

OPPOSE NATUROPATHIC LICENSING!
www.no-naturopaths.org

Naturopaths with degrees from naturopathic schools call themselves "naturopathic doctors." They want to be licensed in all states as primary care physicians with the authority to diagnose and treat any patient with any disease or condition. Legislators must learn the facts before voting on naturopathic licensing.

There is no public demand for naturopaths

A miniscule **3/10 of one percent** of American adults used naturopathic services in 2007 according to a federal government survey. In Washington State, where naturopathic doctors are licensed to practice as primary care physicians, **only a tiny portion of the public** uses them. Two studies demonstrated less than two percent of insured patients made a health insurance claim for naturopathic services in Washington even though coverage of their services is mandated by state law. While naturopaths have sought licensing in all states for years, only a handful of states license them. Some state legislatures have **rejected these attempts almost a dozen times**.

"Naturopathic Doctors" falsely claim the same education and training as Medical Doctors

"... the proposed licensure of naturopathic physicians would likely increase the risk of harm to the public..."
Florida House Committee on Health Care Interim Project Report, January, 2004

Four small naturopathic colleges in the U.S. have **misleadingly appropriated the name "medical" for their schools**. Although these schools may call themselves "universities" **none are a part of any mainstream American university**, such as a state public university system. Some of these schools also grant degrees in subjects like acupuncture and massage therapy. Unlike real medical schools (and other professional schools) there is **no entrance exam** for naturopathic school. **They make up their own curriculum, are taught by other naturopaths, and create their own exams for admission to practice**. No one outside of naturopathy has ever vetted their course content and few have seen these exams. These schools are accredited by a private agency run by naturopaths. While this agency has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education so that accredited schools can access government money, the Department does not review course content or vouch for the validity of what is taught. Importantly, after medical doctors graduate from school they must complete residencies, an additional 3 to 7 years of hospital-based, supervised training where they diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions. **Naturopaths do not have this essential training** -- they can go into practice right after graduation and passing their self-created exams.

Naturopaths reject evidence-based medicine as a standard of patient care

"Available scientific evidence does not support claims that naturopathic medicine is effective for most health problems." American Cancer Society

"... little scientific evidence is currently available on overall effectiveness [of naturopathy]."
National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine [NCCAM], U.S. National Institutes of Health [NIH]

To improve quality and cost-effectiveness of care, medical doctors, dentists, and other medical professions rely on evidence of safety and effectiveness in evaluating their treatments. This is called "evidence-based medicine." Naturopaths **reject evidence-based medicine** as a standard for patient care. Naturopaths do offer some conventional advice about diet, exercise and stress relief, information widely available from other sources, often at no cost. However, employing buzz words like "natural," "individualized" and "holistic," they use **strange diagnostic methods and treatments** that have **no evidence of effectiveness**. This includes homeopathy (which is just water or sugar pills), glandular therapy (desiccated animal organs), hair mineral analysis

and applied kinesiology (basically using the body like an Ouija Board). They regularly prescribe and sell dietary supplements, again with **no evidence of safety or effectiveness**. **Naturopaths over treat** by diagnosing conditions such as chronic yeast overgrowth, "leaky gut," heavy metal toxicity and near-universal food "sensitivities," and do so in cases where no responsible physician would agree with their diagnosis. The bottom line: there is **no evidence that naturopathic care delivers an overall benefit for the health care dollar**.

Naturopaths fail to recommend standard public health practices

*"Some beliefs and approaches of naturopathic practitioners are not consistent with conventional medicine. . . . and their safety **may not be supported by scientific evidence**. For example, some practitioners **may not recommend childhood vaccinations**. The benefits of vaccination in preventing illness and death have been repeatedly proven and greatly outweigh the risks." NCCAM, NIH.*

Naturopaths **oppose vaccination and public water fluoridation**, standard practices that have greatly reduced disease and death, especially among children. Studies show that naturopathic patients are less likely to be vaccinated and are **more likely to contract vaccine-preventable diseases**. Another study found that women seeing naturopaths were **less likely to have undergone important health care screening tests**, such as mammography.

Naturopaths use risky treatments that have no evidence of benefit

*"Relying exclusively on naturopathic treatments and avoiding conventional medical care **may be harmful**, or, in some circumstances . . . have **serious health consequences**." NCCAM, NIH*

*"Excessive fasting, dietary restrictions, or use of enemas [colonic irrigation], which are sometimes components of naturopathic treatment, **may be dangerous**. Naturopathic treatment may involve taking unregulated herbs, some of which may have **harmful effects**. . . ." American Cancer Society*

*"Proponents claim [colonic hydrotherapy or irrigation, a typical naturopathic practice] aids in weight loss, increases energy, boosts immunity, and reduces the risk of colon cancer. Not only is there **no evidence to support those claims**, but the practice can also be **dangerous**." Consumer Reports (on Health), February 2013*

Rejection of evidence-based medicine, including standard risk-benefit analysis, leaves naturopaths free to **employ useless treatments** that are unduly risky and harsh, such as hot peat baths, colonic irrigation, fasting, severely restricted diets, and herbs of unknown quality and effectiveness. All of these are taught in their foundational text, *The Textbook of Natural Medicine* (2013).

Forcing reimbursement for naturopaths

Naturopaths want to **cash in on the federal Affordable Care Act**. The Act requires reimbursement of care provided by any health care worker licensed by the state. This would be a bonanza to the naturopaths and the multi-billion dollar dietary supplement industry which supports their schools and whose products naturopaths sell.

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