

**TIME FOR A WHOLE NEW APPROACH IN HEALTH CARE CALLED “NATURAL HYGIENE,” FIRST INTRODUCED IN THE MID-1980S**

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I would like to introduce you to a 150 year old system of health philosophy in the U.S. called Natural Hygiene (NH). I believe it will solve many puzzles in your mind about health and disease just as it has for me over the past forty years of study and patient care.

First enunciated in the mid-19th century, NH is the original medical heretical model. It is set apart from all the “curing” schools including allopathy, homeopathy and naturopathy. NH is the true *alternative to medicine* whereas all of the others are other forms of *medicine*, whether called allopathic, integrative, complementary, naturopathic, nutraceutical or homeopathic.

NH holds that disease is a remedial effort that should not be suppressed with medications of ANY type including drugs, homeopathics, herbs, vitamins or any other so-called “cures.” The disease itself is seen as the cure. Inflammation, for example, according to basic pathology texts, is a healing effort initiated by the body to destroy, dilute or wall off an injurious agent or substance. It is the body sending in the fire department to put out a fire. Suppressing inflammation with anti-inflammatory drugs such as NSAIDs, or with homeopathic remedies, herbs, vitamins or any other measure is identical to obstructing the fire department from responding to the fire. Yet this is the basis of treatment by allopaths, homeopaths, naturopaths and vitamin therapy purveyors of anti-inflammatory treatments. They are all “curing” the “cure.”

Take any area of the body, add “itis”, and you have the name of the inflammatory disease for that area. Examples include arthritis, gastritis, hepatitis, neuritis, etc. The names change based on location but the process and purpose of inflammation remain the same: To heal the area. NH doctors never suppress inflammation. All other doctors do.

Consider fever. Once considered a “disease,” fever is now seen as evidence of a remedial effort that should not be suppressed with any measure except under very rare and extreme circumstances. It is known that the body is more efficient at destroying infections in a feverish state. NH doctors understand that fever is the cure, not a disease that should be “treated” and suppressed with drugs, homeopathics, herbs, vitamins or any so-called “natural” remedy.

If a substance suppresses the beneficial processes of inflammation or fever, that substance is harmful to the body whether it is a pharmaceutical drug or a pure and natural plant material. This is because it opposes a remedial process that was initiated by the body. Moreover, some of the most toxic substances on earth come from natural plants. “Natural” does not always mean non-toxic.

If the body decides to expel waste products via the respiratory tract in the form of mucus, or from the upper GI tract as vomit, or the lower GI tract in the form of diarrhea, should doctors give substances to suppress these efforts, thus locking up the waste products in the body? People rush to the drug stores and “health” food stores to buy “cures” for stuffy noses, coughs, fever, upset stomach, loose stool, joint inflammation, and on and on. Since these diseases are actually

remedial processes in action, all substances which suppress the remediation do harm to the body. The remedial effort was clearly necessary or the body would not have initiated it.

NH doctors think all other doctors are confused when they obstruct the body's own efforts at self-healing regardless of whether they use drugs, herbs, homeopathics or vitamins. It is counterproductive to suppress healing.

NH doctors believe in treatment, but they believe the body will design its own best treatment when needed and apply it expeditiously. Inflammation and fever are perfect examples of treatments designed and applied by the body automatically when the need presents. The body also circulates blood automatically as needed. It takes in oxygen and expires carbon dioxide as needed. People do not need to take drugs, homeopathics, herbs, special vitamins or any "treatment" at all to ensure that basic physiologic functions occur. They simply have to supply the basic necessities of life: healthy food, clean air and water, physical activity, sunlight, etc. In rare cases, they need intervention with substances like herbs or drugs, or they need surgery. Such interventions are only needed *rarely*, not every day and commonplace as is the practice today.

The body does not need to be *cleansed* in order to get *cleaned out*. The body is a self-cleansing living entity. The main substance that needs to be cleansed from the body is usually cholesterol lining coronary blood vessels. This can be removed by the body itself when patients adopt a proper diet. Dean Ornish, M.D. has proven that when patients adopt a plant-based diet the body will reverse atherosclerosis naturally.

Natural Hygiene has long questioned the logic of "curing" the "cure." Remedial efforts initiated by the body are called "disease" and suppressed. Until this confusion is cleared up, there will be no general alternative to allopathic medicine available to the public, just variations on the general theme.

Here is an excerpt from a historic speech by the original medical heretic, Russell Trall, M.D., given to the Smithsonian Institute in 1862. See how much you agree is true today.

So what is this mysterious thing, disease? Simply the effort to remove obstructing material from the organic domain, and to repair damages. Disease is a process of purification. It is remedial action. It is a vital struggle to overcome obstructions and to keep the channels of the circulation free. Should this struggle, this self-defensive action, this remedial effort, this purifying process, this attempt at reparation, this war for the integrity of the living domain, this contest against the enemies of the organic constitution, be repressed by bleeding? Should it be suppressed with drugs, intensified with stimulants and tonics, subdued with narcotics and antiphlogistics, confused with blisters and caustics, aggravated with alternatives, complicated and misdirected, changed, subverted, and perverted with drugs and poisons generally?

To give drugs is to give the living system more work to do. It is aiding and assisting the enemy. It is, in effect, very much like fighting the rebels by firing at our own soldiers in the rear, while they are attacking the enemy in front. Can our

army manage two adversaries better than one? It is like tying one hand fast to the body and form of the Constitution, and going at the rebels with the other. Had you not better employ both hands?

The grand fundamental error of medical men, and the great primary mistake of physiologists and chemists, and of philosophers, psychologists, and metaphysicians, and even of theologians, so far as their doctrines and dogmas apply to the subject in hand, consists in mistaking the relations of living and dead matter. They have erected all of their systems and philosophies on a false basis--on a reversed order of Nature. And, think you, can the superstructure be reliable and enduring if the foundation be laid in error?

Medical schools and books teach that medicines--acids, alkalis, salts, earths, minerals, more drugs--which are dead, inert and inorganic substances, act on the living system. Nature teaches the contrary; that the living system acts on the medicine.

Medical schools and books teach--and the whole drug system is predicated on this idea--that particular medicines, in virtue of "inherent affinities" which they possess for certain parts and organs of the body, act upon or make impressions on them. Nature teaches the contrary. Nature teaches that the relation of medicines to the vital tissues is that of antagonism, not affinity.

On the theory that remedies act on the living system, and by a power or property inherent in themselves, and that this property enables them to *elect* or *select* the organ or structure on which they will make an impression (we drop for the moment the question whether the impression be "sanative " or "morbific"), medical men have arranged and classified their materia medica as *emetics* which act on the stomach; *purgatives*, which act on the bowels, *diaphoretics*, which act on the skin; *diuretics*, which act on the kidneys; *expectorants*, which act on the lungs *cholagogues*, which act on the liver; *stimulants*, which act on the blood-vessels; *tonics*, which act on the muscular fibers; *narcotics*, which act on the brain, etc.

A knowledge of the law of vitality would teach medical men that only living structures have inherent powers to act; that all dead things, in relation to living, are entirely passive; and that the only property they possess is inertia, which is the tendency to remain quiescent until disturbed by something else--the *power to do nothing*.

The living system acts on food to appropriate it to the formation and replacement of its organs and tissues. This is digestion and assimilation--the nutritive process. And the living system acts on drugs, medicines, poisons, impurities, effete matters, miasma, contagions, infections-- on everything not useful or usable in the organic domain--to resist them; to expel them; to get rid of

them; to purify itself of their presence through the channel or outlet best adopted to the purpose under the circumstances.

And herein is the explanation of the classes of medicines; the rationale of the action of medicines, which has so puzzled the brains of medical philosophers in all ages.

- Emetics do not act on the stomach, but are ejected by the stomach.
- Purgatives do not act on the bowels, but are expelled through the bowels.
- Diaphoretics, instead of acting on the skin, are sent off in that direction.
- Diuretics do not act on the kidneys, but the poisonous drugs are got rid of through that channel,
- And so on

And this equally mysterious entity called disease! Is not its essential nature sufficiently apparent? The disease is simply the process of getting the poisons out of the system; and so this perplexing problem is also solved.

That the explanation I have given of the nature of disease and the *modus operandi* of medicines is the true one may be demonstrated in this way. We can take all of the medicines of the pharmacopoeia and produce all the diseases of the nosology.

Now I do profess to understand the essential nature of disease, the rationale of the action of remedies, and the relations of remedies to diseases, and I do not prescribe drug medicines. And if all the physicians of the United States should understand these questions tonight, there would be no drug doctor in all this land with tomorrow's rising sun. It is precisely because medical men do not understand the relations of remedies to diseases that they administer poisons because a person is sick. I admit that physicians, as a class, are honest; but I know they are mistaken. I know that when they suppose themselves to be opposing and subduing an enemy, which they term disease, they are really warring on the human constitution. I do not believe there is a physician on earth who has so poor a judgment or so bad a conscience as to be a drug doctor for one moment after he understands the essential nature of disease, or the rationale of the action of medicines.

It was mere accident—a necessity of my existence--which led me to do what no other medical man had ever done, so far as I know--to *investigate the premises of medical science in their relation to the laws of Nature*. Many men have written its history; hundreds have investigated its hypotheses; thousands have discussed its problems; and a few have studied its philosophy. But no one before me had explored its *primary premises*. All have assumed the dogmas of their predecessors as starting-points; dogmas which originated in the ignorance and superstition of the dark ages, and which have been admitted and accepted, uninvestigated and

unquestioned, as self-evident truths; but which, when examined in the light of the "unerring laws of Nature," are found to be self-evident absurdities.

In the 1970s and 1980s, I searched the peer-reviewed medical literature for evidence regarding Natural Hygiene. This resulted in publication of the following peer-reviewed journal articles which are now posted online. In addition, I published a book which is a brief lay introduction to NH with references. It is now out-of-print but is also posted online. Here are the links for those interested in further study:

["Fasting and Diet Restriction in the Treatment of Cardiovascular Disease" by Alan M. Immerman, D.C., \*ACA Journal\*, March, 1980](#)

["Can Diet Prolong Lifespan?" by Alan M. Immerman, D.C., \*ACA Journal\*, February 1982](#)

["Evidence for Intestinal Toxemia" by Alan M. Immerman, D.C., \*ACA Journal\*, April 1979](#)

["Scientific Basis for the Concept of Toxemia" by Alan M. Immerman, D.C., \*ACA Journal\*, June, 1981](#)

*Health Unlimited!* By Alan M. Immerman, D.C. A complete book online. This guide to health and the NH approach was used as a text at Parker University of Health Sciences. Go to <http://soilandhealth.org/02/0201hyglibcat/HlthUld.pdf>.

(For information about the professional association of NH licensed physicians worldwide, go to <http://www.iahp.net/index.htm>. The connected public organization is the National Health Association, formerly the American Natural Hygiene Society, at <http://www.healthscience.org/>. Dr. Immerman is a member of both and president of the Arizona Chiropractic Society on the web at [www.AZChiropractors.org](http://www.AZChiropractors.org). Contact him at [aimmerman1@cox.net](mailto:aimmerman1@cox.net).)