

American Association of Naturopathic Physicians

Naturopathic Medicine is Safe

Each year since 2013, the United States Congress has recognized the safety and efficacy of naturopathic medicine by designating the second week in October as Naturopathic Medicine Week. The resolution recognizes the “value of naturopathic medicine in providing **safe**, effective, and affordable health care” Available data backs this assertion. The incidence of malpractice claims made against Naturopathic Doctors in jurisdictions where they are regulated is exceedingly low, especially as compared to allopathic physicians, and disciplinary action against Naturopathic Doctors is exceedingly rare.

Naturopathic medicine is well-established. Of 22 states and territories where Naturopathic Doctors are regulated, licensure in five of them dates back to 1935 or earlier; in the others, Naturopathic Doctors have been regulated an average of 17 years.

In the 12 states that regulate Naturopathic Doctors prescribing rights, nine report **ZERO prescriptive disciplinary actions** against Naturopathic Doctors from 2010-2020*:

State:	Year of regulation:	Approximate # of regulated Naturopathic Doctors:	Total # of disciplinary actions against NDs in the last five years:
California	2003	1,001	0
Hawaii	1925	132	0
*Idaho	2019	19	0
Maine	1995	66	0
Montana	1991	97	0
New Hampshire	1994	88	0
*New Mexico	2019	licensure in progress	0
Utah	1996	62	0
Vermont	1995	338	0

**Idaho and New Mexico became licensed in 2019, therefore ten years of data is unavailable.*

Source: 2020 Federation of Naturopathic Medicine Regulatory Authorities (<https://fnmra.org/>)

California is one of the more recent states to license Naturopathic Doctors, yet they've been licensed long enough to provide an excellent example of the safety records of Naturopathic Doctors post-licensure. California passed its licensure law in 2003 and began licensing Naturopathic Doctors in 2005. California's over 1,000 practicing Naturopathic Doctors have a pristine safety record:

- There have been **no cases of patient harm** caused by Naturopathic Doctors in California since the first licenses were issued in 2005 to date.
- Of 16,925 medical malpractice payments totaling more than \$2.7 billion made in California from 2002-2012, **none of them** were attributed to Naturopathic Doctors.

(Sources: California Naturopathic Doctors' Association, 2016; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Practitioner Databank).

Because of the exemplary safety record of Naturopathic Doctors, **malpractice insurance costs are low** for them. Average yearly malpractice premiums for Naturopathic Doctors practicing in full-scope states tend to be substantially lower – 30-40 percent less – than premiums for medical doctors and osteopaths.