



Suggested Reading

## **WHY DETOXIFY OUR BODIES: An in-depth look at internal detoxification** by Cathy Shea, LMT, CT

Internal detoxification is often neglected, overlooked or misunderstood by the general public. Everyday our bodies are exposed to toxins and pollutants in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. Our environment subjects us to a variety of pesticides, chemicals, synthetics and petroleum products that are used in homes, offices and cars. Our modern diets consisting of processed and over cooked foods, genetically engineered foods, fast foods, and junk foods all contribute to the problem. Our stressful lifestyles also create additional burdens on the digestive organs we “take it in the gut.” Since there is no way to avoid continuous exposure to toxins, our only hope is to build our immune system to defend ourselves, cleanse and work towards balance in our lifestyle. Our family system also contributes to this balancing act. Sometimes we must reject long held traditions to affect lasting change.

Recent research has proven that prolonged use of medications and drugs actually increases the risk of losing areas of protective mucosal lining in our intestinal tract. Once this leaking occurs, known as “leaky gut”, a situation exists where toxins are absorbed into the blood stream. When this happens, the body does not recognize the toxin and therefore, goes into a self-attack mode creating antibodies. It is widely known that this is the actual beginning of many autoimmune disorders. This polluted blood then goes to our liver for filtration before being circulated throughout our body. This constant challenge to the liver results in overwork and at some point the liver becomes so saturated with toxins it cannot process this overload; much like a sponge that has all the water it can absorb.

The liver is our largest internal organ. It has numerous functions but is mainly a filter. As it filters, it stores every condition we’ve suppressed with drugs and over-the-counter medicines. The bile that it secretes is the liver’s effort to purge such toxins. Bile flows to the gall bladder where it is concentrated 10 times from the liver. From there, it moves into our digestive system (small intestine) and helps to digest and alkalize our food. Can you see why a diet that is high in fat creates havoc on this process? There are over 500,000 gall bladders removed in the United States every year. Once that surgery is performed, the liver loses its helper and must take over the gallbladder’s functions. More stress on our system results.

This process of digestion takes more energy than running 5 miles! We are all born with organs that are stronger than others. If there is a history of diabetes, the pancreas may be weak. Hormonal irregularities affect our adrenal glands. Build up the organ that is weakest so that as it attempts to adapt, it is being fully supported.

**We all have stress in our lives. It's when the stress turns into DI-STRESS that every cell is on alert. Deepak Chopra, MD states: "Wherever a thought goes, a chemical goes with it." And "Belief creates biology." He points out that stress doesn't make people sick, *losing the inner adaptability to stress does*. This ongoing condition affects every tissue of the body, breaks down the immune system and hinders proper digestion, absorption and elimination. Other factors that contribute to this overload are lack of exercise, overeating, not drinking enough purified water and most importantly, ignoring our emotions. There are more serotonin receptor sites along the digestive tract than in the spinal cord and brain combined. Serotonin is the "feel-good hormone" that helps regulate emotions & mood. Most people have no idea that constipation can lead to depression and that many medications given for this condition exacerbate digestive symptoms.**

Toxic acids are normal byproducts of cellular breakdown that occurs constantly in our bodies. We create a new stomach lining every six days, a new liver every six weeks and an entirely new skeleton every year. The old cells are excreted through our normal eliminative channels: lungs, bowel, skin, kidneys and lymph system. When these systems are flowing easily, we are in good health. But when toxins are being produced faster than they can be eliminated, they get picked up by the blood and circulate. This creates a condition known as AUTOINTOXICATION, literally self-poisoning. One of my teachers from Switzerland, Dr. Thomas Rau, states emphatically, "We must open the channels of elimination!"

Common symptoms of excess toxins include: constipation, excess weight, bloating, gas, headaches, chronic sinus problems, infections, poor memory, inability to concentrate, insomnia, menstrual problems, prostate enlargement (prostatitis), depression, skin eruptions, yeast infections, fatigue and a host of other health challenges.

**Our bodies are amazing miracles. They will adapt to this condition and actually function for a time under this stress. Research shows that the veins will become 75% blocked before we even feel pain. It can take up to 20 years for certain colon cancers to show up. For every pound of fat, it takes an additional 5 miles of blood in the vein to feed it. This overload to the circulatory and cardiovascular system is one reason why heart disease is the number one killer in our country. The resulting stagnation in the bowel is why colon cancer is now the number two killer after heart disease.**

When the body gets too much of one food, it develops a sensitivity. Allergy is a signaling system for us, but we may ignore or we medicate the signal to shut it off. We then develop a tolerance for the medication so we try another one creating a vicious cycle. The news is full of infections that are now resistant to the most powerful antibiotics. This is a direct result of overuse and misuse of these drugs. They are commonly prescribed for viruses for which they are not only ineffective, but weaken the immune system as it tries to fight the virus. Antibiotics are prescribed routinely for simple colds and flu. When the body really needs one for a serious infection, it no longer works. New information is proving that supplementing with probiotics creates the inner balance necessary for health to flourish naturally.

A proper diet of fresh organic foods, plenty of pure water, regular exercise, stress management and several daily bowel movements are vital to balancing these systems of elimination. Colon hydrotherapy helps get a sluggish system moving again so that ideally for every meal we eat, we have a bowel movement. Output must equal input. It is vital to have the guidance of a health care professional when

considering any cleanse. As the toxins are released, symptoms may appear and it is important to be coached by someone who is experienced and can guide you through this transition to better health. Cleansing is often an enlightening process. I was able to clearly see my enabling in my alcoholic family after a series of colonics. It was a life changing experience for me to break free of this dysfunctional pattern and I credit my cleansing sessions for this illumination.

A theory from the science of naturopathy states that all disease begins in the colon. The tube from our mouth to our anus is approximately 30 feet long. Our eliminative organs (lungs, lymph, skin, kidneys, colon) must be constantly flowing in order to maintain balance in the body.

When the colon builds up undigested foods, toxins form, pass through the intestinal wall and the DIS-EASE process begins. Gas, belching, constipation, indigestion, food cravings, headaches, fatigue, allergies, yeast and other infections are only a few of the beginning symptoms. These are the signals of an imbalance. We often adapt to these symptoms and/or medicate them for comfort. Unfortunately, the problem is still present: toxins circulating in the blood from waste that must be eliminated. But how do we make changes?

In order to facilitate the eliminative process, many people use laxative products. This only serves to propel the waste through the system resulting in weak colon muscles. These weak muscles then begin to rely on the purgative and dependency develops. Any form of laxative whether herbal or otherwise will completely upset the entire digestive system, often leading to dehydration and the ultimate damage to the colon wall, cancer.

Colon hydrotherapy is an effective, gentle and safe process that uses only pure water to gently bathe the five feet of large intestine. The treatment is performed while the client is comfortably laying on a table draped for privacy. The practitioner performs a gentle rectal exam to lubricate the anal opening and then assist the client with insertion of the speculum. Disposable tubing is attached to the machine and water is slowly and gradually infused into the client through the small tube attached to the speculum. When the client indicates that they have reached their point of tolerance, the water is allowed to flow out through the large tube attached to the speculum. This entire process happens while the client is comfortably relaxing and the waste material is contained entirely within the disposable tubing. It is a closed system so there are no unpleasant odors or exposed bacterial waste. There is a viewing tube where the client can see the waste product and this allows the practitioner to evaluate the feces and make recommendations to the client after the treatment is completed. Used in conjunction with a supervised nutritional program, this process allows for balance in the system to occur in a natural, safe and effective way. Our goal is to provide a safe space for the client's process to emerge while practicing respect and reverence at all times. A series of sessions often yields remarkable results.

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