

Is Detoxing Right for You?

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Every day on the news we hear about pollution in the air and toxins in the foods and drinks that we consume. It seems that while technology advances, instead of helping protect us from toxins, we're being bombarded by them even more.

Detoxing your body is a method many people use to flush out toxins and give your body a jumpstart that it needs to function properly. But it might not be something you want to pursue, so it's vital that you learn exactly how it can benefit you and how a detox works before you embark on one blindly.

Where Are Toxins Found?

In short, toxins are all around you. They're in your cabinets, on the skin of your fruit, in nature, in the air and more. You can't truly escape toxins on a regular basis, but you *can* shield your body from them and give it a chance to recover and fight back.

Every day you go to the store to stock up on household cleaners, food and beauty products, you're buying toxins to bring back into your home. You use them for yourself and even on your little baby if you have children.

They're typically invisible to you – especially in the air that you breathe – but in products, you can spot them if you look at the ingredients list and see a slew of words you can hardly pronounce.

Natural toxins are in your environment, like poisonous plants, animals and even germs. You typically know about these and try to avoid them. We're less likely to learn about the toxic chemicals in our life, though.

Chemicals aren't made by nature – they're made by man – and they're very dangerous. Sometimes we know the dangers – like using pesticides on our lawn or garden to keep pests out.

Other times, we blindly accept a company's use of toxins in products that we buy, assuming the government would protect us from anything *truly* harmful. But they're rarely tested and often ignored until it's proven that they're harmful.

It's almost a case of innocent until proven guilty, when in reality, for the protection of humankind, it should be the other way around. Companies should have to prove the innocence of their chemicals before using them, but that's not how it works.

To start, identify the toxins in your day today. Look at everything you eat – especially processed foods. Are there ingredients with very chemical-sounding names in them? These are likely toxic chemicals.

Preservatives, artificial flavoring, and coloring enhancements are all false ingredients that attack your body, rather than contribute to its nutritional benefits. They're in foods that are even branded as healthy, so make sure you investigate carefully.

Look at the toxins in your community. Many news stations will have a pollution index that you can analyze to see how toxic the air is that you breathe. You want to pay attention to everything landing on your skin or being sucked into your lungs, such as cleaning aromas.

Not everything will have a scent, like lemon-scented cleaner. Many of them are colorless and free of any aroma. So look for whatever is being used in your home and work environment.

What Does It Mean for Something to Be Toxic?

Well, it means your body has no use for it, so it has to work hard to rid your body of it. Sometimes, it even fails, and those toxins build up inside your body and wreak havoc on your health.

You may not see any side effects the first day you're exposed to toxins, but over time, it begins to take its toll and you start to experience the burden of your body being unable to handle the overload.

Sometimes toxins have mild side effects, like a minor headache, a sneeze or other reaction. Sometimes it's more serious – like being a cancer-causing toxin residing in your body.

If your body isn't performing optimally, then it's going to struggle cleaning the toxins out. It will become sluggish and falter. A detox periodically can rev up your inner engines and help you function at peak performance levels.

The Basic Rules of Detoxing Your Body

With a detox, you're going to have to identify the toxins in your own life and then avoid them. At the same time, you'll need to take some steps to boost your body with the repair process.

You can detox your body from the inside-out. The toxins are things you've ingested as well as outer pollutants that have landed on your body. Many people don't think about it, but your skin is the largest organ you have – and you may not be protecting it from toxins in the air.

When you detox, you'll not only be identifying and avoiding toxins, but you'll be using things like diet, sleep, stress relief and more to help rid your body of damaging elements.

When you go through a full body detox, not only will your skin get cleansed, but your internal organs as well – your kidney, stomach, lungs and more. Your kidneys and sweat glands will do most of the heavy lifting during the detox process.

After identifying where your toxins are coming from, start replacing the processed foods with organic, whole foods. If you notice your diet has gaps in what your body needs nutritionally, then supplement it with various solutions like vitamins and minerals.

A good place to start would be:

- A good multi vitamin – specifically one for your gender and age group
- Omega-3 fatty acids – a great thing to take in lieu of eating oily, toxic fish like tuna
- Vitamin B – preferably, a vitamin B complex that contains all of the B vitamins
- Vitamin C – which will help boost your immune system
- Vitamin E – with powerful antioxidants and the ability to keep you well
- Resveratrol – which does the same as red wine, providing antioxidants

Diet is one of the main things you'll be addressing during this detox. You want to start by knowing what to avoid putting into your shopping cart at the grocery store. That includes:

- Milk, which is packed with antibiotics and hormones
- Corn oil, which comes from genetically modified corn
- Margarine, or anything that contains trans fat
- Soy, which many believe is healthy but is horribly processed for consumers
- Deli meat, which is packed with salt, artificial color and flavors and more
- Tuna fish, which contains higher levels of toxic mercury than other fresh fish
- Lard, which comes ripe with steroids, hormones and antibiotics like milk
- Artificial ingredients, like colors and sweeteners that are harmful to your body

Get ready to sweat! Your body's sweat glands help usher out toxins from the body. So in addition to exercise, your body's natural sweat activation system, you can also use heat like a pampering sauna (which has now been proven to help with heart health) to increase your body's sweat potential.

You're going to have to change your habits. Everything from getting a good night's sleep to getting up and moving more will help your body flush out toxins on a daily basis.

If you smoke, you'll need to stop. If you drink alcohol, let go of that habit during your detox stage. Even bad habits like cursing a lot can weigh heavily on your emotions and contribute to stress, which is toxic to your body because it floods your bloodstream with unhealthy hormones.

Benefits You'll Experience with a Good Detox

A detox can be something you have to fully commit to – and it might feel dramatically different to you. But if you give yourself a chance to experience the full array of benefits, you'll feel amazing and give your body a gift that contributes to your longevity.

The first thing you'll notice is that when you're starting the detox, your energy levels might slump slightly at first. Then, they soar! Detoxing your body helps refuel your energy levels because your body isn't having to work so hard to function.

Your stress levels will plummet. Doing a total wellness detox means not only are you avoiding physical toxins, but the pollutants of your mind start to disappear as well. When your brain is functioning better and you're sleeping better, your stress levels will naturally subside because you'll gain clarity.

You'll notice that you get sick less often. Toxins really attack your immune system, so when you rid your body of them, your white blood cells are able to fight off invaders more easily.

Weight loss will come to more easily, too. Your body won't have to focus on cleaning your body of toxins. It will be able to burn fat with a laser-like focus. The energy increase, paired with natural shedding of pounds will really inspire you to stay on track with your detox.

Things That Can Derail Your Detox Success

You want to believe that when you embark on a formidable detox plan, you'll stick to it. But there are many issues that can stand in your way, and unless you know what they are and how to manage them, you might be prone to failure.

The first thing you want to watch is eating away from your home. Whether that means fast food, nice restaurants, the office workplace or a friend's house – eating where you're not the one fully in control can be hazardous to your detox plan.

You have to understand that Sally who brings a casserole in for lunch at work, or Ed's Chicken Shop down the street, don't have detox plans on their minds when they're planning their meals and menus.

They're not ensuring that your food is toxin free, made with whole grains and organic, pesticide-free fruits and vegetables. They haven't even looked to see if the chicken they're serving is awash in steroids, hormones and antibiotics.

This means you have to be very diligent about planning your meals away from home. If you're serious about detoxing, then that doesn't mean you flub a few meals. Your body will be bouncing back during this flush and re-introducing toxins periodically keeps it from achieving its goals of better health.

Mindful eating and mindfulness in general will help keep your stomach and other organs from having to work overtime for you. Take your time eating, enjoy the meal and flavors and give your brain time to recognize your fullness cues.

Throughout your day, be mindful whenever you're driving, working, interacting with others and spending time alone. When someone snaps at you, take a moment to think about what's possibly going on in their world to cause them to lash out – it helps you not take things so personally and your stress hormones won't flood into your bloodstream, wrecking your detox plan.

Make sure you get the minimum exercise requirements into your day. Remember, sweat helps your body flush the toxins out. Shoot for a minimum of 30 minutes of sweat-inducing movement, like cardio. Rinse them off quickly in the shower so that they're not re-absorbed through the skin.

Up your intake of water. Water should be one of the only things you drink on a detox plan. Your body needs it to help almost every organ function, and most of us don't get nearly enough.

You'll notice a change in the color of your urine when your body is getting plenty of water. It will go from yellow to clear, usually in a couple of days. Keep a glass of water nearby and sip it throughout your day to stay hydrated and give your organs the fluid they need to get rid of toxins.

Try to get your family onboard for better health. They don't have to be on the exact same detox plan as you, but try to replace the unhealthy, processed foods and toxic cleaners and beauty products with those that are not harmful to anyone living with you.

Detoxing is a great way to lose weight, clear out brain fog, distress and increase your longevity by preventing disease. It's not something that's easy and enjoyable right at first, but most people who commit to it, eventually crave the detox lifestyle because they feel so much better while doing it.