

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 global healing methods.
- NDs tailor their treatment protocols to suit each patient and place a strong emphasis on preventive care, nutrition, and self-care.
- Naturopathic Physicians collaborate with other branches of medicine and refer patients to conventional healthcare practitioners as needed.
- 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).
- Students 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.
- NDs must also pass a board exam (the NPLEX) to be eligible for licensure at the end of their training.

Preparation

- Generally naturopathic schools will expect to see you have spent time observing (shadowing) a naturopath or holistic healer.
- 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 needed. Prospective students should also have a strong belief in the efficacy of natural medicine.
- 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 or BIOL 13100 & BIOL 23100 & 23200 (lab)
Anatomy & Physiology (recommended)	BIOL 20300-20400 or BIOL 30100-30200
General Chemistry with labs	CHM 11500-11600 or CHM 12500-12600 or CHM 12300-12400 or CHM 12901
Organic Chemistry with labs	CHM 25500-25600 or CHM 26100-26200 or CHM 26505-26605 or MCMP 20400-20500
Biochemistry	CHM 33300 or CHM 33900 or CHM 53300 or BCHM 30700 or BCHM 56100 or MCMP 20800
Physics (at least 1 semester)	PHYS 22000-22100 or PHYS 23300-23400 or PHYS 17200-27200 or PHYS17200 & 24100
English (at least 1 semester)	ENGL 10600 or ENGL 10800 plus upper level writing or 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	
Pre-Med Planning Seminar (optional)	BIOL 39600: Pre-Med Planning Seminar -covering how to apply

Student Organizations: Caduceus Club, American Medical Student Association

Research Programs

[Accredited Naturopathic Programs](https://aanmc.org/naturopathic-schools/) <https://aanmc.org/naturopathic-schools/>

[Academic Prerequisites](https://aanmc.org/naturopathic-schools/academic-prerequisites/) <https://aanmc.org/naturopathic-schools/academic-prerequisites/>

Applying

- An online common application, called [NDCAS](https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login), is available for some of the programs. <https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>
- For schools not yet participating in NDCAS, application is directly through those programs.
- Competitive applicants will have:
 - Respect for traditional healing methods and a belief in their efficacy
 - Strong academic performance
 - Research experience is seen favorably
 - Leadership, teamwork, and communication skills
 - Volunteer and shadowing/observation experiences
 - Strong positive letters of recommendation
- Early application is essential as programs are typically small.

Fee Assistance

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

Employment 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.

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/>
- [Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences](https://www.scnm.edu/) Tempe, AZ <https://www.scnm.edu/>
- [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/>

More Information

- [American Association of Naturopathic Physicians](https://www.naturopathic.org/) (AANP) <https://www.naturopathic.org/>
- [Council on Naturopathic Medical Education](https://cnme.org/) (CNME) <https://cnme.org/>
- [National Center for Complementary & Alternative Medicine](https://nccih.nih.gov/) <https://nccih.nih.gov/>
- [NDCAS](https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login) (application service) <https://ndcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>

Other Careers to Consider

- Chiropractic Medicine
- Physician (MD or DO)
- Dietician

Information for this career guide came from [Explore Health Careers](https://explorehealthcareers.org/?s=naturopathic+medicine) <https://explorehealthcareers.org/?s=naturopathic+medicine>, the above websites, and those of individual schools.



Purdue University • Center for Career Opportunities • Pre-Professional Advising

132 Young Hall • 765-494-3981 • preprofessional@purdue.edu • [PPA Website](#) • www.purdue.edu/preprofessional