

Why Detoxify?

Just as factories and industry produce products & pollution, life produces products—the very person and all things done by that person. Unfortunately the process of life also produces direct waste products and comes into contact with a variety of chemicals, types of radiation, and stressors of various types that have an adverse impact. We're all involved with detoxifying things, constantly without even paying attention, just as we breathe and our heart beats, our bodies are busily ridding themselves of waste products and toxins that we're exposed to. Just as a factory wouldn't function for long without the waste being removed, so too, do we need to have our toxins and wastes cleaned up and removed. One of the theories of aging is that it's progressive damage due to these toxins that build up. We've all seen sickly 50 year olds and 80 year olds full of vim and vigor. Everybody knows that a "healthy lifestyle" contributes to that vigor throughout life. How do we keep our toxic burden down and achieve that goal?

Consider that we are now using a lot of artificial ingredients in our lives, from plastics that our food is cooked in, to the "hydrogenated oils" and trans-fats, so many "new" substances that we were not divinely designed to eliminate. We were designed to run on certain things that are natural and yet it seems we're running instead on artificial everything. What will the long term consequences be? We need to help ourselves get rid of the burden of those byproducts!

Who should do a detoxification?

Frequently folks will come to the office with a variety of chronic aches and pains. Sometimes the complaint will be food allergies or sensitivities. People taking a large variety of medications for a long time may build up metabolites to those drugs that the body is having trouble getting rid of, some of these metabolites can retain biologic activity and thus harmful side effects—sometimes quite unanticipated and possibly unusual in nature.

Abruptly stopping a drug that's been used for a long time can also cause withdrawal symptoms—don't undertake this without your doctors knowledge, agreement & support! Obesity is usually involved with toxicity as well, fat can store a lot of toxins which can in turn make it difficult to lose the fat.

Organs of Elimination;

Colon

Kidneys

Skin

Lungs

Liver

Circulation

Lymphatic system.

They're all involved and work together to rid us of the poisons. The colon is generally the first organ approached in a detoxification protocol. The liver circulates bile acids through the intestinal tract; it's another big player in getting rid of the waste. If the colon is blocked up and not functioning properly, wastes from the body aren't promptly eliminated and problems begin to occur. Even those with a good bowel movement once

daily can have up to 5 pounds of waste in the folds of the colon. Cleansing the colon with herbs and colon hydrotherapy is a great way to open the channel.

What methods are used to detoxify the body?;

Dietary changes; The first thing to remember, while doing a cleanse it's important to make sure you only take in purified water and clean organic foods without excessive preservatives elimination of refined sugar, caffeine, soda, alcohol, preservatives, artificial flavors & colors, highly refined carbohydrates, foods laden with pesticides, processed meat, artificial and refined oils, processed meats and drugs

Herbal cleansing programs: Milk thistle supports the liver, Dandelion to stimulate bile acid flow and act as a gentle laxative. Beets reduce damaging fats in the liver; Artichoke leaf stimulates secretion of bile and protects the liver. Mullein is an expectorant to clear the lungs. Burdock removes toxins that cause skin problems. Corn silk is a diuretic to flush the kidneys. Red clover is another expectorant and helps purify the blood. Larch gum helps the lymphatic system. Hawthorne berry helps the heart and adrenal glands. Colon cleansing herbs include aloe, rhubarb & triphala. Magnesium helps stimulate the bowel, equal parts of soluble and insoluble fiber are also important. Omega 3 fatty acids from fish oils, flax & Borage oil are also important.

Herxheimer Reactions; When toxins are mobilized and microbes are killed, they can cause a toxic uncomfortable reaction. Microbes release toxins when they're killed. To aggressive a regimen can make you miserable so take your time with these programs.

Skin Detox Techniques; These typically involve sweating and heat. Sauna & steam baths are very helpful. For folks with liver, kidney & colon problems this may be a preferred route of detox, something to concentrate on. Use of a conventional sauna, start at 135°F until you can go to 45 minutes without difficulty, then try to go to 145°F and work your way up to 180-230°F if possible. *Infrared* sauna is a cooler sauna that uses IR radiation to heat the skin, it works as well or better than traditional sauna. Hot baths with Epsom Salts and/or Ginger or Baking Soda can help as well, hot as tolerated for 20 minutes or so at a time 2-3 times per week. Other additives to the bath include apple cider vinegar, hydrogen peroxide, clay and Oatstraw which helps skin conditions.

Colon Hydrotherapy; This can be as simple as an enema, to a much more involved procedure that involves a tube in the rectum that puts water in and then drains it out again and again while a therapist massages the abdomen to move the liquid throughout the colon. The duration of this therapy is about an hour while the patient is draped and lays comfortably on an exam table. This opens the colon, can help reverse changes from years of laxative abuse and has many benefits including; improved muscle tone, reduced stagnation & toxic waste absorption/re-absorption, thorough colon cleansing. Closed systems consist of tubing to bring water into the colon and from the colon to the sewer. Open systems are basically enemas where a toilet is used to expel the water. Various additives can be used to instill into the colon such as coffee etc to stimulate bile acid flow.

Fasting & Juice Diets; Fasting is abstinence of food for a period of time. A great variation on this technique involves juicing fresh vegetables with a commercial juicer. It would be difficult if not impossible to eat 10 to 20 pounds of vegetables daily, but with a juicer it's very easy to do this, removing the vast majority of the nutrients from the produce and giving yourself a highly concentrated, easily absorbed blast of high-powered

nutrition that is typically absorbed within half an hour of ingestion. It's best to use only organic vegetables to avoid pesticide residue. Use fresh juice, within minutes to hours the enzyme and vitamins will lose their potency. While on a fast of this nature it's important to drink plenty of pure filtered water as well, at least four 4-12 oz glasses of water sipped daily throughout the day. A pure water fast should only be done with careful medical supervision to avoid complications due to electrolyte imbalances and other problems. Ending the fast needs to be done gently and carefully. The first meal should be fruit or vegetable salad with lemon juice and tea, the next meal can add some vegetable soup and perhaps a steamed vegetable in a small serving. Finally meat can be added afterwards. The late Max Gerson MD had notable successes treating cancer patients with up to 13 glasses daily of fresh vegetable juice.

Supplements; Vitamins and minerals, especially extra vitamin A, C, E, N-Acetyl Cysteine (NAC), Selenium & Zinc as well as good amounts of the B vitamin complex are encouraged during any detox protocol. If you're doing a vegetable juice fast you'll be getting a lot of these, but not necessarily enough of all of them. Taking a bit extra will help ensure that you're able to mobilize the toxins. The vitamins are essential to eliminate many toxins such as heavy metals that are present in all of us

Chelation therapy; This is a form of therapy that is designed to rid the body of toxic heavy metals such as lead ("get the lead out! It's good for you") which many of us have been exposed to due to breathing air contaminated by vehicles burning leaded gasoline. Mercury is present in seafood & dental amalgams, Arsenic in shellfish and pressure-treated lumber, Cadmium in tobacco. These heavy metals "hide" in the body, especially in fat & bone tissue where they are metabolically active, cause problems and can cause cancer over time.

Exercise & Deep Breathing; Both of these promote flow of lymphatic fluid back to the heart. This is fluid that leaks from the blood vessels and flows around nourishing each cell and removing cellular waste products. It also contains a lot of white blood cells. DEEP breathing promotes flow of the lymph back to the heart. From there those toxins go to the liver, kidneys & colon for metabolic degradation and/or expulsion from the body.

There are a wide range of techniques to detoxify our bodies. It may be wise to initially start with a gentler shorter duration approach. It is also possible to "over-detox" which will cause a variety of problematic symptoms. The simplest form of detox involves simply increasing water intake. There is a large school of thought that recommends trying to retain an alkaline pH in the body, this is what is achieved on the type of diet eaten during a detoxification protocol. Typically a diet with steamed vegetables, fresh fruits, filtered water and alkaline drinks will help rid the body of the organic acids that cause problems over time.

Detoxification is best undertaken when you will have some "down-time" as it may cause fatigue, aches & pains, irritability and other symptoms due to the release of pent-up toxins in your body. There's no need to rush into the process, start slow and advance as tolerated. There are a number of spas and other facilities that can provide assistance. Expert guidance can also be obtained from Natural Food Stores that have nutritionists on staff. Completing the detox protocol will give your organ systems a break, easier work to

do and provide a greater sense of well-being, improved energy etc. It also should lessen your risk of cancer, heart disease and other metabolic problems common with aging.
To Your Health!

R. J. Oenbrink DO

More information can be obtained from;

Watson, B ND, CT, Renew Your Life Improved Digestion & Detoxification, Renew Life Press, 2002

Haas, EM, The New Detox Diet, Celestial Arts Press, 2004

www.tequestafamilypractice.com