

Intersections of Naturopathy and Science

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Background

Naturopathy, a medical practice deeply rooted in ancient healing traditions, has gained new interest in recent years as individuals seek holistic approaches to health and wellness.

Population

The majority of the patients at the hospital, called *sadhakas* (practitioners) were older than thirty years old and suffered from obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, or some other chronic illness.

Activities

During my practicum, I stayed at a naturopathy hospital for 7 days, following the diet and lifestyle.

Deliverables

1. Literature Review on Naturopathy
2. Infographic on Naturopathy Treatments that can be done at home

Learning Objectives

1. Learn the perspectives of patients and understand the treatments they undergo, synthesizing this with published research to contextualize these approaches in science.
2. Look for similarities in impact and intention with Western medicine approaches, as well as areas for improvement through integrating treatment principles from naturopathy.
3. Create a resource for those who are unexperienced with either allopathic or naturopathic medicine to break down the separation between the two schools of medicine by providing scientific justification for the treatments observed.

Lessons Learned

The treatments at the clinic and following literature review highlighted the following effects:

- Yoga and breathing exercises were found to reduce pain as well as improve sleep quality, self-esteem, coping with anxiety and stress as well as brain structure and function.
- Sauna bathing was associated with improved respiratory function and, cardiovascular health
- Being surrounded by nature and increased physical activity can decrease cardiovascular disease risk
- Diets low in meat, salt, sugar, and oil were strongly linked to improved quality of life and cardiovascular health
- Acupressure reduced anxiety and improved recovery in a study of thoracoscopic surgery patients.

Public Health Implications

The literature review shows that there may be significant benefits to adopting various naturopathy practices into daily lives, mitigating or preventing chronic illnesses.

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