

## **ND vs. NMD**

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There are three types of naturopathic doctors in the US and several authorities differentiate them as “traditional”, “classical”, and “pseudomedical” naturopaths.

The traditional type follows the rules of the Nature Cure movement of long ago and teaches people about health and disease prevention, using diet, hygiene, detoxification, and simple low-tech therapies. The largest number of these practitioners were educated in distance learning programs.

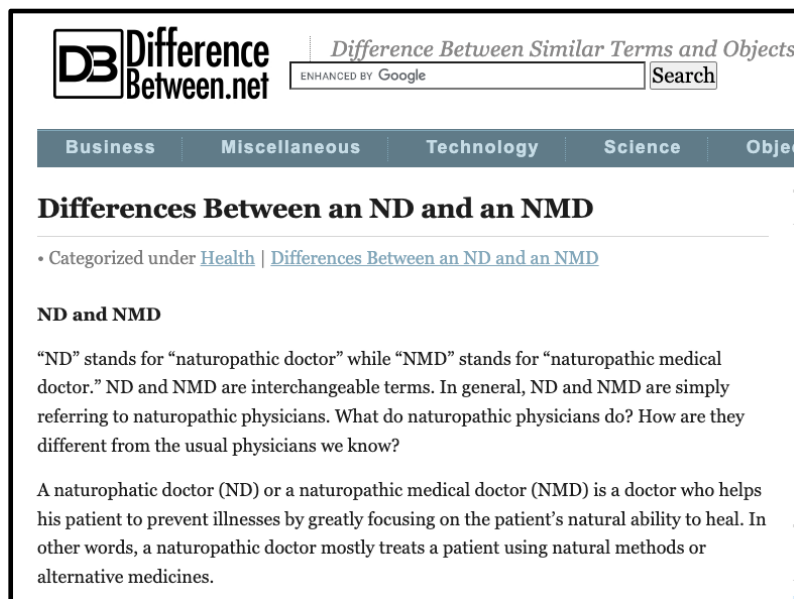
The classical type is left over from the days when a certain amount of training in medical subjects was necessary to complement the training in naturopathic methods. These naturopaths can diagnose and prescribe, and tend to use lots of different modalities to treat illness. They attended brick-and-mortar schools that were exclusively naturopathic colleges.

The pseudomedical type is the graduate of a progressive movement in education that uses a curriculum more like conventional medical school. Though they are educated in naturopathic philosophy, they perform more like MDs, substituting nutraceuticals for drugs and increasingly lobby for the right to prescribe synthetic drugs and do minor surgery.

They attended one of the five naturopathic medical schools using this more medically oriented curriculum.

My old school was one of two in the country that had in addition to the Doctor of Naturopathy degree a second path, Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine. It required a bit more medical training and that is the degree I was granted.

Therefore, I have used the letters NMD after my name ever since. Even the national organization of the pseudomedical



The screenshot shows the website 'Difference Between.net' with a search bar and navigation tabs. The main heading is 'Differences Between an ND and an NMD'. Below the heading, it says 'Categorized under Health | Differences Between an ND and an NMD'. The text explains that 'ND' stands for 'naturopathic doctor' and 'NMD' stands for 'naturopathic medical doctor', and that they are interchangeable terms. It also defines a naturopathic doctor (ND) or naturopathic medical doctor (NMD) as a doctor who helps patients prevent illnesses by focusing on their natural ability to heal.

naturopaths takes the stance that “ND and NMD are interchangeable terms”.

However, political friction between the pseudomedical camp and the other two groups has heated up

in recent years, with that group wanting to better differentiate themselves from all the other “ND” practitioners whom they do not consider to be their equals. There is a growing movement to refer to themselves as NMDs. Since they consider themselves to be on a par with medical doctors, this is fairly reasonable in my opinion. And since they have licensure in a number of states and are very active politically, this movement is likely to gather steam.

Therefore, I am choosing to revert to the ND title because I certainly do not belong in their group. I do this with some hesitancy because for years all my literature has borne the “NMD” title. All my published books have the same letters after my name. And it is confusing to the public, who may feel that I am just making up degrees as I go along. However, I see this as the direction things are moving, and I certainly don’t feel bad about sharing a professional title with so many great practitioners from the past and present who hold the title “Doctor of Naturopathy”.

It will just be hard to train myself to write “ND” after my name.