

- Naturopathic physicians diagnose, prevent, and treat acute and chronic illness to restore and establish optimal health by supporting a person’s inherent self-healing process. They work to remove obstacles to health and stimulate self-healing mechanisms.
- Naturopathic education includes training in the same biomedical and diagnostic sciences as allopathic (MD) and osteopathic (DO) physicians. In addition, NDs learn nutrition, botanical medicine, and traditional global healing methods.
- NDs are trained to treat the whole person—their treatment protocols are tailored 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.

Education & Licensure

- To practice as an ND, you must attend a naturopathic medical school accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME).
- Students must complete a 4 year medical program after their undergraduate degree.
- Graduates of these medical programs are eligible to practice in any state in which they meet the licensing requirements. Not all states allow naturopathic physicians to practice the full scope of their field. Even in states where naturopathic is not fully recognized, NDs 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 expect to see you have spent time observing (shadowing) a naturopathic physician and/or a holistic healer (e.g. an acupuncturist or ayurvedic healer).
- 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 (required courses 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) or BIOL 23000 & upper level biology (including 2 hours of lab)
Anatomy & Physiology (recommended)	BIOL 20300-20400 (BIOL 30100-30200)
General Chemistry with labs	CHM 11500-11600 or CHM 12500-12600 or CHM 12300-12400 or CHM 12901 (CHM 11500 credit exam recommended with 12901) or CHM 13600
Organic Chemistry with labs	CHM 25500-25600 or CHM 26100-26200 or CHM 26505-26605 or MCMP 20400-20500
Biochemistry	BCHM 30700 or BCHM 56100 or CHM 33900 or CHM 43300 or MCMP 20800 (CHM 33300, CHM 53300)
Physics (at least 1 semester)	PHYS 22000-22100 or PHYS 23300-23400 or PHYS 17200-27200 or PHYS17200 & 24100 & PHYS 25200 (lab) or ENGR 16100-16200*
English (at least 1 semester)	ENGL 10600 or ENGL 10800 or SCLA 10100*; plus upper level writing or literature course
Psychology (1 semester)	PSY 12000 required (more recommended, including a lifespan course)
Other Recommended & Required Courses: Humanities and Social Sciences (at least 2 courses), medical terminology, biomedical ethics, public speaking, microbiology, math	
<i>Pre-Med Planning Seminar (optional)</i>	<i>BIOL 39600: Pre-Med Planning Seminar-covering how to apply</i>
*Ask individual naturopathic medical schools if they will accept these courses toward their requirements. Courses no longer offered.	

Student Organizations: Caduceus Club, American Medical Student Association

Program Information

[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](#), 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. NDCAS opens in September and it is best to submit an application by mid-October.

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, naturopathic medicine is a growing field.
- More [states are licensing professionals](#) <https://aanmc.org/resources/licensure/>
- Average salary is about \$85,000 but ranges from \$60,000 to \$200,000.

Diversity Matters

The naturopathic profession needs professionals who look just like you, and who share your life experiences. Race or ethnicity, LGBTQ identity, (dis)ability, age, geographic region, socioeconomic status, and nationality all add to a richer experience for all students in the naturopathic program classroom, contribute to the naturopathic profession, and ultimately lead to better outcomes for patients.

Programs

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

More Information

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

Other Careers to Consider

Chiropractic Medicine · Physician (MD or DO) · Dietician · Podiatry

Preparing for your Giant Leap

purdue.edu/preprofessional