/>

Information for this career guide came from [Explore Health Careers](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org) <http://www.explorehealthcareers.org>, the above websites, and those of individual schools.



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