

Naturopathic Medicine Week

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The week of October 7th-13th may just be any another week for most people. Fall is starting to set in for real and we are getting ready for Halloween. For us doctors at True Health Medicine and other naturopathic physicians around the nation, this week now has much more exciting significance that we are thrilled to share with you.

On September 10th 2013, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution designating this special week as Naturopathic Medicine Week. They believe this week will help encourage Americans to learn more about what naturopathic physicians can do to help prevent and treat chronic diseases. And that it is "safe, affordable, and effective health care."

There are many individuals that know about naturopathic medicine and utilize it as either adjunctive health care to their conventional doctors or as their primary source for health management. With that said, there are many more that don't know or understand very little about what we do with some sadly assuming it's little more than "voodoo". Here's a little education and dispelling of myths about how we are trained and our general practice methods.

A licensed naturopathic physician is educated through a full-time, doctoral level program in a federally accredited naturopathic medical school. The training includes 2 years of basic sciences, 2 years of clinical sciences for a total of 4100 hours, 1200 of which are clinical training. Doctors must pass national

board exams in order to be state licensed. Here in Oregon, we are licensed as primary care providers, which includes the ability to prescribe pharmaceuticals when deemed necessary. Each year we complete 50 hours of continuing education of which several of these hours are based on pharmacy in order to maintain our license. Our practice methods, like any other primary care doctor, includes performing clinical history, physical exams, ordering labs and diagnostic imaging when needed, and referrals and/or co-management with other medical specialists.

As any person that has experienced a visit with a naturopathic physician knows, there are also some differences from a conventional primary care doctor.

Our practice is based upon a set of fundamental philosophical tenets:

1. First Do No Harm
2. The Healing Power of Nature
3. Treat the Whole Person
4. Identify and Treat the Causes
5. Doctor as Teacher
6. Prevention

There are most certainly times when acute care management is necessary which often involves the use of medications. What is different is that we will continue working and researching to determine the cause behind

the health issue. Sometimes it is as simple as making dietary and lifestyle changes such as making healthy food choices and incorporating exercise and stress management tools. (I did say simple, not necessarily easy!) Other times the answer may be much more complex and difficult to determine.

As stated previously, we have the ability to prescribe pharmaceuticals when needed but generally is not our first choice when treating individuals. We utilize therapeutic nutrition, botanical medicine, dietary management, lifestyle changes, and a great deal of education in our treatment practices. The more educated an individual is about their own health, the more likely they will become engaged in their own process of becoming healthier. Knowledge is empowerment and it's critical for individuals to understand their daily choices have a great impact on their health and well-being.

We spend more time with our patients in order to get to know them, understand their health issues, and determine appropriate treatments based upon the individual.

At True Health Medicine, we are happy to bill insurance when there is coverage for our services. Beginning in January, 2014 naturopathic services will be included under the Affordable Care Act which should increase accessibility for those who wish to utilize our services.



At True Health Medicine, we believe in trying to meet the needs of as many as possible. Along with naturopathic medicine, we also offer acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy. As Naturopathic Medicine Week approaches we would be happy to answer any questions you may have about our practice and how we may help in your health care needs.



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