



Information sheet: Naturopathy

What is Naturopathy?

The principles of Naturopathy were first used by the Hippocratic School of Medicine in about 400BCE. The Greek physician and philosopher Hippocrates believed in viewing the whole person to find the root cause of the disease, rather than treating the symptoms. It was from this original school of thought that Naturopathy takes its principles:

- o the healing power of nature – nature has the innate ability to heal
- o identify and treat the cause – there is always an underlying cause, be it physical or emotional
- o do no harm – never use treatments that may create other conditions
- o treat the whole person – when preparing a treatment plan, all aspects of an individual are taken into consideration
- o the Naturopath as a teacher – a Naturopath empowers the patient to take responsibility for his/her own health by teaching self-care
- o prevention is better than cure – a Naturopath may remove toxic substances and situations from a patient's lifestyle to prevent the onset of further disease.

Naturopathy, or Nature Cure, is underpinned by a fundamental principle – vis medicatrix naturae – the healing power of nature. This was made clear twenty-five centuries ago when Hippocrates said Health is the expression of a harmonious balance between various components of man's nature, the environment and ways of life – nature is the physician of disease.

What does the therapy do?

The modalities and practices of Naturopathy can be broad. The main aim is to restore the body back to balance and empower clients to take control of their own health. Naturopaths apply a range of natural therapies, such as Homeopathy, Acupuncture, Nutrition and Herbal Medicine, as well as the use of modern methods such as Bio-Resonance, Ozone-Therapy, and Colon Hydrotherapy (this list is not an exhaustive list).

What are the training standards?

The General Naturopathic Council, has established core elements for naturopathic education reflecting the National Occupational Standards CNH10. Individuals who are entitled to become members of the GNC will have trained and will practice to a minimum of the levels set out in the core elements.

Membership is solely via one of their professional associations: Association of Master Herbalists (AMH), Association of Naturopathic Practitioners (ANP), Association of Registered Colon Hydrotherapists (ARCH), Guild of Naturopathic Iridologists International (GNI), Institute of Clinically Applied Hijama Therapy (ICAHT), Incorporated Society of Registered Naturopaths (ISRN), or the Naturopathic Nutrition Association (NNA)

The GNC has a two-tier Register for Naturopaths. All registrants are required to comply with the GNC's Code of Ethics for Professional Practice and must work within the Naturopathic National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Is Naturopathy under any regulatory process?

There is no legal regulation of Naturopathy however there are various professional associations in the UK that have been established to protect the public from practitioners and ensure an adequate level of training and competence. The Association of Naturopathic Practitioners is one such professional organisation.



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These professional associations are a safe and effective resource for members of the public who are in search of a practitioner. They require practitioners to maintain levels of professional standards, comply with a code of ethics and complaints procedure as well as hold appropriate insurance.

How do I find a Naturopath?

Most accredited associations will have practitioner directories. Both the Association of Naturopathic Practitioners (ANP) and the General Naturopathic Council (GNC) have find a therapist searches on their website. All searchable therapists will be insured, agreed to abide by a code of conduct and continue to develop professionally.

Are there any safety concerns for Naturopathy?

Naturopathic treatment is perfectly safe however there may be specific contraindications relating to each modality e.g. there are some herbs that cannot be prescribed with certain pharmaceutical medication. These will be taken into consideration and explained by the accredited practitioner prior to and during treatment.

Is there an evidence base?

There is a plethora of research and evidence to support the benefits of Naturopathy. For research abstracts visit:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>