

**“Health is not a ‘product’ which can be guaranteed by the art of healing; treatment involves manipulation of a patient that is sensitive to their context and to the forces of nature that are struggling to find a new equilibrium in their body.”**

**Hans-Georg Gadamer**

## **What is Naturopathy?**

According to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Dictionary of Occupational Titles a naturopath is one who: “Diagnoses, treats, and cares for patients, using a system of practice that bases treatment of physiological functions and abnormal conditions on natural laws governing the human body. Utilizes physiological, psychological, and mechanical methods, such as air, water, heat, earth, physiotherapy (food and herb therapy), electrotherapy, physiotherapy, minor orificial surgery, mechanotherapy, naturopathic corrections and manipulation, and natural methods or modalities, together with natural medicines, natural processed foods, and herbs and nature’s remedies. Excludes major surgery, therapeutic use of x-ray and radium, and use of drugs, except assimilable substances containing elements or compounds which are components of body tissues and are physiologically compatible to body processes for maintenance of life.”

## **The Kneipp cure comes to America.**

A little over one hundred years ago an American newspaper surveyed its two million readers to determine the most recognizable people of the time. The most famous was the president of the United States, second most famous was the Chancellor of Germany, Bismarck, and third was Sebastian Kneipp, a priest in Bavaria. Sebastian Kneipp had successfully treated thousands of people with such remedies as pure water, fresh air, exercise and herbs, and taught literally millions of others to utilize his techniques with his writings. His method was originally known as “Nature Cure.”

Benedict Lust, a German immigrant, had come to America in 1892 to seek his fortune. Lust became very ill with tuberculosis after receiving several required vaccinations. Allopathic medicine and homeopathy had failed to help him. The doctors signed his death certificate in his presence, and so he returned to his native Germany to die. There he went to see Sebastian Kneipp for the “Kneipp cure” as it was called. Immediately his health began to return. In 1896 Lust returned to America as Kneipp’s official representative.

The term “naturopathy” is really a misnomer. It combines a Latin root (nature) with a Greek root (pathos). Literally translated it means Natural Death. Mr. Lust defended the term stating, “Naturopathy is a hybrid word. It is purposely so. No single tongue could distinguish a system whose origin, scope, and purpose is universal-broad as the world, deep as love, high as heaven.”

A chiropractor, Dr. John Bastyr, is credited with being the Father of Modern Naturopathic Medicine. Because of Bastyr’s influence naturopaths have been at the forefront of the rebirth of homeopathy in this country. He made sure that homeopathy shared equal emphasis with nutrition, hydrotherapy and botanical medicine in naturopathic education. Dr. Bastyr considered manipulation the most important therapy in his practice.

## **What kind of treatment methods do naturopaths use?**

Like a chiropractor, a naturopath is trained as a general practitioner. All healing methods compatible with the basic naturopathic medicine philosophy are integrated into the treatment protocols. These include but are not limited to: heat, cold, sunshine, light, ultrasound, electricity, massage, manual manipulation of joints and soft tissues, acupuncture, homeopathy, therapeutic nutrition including vitamins, minerals,

enzymes, glandular extracts, and botanicals. The practice emphasis and methods utilized vary widely among practitioners. But whatever the focus the emphasis isn't so much what is done as it is, why is it done.

*An educated background in natural healing is the hallmark of a naturopath.*

*What are the basic principles of naturopathy?*

*What about accreditation?*