

# Naturopathic Clinic Stresses Holistic Approach to Health

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Linda Zukauskas



Shawn M. Carney, N.D., Northeast Natural Medicine, 19 Church Hill Rd., offers a holistic approach to restoring the body to its proper balance and function. (Zukauskas photo)



# Naturopathic Clinic Stresses Holistic Approach to Health

by Linda Zukauskas

NEWTOWN — Shawn M. Carney, N.D., of Northeast Natural Medicine, 19 Church Hill Rd., offers a holistic approach to restoring the body to its proper balance and function.

He told Voices, “A naturopathic physician works in the least invasive way possible.”

Eight years ago, he started his own practice, which is a naturopathic clinic for the whole family and offers massage therapy.

“I’m licensed in the state of Connecticut, which has the longest history of licensing in this profession, going back to the 1930s. A naturopathic physician studies the same anatomy material as a medical doctor for the first two years of school but the last two are different.”

He explained that, instead of studying pharmacology in those later years, he focused on using body constituents—vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and neurotransmitters—to help patients feel better.

“I function much like a medical physician, ordering diagnostic tests and working with health insurance, but I don’t write prescriptions. The treatment emphasis is to address that balance instead of only treating symptoms.”

Some of the tools in his bag include botanical medicines, manual manipulation, low level laser therapy, acupuncture, and homeopathy.

“Half of what I do is detective work. For example, a headache might be treated by an M.D. with a pain killer. A naturopathic physician might test magnesium levels which can cause pain if they’re too low and food sensitivities. There also might be an undiagnosed infection like Lyme Disease.

Dr. Carney’s chosen approach to restoring a person to a state of wellness was inspired by his father’s difficulties with type 2 diabetes.

“He gradually declined despite the fact that he was well

informed. He really didn’t take good care of himself or incorporate that information into his lifestyle, and eventually passed away from complications.

“That experience had a big influence on me. I wanted to get into an area of medicine where the patient is involved in lifestyle changes.”

Today, he works with diabetic and pre-diabetic patients.

“Instead of just giving the patient insulin, we can promote a Mediterranean diet, low glycemic foods, and supplements to help the body respond better to the insulin that is already present.”

He said he has had success with supplements such as chromium, referring to peer review evidence on how that treatment improves the body’s function.

“Many pre-diabetic patients can turn to the right direction and reduce their risk factors with simple steps like cinnamon, which improves the sensitivity of insulin receptors.”

Dr. Carney made a distinction in quality of care.

“There are concerns about the quality of supplements and people should know they’re not all absorbed at equal rates. Without quality control from the FDA, you can’t be sure of what you’re buying. Also, dosage is important. I might test a patient who is taking 500mg of vitamin C but needs 2000.”

He recommended, “Depending on what you’re up against and the severity of your health concerns, it is worth engaging a professional.”

The practice accepts most health insurance plans in order to improve patient access to wellness.

“I’m proud of our success stories. People who have suffered for years from fibromyalgia are feeling better, some with a corrected diagnosis, and I treat many children. Perhaps 40 percent of my practice helping little people in their formative years with attention concerns like ADD or upper respiratory infections.”



He described one baby who suffered from multiple ear infections and had gone through many courses of antibiotics.

The treatment plan included testing the mother, who was breast feeding, for food sensitivity.

"We used some botanicals to boost the baby's immune system and addressed the mother's issues. The infections stopped."

Noting that there are often undesirable side effects with medications, such as weight gain with antidepressants, the doctor would consider the use of amino acids or vitamins to support mood.

"We can strike a better balance in neurotransmitters and eliminate the medications and their side effects. There are things we can do with anxiety to improve the quality of life."

Treatments of low level laser can help those with arthritis or carpal tunnel syndrome by using wave lengths of light to stimulate cells in the body, decrease inflammation, and optimize healing.

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## Holistic

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"I have patients who suffer for months with planter fasciitis and they're doing terrific with no pills or injections. This treatment has been around for years but it hasn't hit the mainstream consciousness yet."

Dr. Carney is proud of how he implements specialty diagnostic tests.

"Some of what we do is not available elsewhere, such as saliva testing for hormones. We can perform those tests here or send patients home with a kit. Our tests for Lyme disease look for multiple strains so the results

are more reliable. Many clinicians aren't aware of the subtleties of this disease and focus on treatment rather than proper diagnosis; I've seen cases misdiagnosed as fibromyalgia.

"I'd rather correct the underlying problem and tailor the specific treatment."

Dr. Carney holds office hours from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and every third Saturday at New Morning Market in Woodbury in addition to hours Tuesday through Saturday in Newtown.

Appointments are available by calling 800-723-2962 and more information is available at [www.northeastnetmed.com](http://www.northeastnetmed.com).