



What is the Role of Naturopathic Medicine in Cancer Care?

Naturopathic Doctors (NDs) trained in Integrative cancer care play an important role in the support of people diagnosed with cancer through survivorship. They provide evidence-informed guidance on safe and effective use of natural and supportive therapies, when combined with conventional treatment.

The Oncology Association of Naturopathic Physicians (OncANP) is the leading professional organization in North America for licensed NDs and students working to support a standard of whole-person, patient-centered care. The OncANP advocates for collaboration with conventional providers, and is dedicated to advancing the science and application of Naturopathic medicine within the field of standard cancer care and treatment.

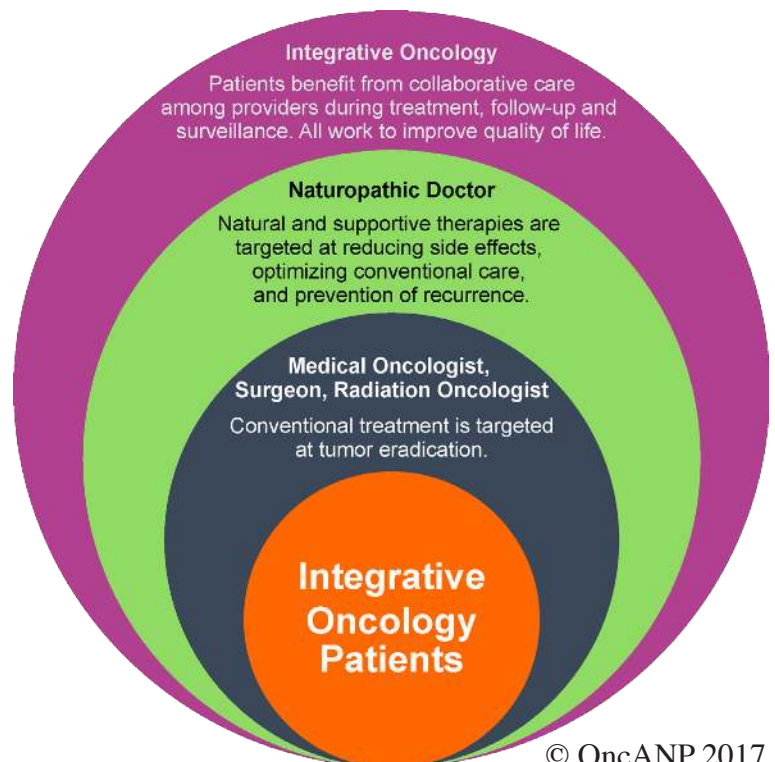
Naturopathic medicine is a distinct primary health care profession emphasizing education, prevention, treatment and optimal health of mind, body and spirit.

Surveys estimate that over 80% of people with cancer are choosing to use natural and supportive therapies alongside their conventional treatments.^(1,2) Therapeutic care is non-invasive and includes acupuncture, botanical medicine, physical medicine, clinical nutrition, and lifestyle counseling.

Integrative oncology provides patients with safe options for combining conventional cancer treatment with natural and supportive therapies. The goal of this collaboration among multi-disciplinary health care providers is to best support optimal health and well-being: physically, mentally and emotionally.

INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY AMONG PROVIDERS IS COLLABORATIVE CARE.

COMBINING CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE AND NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE, SUPPORTS THE PURSUIT OF BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOR PATIENTS.



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Within this model of integrative oncology, all providers work together to improve quality of life. Patients benefit from a coordinated approach to care as NDs collaborate with conventional providers at all stages:

- At the time of diagnosis: to prepare the patient for what lies ahead.
- During active treatment: to reduce side effects and potentially improve response to conventional care.
- Post-treatment: to help with recovery and support prevention of recurrence with healthy lifestyle education.

Medical Oncologists, Surgeons and Radiation Oncologists focus their conventional, standard of care treatment on targeting tumour eradication.

NDs practicing integrative cancer care use natural and supportive therapies to reduce side effects, to help optimize conventional care and prevent recurrence.

NDs are important advisors in this collaborative approach, offering safe, evidence-informed guidance for patients and their conventional providers about options for natural and supportive care.

The integrative oncology approach allows for collaboration among providers, a higher standard of safety, and optimal patient-centred care.

The Oncology Association of Naturopathic Physicians (OncANP)

The OncANP is a professional organization with a membership of licensed NDs, Naturopathic medical students and allied providers from across North America. The OncANP was established in 2004, and is a recognized affiliate of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP). The vision of OncANP is to enhance survival and quality of life for people living with cancer through the integration of Naturopathic medicine into cancer care.

Naturopathic physicians complete pre-medical undergraduate studies and graduate from federally recognized and regionally accredited doctoral programs of Naturopathic medicine. Graduates are then eligible to take national or provincial

licensing examinations. Currently, 20 states, the territory of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the US Virgin Islands, and five Canadian provinces license or regulate NDs. In some of these regions, NDs function as primary care providers.

The OncANP also supports Advanced Training of Naturopathic Doctors in Oncology. Successfully board-certified members are awarded the status of Fellow by the American Board of Naturopathic Oncology (FABNO). These Fellows meet the highest standard of the profession.

Research in integrative oncology is substantial and ever-growing. Largely, it is guided by single intervention randomised controlled trials (RCTs). NDs in cancer care focus on the highest quality human data for clinical decision-making. Many studies report safe use of natural therapies in humans with positive outcomes for improved quality of life, side effects management, treatment response and survival.

The OncANP mission is to advance the philosophy, science and practice of Naturopathic medicine in oncology care, and it is committed to improving the knowledge of integrative oncology research within the Naturopathic profession. In 2016, the OncANP launched The Knowledge in Naturopathic Oncology Website (KNOWoncology.org) for its membership. This is a database of human clinical trials in integrative oncology and combines detailed summaries of up-to-date research with current best practices from experienced Naturopathic physicians. The goal is to provide clinicians and students working with cancer patients access to data for best education, safety and clinical decision-making.

For more information about OncANP and its membership, please visit: www.oncanp.org

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- (1) Richardson MA, Sanders T, Palmer JL, et al. Complementary/ Alternative Medicine Use in a Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Implications for Oncology. *J Clin Oncol* 2000 Jul;18(13):2505-1
 - (2) Patricia L. Judson, MD, Reem Abdallah, MD, et al. Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use in Individuals Presenting for Care at a Comprehensive Cancer Center. *Integrative Cancer Therapies* 2017, Vol. 16(1) 96–103