

Doctor focuses on natural healing

By Michael C. Juliano
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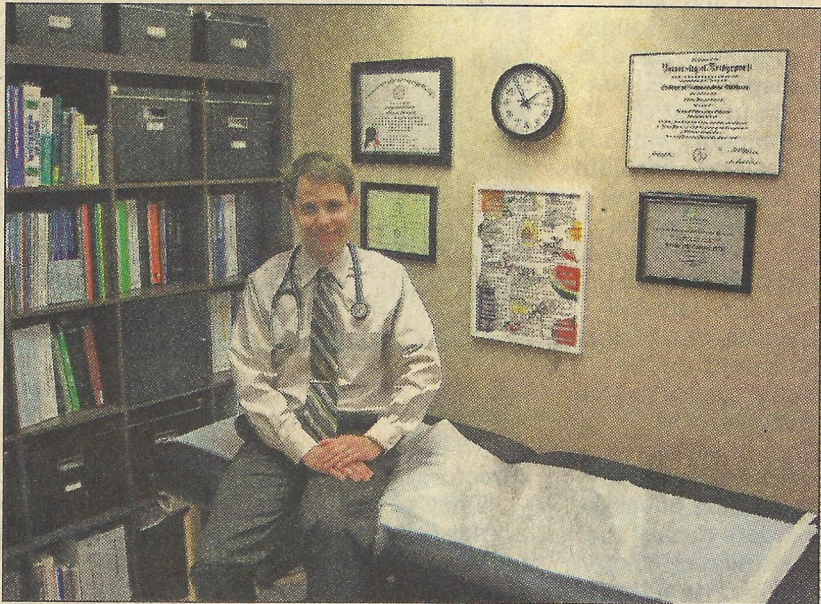
Shawn and Stacey Carney of Newtown are taking a natural approach to healing.

The married couple recently opened Northeast Natural Medicine at 33 Main St., Newtown, to offer a combination of naturopathic medicine and massage therapy.

"People are tired of the side-effects of conventional medicine," said Shawn Carey, a naturopathic physician whose wife, Stacey Carney, is a licensed massage therapist. "Our approach is to restore health and balance by using less invasive therapies."

There are almost 240 licensed naturopathic physicians licensed in the state of Connecticut, according to the state Department of Public Health's website.

Instead of treating symptoms with pharmaceuticals, naturopathic medicine strives to cure ailments through the use of nutrition, vitamins, minerals, botanical medicine and other nat-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"People are tired of the side-effects of conventional medicine," said Shawn Carney, a naturopathic physician. Carney has opened Northeast Natural Medicine in Newtown with his wife, Stacey, a licensed massage therapist.

ural means, Shawn Carney said.

"Conventional doctors are very important, but this approach is intuitive because it's working with the body and trying to fix the problem from the

ground up," he said.

Naturopathic doctors may not prescribe pharmaceutical medications or administer IVs in Connecticut, but they may do so

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in states such as Vermont, Oregon, Washington and Arizona, Carney said.

Carney said he recently treated a breast-feeding, 9-month-old baby with chronic ear infections by asking the mother to stop eating foods such as wheat and dairy that can cause inflammation and treated the infection with alcohol-free antimicrobial medicine.

He then opened the Eustachian tube with a light touch of his finger and bolstered the child's immune system with vitamin D.

Lastly, the mother was

put on an elimination diet to determine which food was the specific cause of the ear infection.

Carney said a significant segment of naturopathic medicine is proper nutrition, which he studied for two years while earning his doctor of naturopathy from the University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine.

"Part of the way you get people better is by addressing what people put into their bodies," said Carney, who specializes in treating Lyme disease after getting it three times and diabetes, which

took his father's life at 54. "Growing up, I saw this destructive trend very gradually. It was preventable and that's the tragedy of it."

A University of New Haven study shows that the use of certain herbs and minerals have proven effective in treating Lyme disease, Carney said.

Naturopathic medicine's growing popularity allows Northeast Natural Medicine, which in May entered into a one-year lease for the former home of the Chamber of Commerce of Newtown, to take several insurance providers, including

HealthNet, Cigna, Aetna and ConnecticutCare, Shawn Carey said.

The number of patients seeking alternative medicine, including naturopathic medicine, is on the rise as people are becoming more conscious of their own health and more physicians advocate its practice, said Ann Aresco, a naturopathic doctor and president of the Connecticut Naturopathic Physicians Association.

"People don't realize that naturopathic doctors are state-licensed physicians," she said. "We're looking at the whole patient, not just a symptom."