

## DO'S AND DON'T'S OF DETOXIFICATION

From a health standpoint, detoxification spans a range from disposing of your body's own wastes to removing the many chemicals of modern life to which we are exposed on a daily basis. I will refer to these wastes and chemical "detractors" interchangeably as "toxins". Just as your car's engine produces byproducts of combustion which will back up and choke the motor if not removed, so too does the body's "engine" of metabolism produce wastes which must be eliminated. When this process falters, conditions as diverse as fatigue, decreased mental clarity, autoimmune disorders and cancer can result. While the importance of detoxification is being recognized more by modern medical science, there is still considerable hearsay and confusion about the best way to cleanse the body for optimum function and prevention of disease. Let's look at the "Do's and Don'ts" of detoxification from a scientific viewpoint to get the best results.

DO understand the three basic steps (often called "phases") of detoxification. From a chemical standpoint, detoxification has three distinct phases or steps which must happen in order to actually get wastes and toxins out of the body. In Step 1, the toxins must be rounded up from their hiding places in the bones, fat and other tissues. In Step 2, the toxin must be "grabbed" and metabolized to a form that is easier for processing, usually making it more water soluble. The body uses powerful chains of reactions, such as the process of methylation or via the super anti-oxidant glutathione, for this transformative step. And finally, in Step 3, the toxin must be able to dissolve in the urine, feces, and or sweat to be actually get it out of the body. If all three processes do not happen in order, you may stir up toxins and feel worse. Or, perhaps you go through the effort to detoxify but don't feel any better.

DON'T rely on unproven "folk remedies" to get the job done. There are many combinations of home remedies and supplements that have been used over the years without proven benefit. Detoxification is a measureable chemical process, and therefore optimal results can be quantified. Therefore, we know how to produce the specific chemical reactions that actually work to rid the body of toxins. For instance, some people lack the proper B vitamins or minerals for Step 1, and are unable to dislodge the toxins from their storage sites. More often, we have deficits in producing glutathione or genetic variations that make methylation less efficient. And with the very acidic SAD diet (Standard American Diet), most often people are not alkaline enough to actually be able to dissolve the toxins so they can pass from the body. All three issues exist in many people, so it can be useful to do testing for nutritional deficiencies or pH status to help determine the best way for that individual to detoxify. (See *Diagnostics for Dummies* to learn more about tests that show evidence of toxin build-up.)

DO take into account your underlying health condition when determining the best way to detoxify. As mentioned, certain symptoms and disorders are often associated with poor ability to detoxify. If you already have conditions such as fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, declining cognitive (brain) function, rheumatoid arthritis or cancer, it is a pretty good bet that your detoxification processes need help. Attempting to cleanse the body is a very energy intensive process, so very frail people may need to start with other types of support, such as resolving gut issues and improving nutritional status before they are able to safely detoxify. For these people, certain combination nutritional IVs can be a good way to build strength and get the process going safely. (See sidebar about nutritional IVs.) These are not the same as chelation, which is used to remove heavy metals, such as mercury and lead. If you suspect heavy metal intoxication, it is strongly recommended that you consult a knowledgeable health professional before attempting any kind of detoxification to avoid stirring up the metals which may re-deposit and cause other problems.

DON'T give up on weight loss unless you have included detoxification in your regimen. One of the most overlooked tools in the process of weight loss is detoxification. Wastes from your metabolic "engine" may literally be turning *off* your metabolism, not only stalling your weight loss, but contributing to problems

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such as diabetes and hypertension. Often, body type gives us a clue as to who is most affected by this. If you are pear-shaped and keep most of your weight around the hips, you are more prone to detoxification issues than the more apple-shaped person who just has belly fat. Among the over 30 ways we REV up your metabolism in our REV Weight Loss program, are several methods of detoxification. Often, we use different dietary and detoxification strategies depending on whether you are an apple or a pear. Many people have elements of both, and therefore need to apply multiple strategies to remove those stubborn pounds. (The BIA mentioned in *Diagnostics for Dummies* can help determine which strategies are most important for you.)

DO combine a detoxifying diet with proper nutritional supplementation to achieve the best outcome. Most detoxification methods will not work optimally unless a detoxifying diet is utilized simultaneously. This may mean elimination of foods that commonly “gum up the exhaust system”, such as gluten. Sometimes food sensitivity testing is necessary to pinpoint the specific foods an individual is not processing properly. In any case, science has now provided us with “medical foods”, an FDA-designation for nutritional supplementation that actually has therapeutic effect in the body. As regards detoxification, these are specifically tailored for the deficits in each of the three Steps mentioned above. In combination with an individualized detoxification diet and possibly other support to enhance clearance through the liver, kidney or skin, these medical foods have been shown to actually improve waste processing by the body.

DON'T start a detoxification process without adequate preparation. One does not simply wake up and decide it's a good day for a detox. As mentioned, this energy-intensive process may need specific groundwork for people with certain underlying conditions. And, depending on how toxic a person is, he or she may experience some “detox symptoms”. These can include headaches, tiredness, gastrointestinal upset, muscle or joint aches, even brain fog. Anticipation and planning can utilize strategies to considerably minimize these symptoms and cause less disruption of your routine while you are on the road to improved health. Most people find these symptoms resolve in 3-5 days, and they are quickly feeling the improved energy and mental clarity that comes with the detox.

DO work with an experienced health professional to cleanse your body safely and effectively. Just as cleaning a dirty engine can markedly improve your car's performance, effectively cleansing the wastes and toxins from your body can noticeably improve your health, and even prevent disease. I often recommend twice yearly detoxification as a basic “reboot” of your system. Once you have done the process for a week or so, and experienced the improved health and wellbeing which it produces, you may actually look forward to the “tune up”. You will probably also notice that each time you do an effective detoxification, the next time is even easier as you have fewer toxins to process. Let us help you get the best results from this valuable health tool.