

Mind Over Matter

Dr. Adam Breiner, ND (Class of 2002),
focuses on brain health at The NeuroEdge
Brain Performance Centre in Connecticut



A BASE OF KNOWLEDGE

“My father ... always said that you get a base of knowledge in school; it’s your certificate to learn, but that the learning really begins once you’re out.”

Dr. Adam Breiner, ND (Class of 2002)



A team of five health-care practitioners, including Dr. Adam Breiner, ND, provide naturopathic and holistic care for patients.

Increasing awareness about head injuries

In December 2015, the movie *Concussion* starring Will Smith was released in theatres. The film generated a lot of buzz and turned the spotlight on to the world of head injuries and in particular, how they are treated. Unfortunately there’s no clear cut answer; as concussions and traumatic brain injuries (TBI) continue to be studied, we learn about their long-term effects and subsequently what treatment options exist.

Making the brain better

Naturopathic medicine is often described as a system of primary health care that can be used to help prevent and treat a variety of common health issues including weight management, digestive complaints, pain, diabetes, and heart disease. It’s not very often that you hear about the benefits it can have on head injuries and neurological conditions; however, one CCNM graduate is paving the way in this area.

Dr. Adam Breiner, ND is medical director of The NeuroEdge Brain Performance Centre, a division of The Breiner Whole-Body Health Centre in Fairfield, Connecticut.

“It wasn’t an area I thought I’d be specializing in even though I was interested in the brain and how we can make it better,” says Breiner of his practice.

Treating neurological conditions with the latest technology

Adam completed a biology degree at Binghamton University in New York before enrolling at CCNM. Shortly after graduating from the College in 2002, he came across electroencephalogram (EEG) technology and neurofeedback. An EEG is a test where electrodes are placed on the patient’s scalp and the resulting signals are amplified so one can detect how the brain is communicating and reveal possible abnormal patterns. Biofeedback, in general, are techniques that train people to improve their health by controlling certain bodily processes that normally happen involuntarily (heart rate, blood pressure, etc.). Neurofeedback is a type of biofeedback that teaches self-regulation of brain function.

“I thought it was very interesting, something I had never heard of before, it wasn't taught in school and wasn't well known at the time,” he says. “My father – who practices dentistry in a holistic way – always said that you get a base of knowledge in school; it's your certificate to learn, but that the learning really begins once you're out.”

With that frame of mind he reached out to Dr. Margaret Ayers, one of the founders in the field of neurofeedback and spent many years mentoring with her.

“To me, it is a very naturopathic approach using an advanced technology because you're giving the body the tools it needs to heal.”

Soon after he began learning about neurofeedback, Breiner came across the idea of hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), a medical treatment in which patients inhale 100% oxygen in a total body chamber enhancing the body's natural healing processes. He got in contact with Dr. Richard Neubauer – the father of hyperbaric medicine for neurological conditions who pioneered its use in the treatment of neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis, stroke, and cerebral palsy – and trained with him over many years.

“Oxygen is the most healing molecule there is. One hyperbaric session is really like genetic therapy: over 8,000 genes are affected, it's anti-inflammatory, stimulates stem cells to grow, helps blood vessels form, it has a lot of properties,” he explains.

Breiner's work at the NeuroEdge Brain Performance Centre combines neurofeedback and HBOT, and in combination with his training as a naturopath, he's been able to help treat a variety of neurological conditions effectively.

The future of caring for the brain?

“One of naturopathic medicine's guiding principles is to emphasize prevention. When it comes to concussions or TBI, it's more than just 'wear a helmet.' What can you be doing to lower inflammation and make the brain more resilient? Detoxification is a great way to rid the body of the pesticides and heavy metals that can affect the brain in a tremendous way.”

His work in this field has garnered a lot of attention: he's spoken at many international conferences, given media interviews and was invited to be at the US Congressional Task Force in Washington about concussions and TBI. However, not all the attention has been positive.

“Quite a few neurologists have been pretty dismissive of these treatments and there's a debate like there always is in medicine, but as naturopaths we're used to fighting against the tide. There is research to back these treatments and other health-care professionals are becoming more open and receptive and have referred patients as a result.

“As naturopaths, we're trained to be like quarterbacks who can see the whole picture. Modalities such as nutrition, traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture, and botanicals can have tremendous affects which help the body and brain be more receptive to neurofeedback and HBOT. These are all tools in our toolbox and it's pretty amazing to see people respond so well to treatment.” *

“There is research to back these treatments and other health-care professionals are becoming more open and receptive and have referred patients as a result.”

Dr. Adam Breiner, ND (Class of 2002)



Dr. Adam Breiner, ND, with a patient