

DETOXIFICATION

The Problem of Toxicity

In recent history, mankind has managed to drastically change the chemistry of the environment in which we live. For example, in 1996 alone, more than 418,000,000 pounds of chemicals were released into the ground, threatening a portion of the soil we grow our food in and the natural underground water tables that supply some of our drinking water. Over 45,000,000 pounds of chemicals were also discharged into surface waters such as lakes and rivers. More than 1,000,000,000 pounds of chemical emissions were pumped into the air we breathe. A grand total of 2,433,506,582 pounds of chemical pollutants were released into the environment we eat, breathe, and live in, all in just one year.

To compound the problem of our toxic environment, we have refined away much of the nutritional value of our food supply and replaced it with artificial colorings, preservatives, flavorings, conditioners, etc. This poor quality diet – combined with extensive use of antibiotics in medicine and agriculture – may have predisposed many of us to experience a kind of “internal” pollution. Internal pollution occurs when unhealthful bacteria overcome the healthful bacteria in the intestinal tract. These unhealthful bacteria release toxic by-products into our circulation, which can negatively impact many aspects of our overall health.

Will Toxicity Have an Affect on You?

What does this problem of toxicity mean for us individually? It may present a threat to the vibrant level of health that we would like to enjoy. But whether we succumb to the adverse effects of toxicity depends on our knowledge of the subject and the choices we make. We need to take personal responsibility to make sure that we do not fall victim to toxicity. That involves learning what we need to do to help our body protect itself from toxicity.

Basic Ways to Avoid Toxicity

Let's begin with some of the basic requirements to avoid toxicity. Do all you can to purify your work and home environments. If you know the source of any toxic materials at work, such as stored or leaking chemicals, dyes, paints, solvents, glues, acids, or household offenders such as insecticides or cleaning agents, remove them if possible. If the offending materials cannot be removed, an effective air purification system may be needed. Protective clothing and/or breathing apparatus should be worn when using any toxic materials. Regular replacement of furnace and air conditioning filters may also be helpful.

It is also very important to eat a good diet with plenty of fresh, wholesome foods. Avoid eating excess fat, refined sugar, and foods high in additives and preservatives. Eat moderate levels of protein (approximately 15% to 20% of your calories) and fat (approximately 20% of your calories), while increasing levels of complex carbohydrates (approximately 60% of your calories). Substitute organically raised animals and organically grown fruits and vegetables whenever possible. Drink plenty of purified water (ideally, eight 8-ounce glasses a day). A home water purification system is highly desirable to provide pure water for drinking and cooking.

Support Your Body's Efforts to Eliminate Toxicity

One thing is certain in our effort to purify our work and home environments; it is impossible to avoid toxicity completely! With that realization, the importance of supporting your body's efforts to eliminate accumulated toxins cannot be overstated. The illustration on the reverse

side of this sheet outlines the body's natural detoxification mechanism and helps us understand the best way to strengthen and support it. Please take a minute now and consider it closely.

Water or Juice Fasts Are Less Complete

Formerly it was believed that a water or juice fast was a preferred detoxification program. These fasts were thought to work under the principle that the body will be able to clear stored toxins and heal itself when the “stress” of digestion and the further accumulation of toxins are eliminated. The modern-day realization that the body's detoxification mechanism is a heavily nutrient-supported process has made it clear that simple juice or water fasting is less complete and no longer the method of choice. Prolonged fasting may weaken muscles and various organs because of protein losses and a gradual slowing of metabolic activity as the body endeavors to conserve its depleted energy resources.

More Complete Support for Detoxification

A more current approach to detoxification is to nourish the body thoroughly, fueling its natural detoxification mechanism with the nutrients needed to achieve optimal detoxification activity. By providing high quality protein, complex carbohydrates, and essential fats, the body gets what it needs to prevent muscle and organ breakdown and depleted energy resources. But that is just the beginning. Nutrients are needed to support the function of the organs directly involved in detoxification: the liver, the intestinal tract, and the kidneys. Intelligent application of nutrition may help in the following ways:

Intestines: The nutrients zinc and pantothenic acid, the amino acid L-glutamine, carbohydrates known as fructooligosaccharides, and microorganisms known as acidophilus and bifidus, are a few of the substances that provide support for the health and integrity of intestinal function. In a proper state of health, the intestines promote elimination of toxins through (1) regular bowel movements, (2) eliminating the build-up of unhealthful microorganisms and internal toxins, and (3) providing a strong and intact barrier to prevent the leakage of toxic materials from the intestines into circulation.

Liver: The vitamins A, B₃, B₆, C, and E, beta-carotene, the amino acids L-cysteine and L-glutamine, and components known as glutathione and phospholipids are some of the substances that support liver function. In a proper state of function, the liver filters out and transforms toxic substances that have entered the blood into harmless substances that can be excreted in the urine. Interestingly, it appears that the ratio of dietary protein to carbohydrate may be a very important factor in determining the ability of the liver to detoxify certain substances.

Kidneys: The vitamins A, C, and B₆, and the minerals magnesium and potassium are just some of the substances that support kidney activity. The kidneys provide a major route of toxin excretion via the urine.

Fat: Weight reduction and management is helpful for those who are overweight. Excess fat provides a ready storage site for fat-loving toxins entering the body. Once deposited there, it is very difficult to remove them. Unless the excess fat is removed, they remain there with the possibility of being a continual source of toxicity.

Find the Help You Need

If you have any questions as to what you can do to help eliminate internal pollution, do not hesitate to ask us.