



Ottawa Integrative Health Centre Inc.

1129 Carling Ave., Ottawa, ON K1Y 4G6 (613)798-1000 [www.oihc.ca](http://www.oihc.ca)  
New satellite office inside The Ottawa Birth and Wellness Centre - 2260 Walkley Rd. Ottawa

## Helping You Achieve Health . . . Naturally!

May 2015

### **Heart sounds, bowel movements, pieces of the pie. What exactly IS naturopathic medicine?**

*By Dr. Christine Nguyen, ND,  
Naturopathic Doctor*

Heart sounds, bowel movements, pieces of the pie? What in the world do these 3 things have to do with one another? These are three of the many things a patient will be asked about during an initial patient consultation with me, a naturopathic doctor (ND).

You don't follow? I am asked all the time **what exactly is naturopathic medicine?**

**The short answer:** Naturopathic medicine combines the science of modern medical research and diagnostics with the art and skilful practice of using centuries old traditions, substances that come from nature, and the body's innate healing wisdom to treat illness.

**The LONG answer:** Naturopathic medicine is a philosophical paradigm shift in terms of medical practice. As modern medicine becomes more and more reductionist (neurologist for the brain, cardiologist for the heart, etc), naturopathic medicine aims to remain as holistic as possible, rooted firmly in the principle **TREAT THE WHOLE PERSON**. In an age of unrelenting chronic disease, never has it been more clear that disease is multi-factorial, involving body, mind, spirit and environment. What does this mean? In other words, it means the naturopathic doctor (ND) asks the questions. What are the stressors in your life? What are your home/work

environments like? When was your last physical exam? (and then performs one – including listening to heart sounds). When was your last vacation? Who are your sources of support? Tell me about your bowel movements. As a naturopathic doctor I want to know many details about every aspect of your life. This takes time. Luckily, NDs spend the time. Initial visits can last up to an hour or more in duration. Over the course of several visits, clients often comment “Wow, I have never told anyone, especially any of my doctors, about that”.

Once this rapport has been developed, a more detailed and significant personal medical history can then be revealed. That is part and parcel of what it means to treat the whole person.

### **What are the guiding principles of naturopathic medicine?**

1. First do no harm – selecting natural therapies that reinforce or compliment the body's healing process
2. Identify and treat the root cause –



# UpComing

## **Naturopathic Medicine Week**

**May 11 - 16th 2015**

**May 11th quick contest:** correctly list at least 5 services NDs provide at the OIHC to be entered to win a gift certificate for Bridgehead coffee

**May 11 & 12** – Like us on facebook – be entered in a draw to win a gift certificate to The Table Vegetarian Restaurant

**May 13th & 14th** – share your Naturopathic Medicine “success” story and receive an infrared sauna session

**May 11th - 16th** – book an initial visit with any of our NDs or a Naturopathic service new to you – be entered to win an Oresta Gift certificate for spa services

**May 16th** – Free well child visits for current and new patients, and a “detox your pantry” session for people with food allergies/intolerances and those wishing for tips to eat more healthfully. Attend either of these events and be entered to win a \$25 Kardish card

**May 11-16th** – refer a friend who books an appointment with one of our NDs – receive a free IR sauna session, and be entered in a draw to win a Glowing Skin Health Basket

**Visit our website [www.oihc.ca](http://www.oihc.ca)  
under Upcoming Events  
or call us at  
613-798-1000 for details**

suppressing symptoms only brings temporary relief

3. Stimulate the healing power of the body - our bodies are amazingly complex and have the ability to self heal.

Sometimes all that is needed is some support or removal of harmful obstacles to cure

4. Treat the whole person

5. Doctor as teacher: give a person a fish, feed him for a day. Teach a person to fish, feed him for a lifetime. Enough said.

6. Prevention is the best medicine - Do you really want to do nothing while you wait for your blood glucose to rise to “outside the normal range” for a diagnosis of diabetes or pre-diabetes? Not on my watch. I am going to review my patient’s case history, identify diet and lifestyle improvements, and provide a naturopathic treatment plan to ensure we prevent the disease process.

### **How are naturopathic doctors trained?**

In countries where naturopathic medicine is a regulated profession (such as Canada), NDs graduate with at least 7 years of post-secondary education under their belts. After acquiring a university baccalaureate, accredited naturopathic medical schools are 4-year programs that include thousands of hours of lectures, anatomy labs, practical skills training (acupuncture, massage, spinal manipulation) and patient contact. Before being able to practice naturopathic medicine, we undergo North America-wide board exams and must be licensed to practice.

### **What are the Tools in the Naturopathic Toolkit?**

No tradesperson works without his/her toolkit and the ND is no different. After having taken an in-depth medical history, physical exam (may include well-baby, well-woman visits, orthopaedic tests) and laboratory results interpretation, the ND’s treatment tools include;

- nutrition & nutritional supplementation
- lifestyle modification
- herbal (botanical) medicine
- acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine

- homeopathic medicine
- physical medicine (massage, exercise, hydrotherapy)

### **What can naturopathic medicine treat?**

Rather than thinking that naturopathic medicine can treat condition X, Y and Z, the naturopathic doctor treats the person with the condition. Case in point: Two individuals with the same “diagnosis” or “disease” may come away from their visits with vastly different treatment plans. I know just as well as you that no two people are identical – and because the road that lead to each person’s health predicaments is different, each warrants an individualized treatment approach. Still want to know what naturopathic medicine can treat? In a nutshell: anything and everything. From acute conditions to chronic disease, naturopathic medicine offers treatment options that can compliment conventional medical treatments or be used in lieu of and that are both safe and effective.

### **Pieces of the Pie?**

Finally, let me explain the pieces of the pie. I often ask my patients to rate their degree of satisfaction in a number of aspects of their life. Each representing a piece of the pie. It’s a strong, albeit deliciously tempting metaphor to reiterate the fact that we are wholistic beings and should never neglect, at least for too long, any one aspect of ourselves. A pie, like you, is best whole, savoured with those we love, and even better with a bit of ice cream on top (the healthy kind of course)!

## Notice of Fee Changes

*As of June 1, 2015 the following rate changes will apply for Naturopathic Visits:  
1 hour consultation will be \$165, 45 minute \$123.75, 30 minute \$82.50 and 15min \$41.25.  
Acupuncture with an ND will now cost \$66 (for 30 minute session).*

*For more information or to make an appointment please call:*

*(613) 798-1000 or email: [info@oihc.ca](mailto:info@oihc.ca) or visit our website at: [www.oihc.ca](http://www.oihc.ca)*