

Improved Health is About Holistic Nutritional and Lifestyle Choices - Detoxification

Hippocrates stated over 2000 years ago that the gut is the seat of disease. A comment that stands as true today as it was then, though the exposure to detrimental food options, environmental chemicals and degenerative lifestyle activities has grown enormously. Whereas nutrition is an obvious requirement of optimal health, most are not aware that toxic body states ensure that optimal nutritional ingestion is neither absorbed effectively by the gut nor distributed appropriately throughout the body. Attending to detoxification practices of the bowel is a fundamental activity of Naturopathic practice, but detoxification is a far more diverse activity. It involves the cleansing of organs, tissues and cells utilising a huge range of practices, foods and other curious machinations that assist in the healing journey. Detoxification is primary to the effective accomplishment of helping the body to heal and help itself.

The Fundamentals of Detoxification

Our body is actually a community of approximately 76 trillion cells (some speculate at 10 000 trillion), with each cell requiring ample oxygen, water and nutrition in order to fulfil its participative functions within the larger community of the body. If we just understand some basics and adjust our lives accordingly we can make big changes in how effectively our body heals or copes with our modern toxic world.

To understand why detoxification is important let us review the six stages to effective cellular nutrition, remembering that all six are important in achieving the goal of sustaining optimal health:

- a) Ingestion – putting it in your system for processing, that means consuming it
- b) Digestion – breaking it down into unrecognisable molecular elements
- c) Absorption – carriage into the intestinal cells, the blood and the lymph
- d) Circulation – effective transportation via the blood and lymph to the organs and tissues
- e) Utilisation – movement and functional metabolism into and by the cells of the tissues and organs
- f) Elimination – of used, excess or inappropriate elements as well as waste materials of cellular metabolism. Inappropriate elimination may occur at any time in the cycle of nutrition interfering with the effectiveness of the other five stages.

All of the six stages mentioned above have physical, psychological and psycho-spiritual contributors and detractors requiring holistic observation and remediation. When one researches the pathway that the cells must undertake to generate malignancy, then an understanding manifests about the involvement of our mind states.

Effective detoxification practices are probably one of the most vital components contributing to effective nutrition. Nutrients must be derived from our food and delivered to the individual cells, and the cells' metabolic wastes must be removed and excreted via the urine or bile salts. In order to achieve this we must consider:

- a) Decreasing the toxic load by implementing excellent food choices and healthy domestic, work and play environments considering the four vectors of stress – biochemical, electromagnetic, structural and mental / emotional.
- b) Assisting and promoting effective digestion by implementing exceptional eating rituals that encourage exceptional digestion
- c) Ensuring a healthy gut flora. Only a clean and healthy digestive tract free of excessive fungal, viral and incorrect bacterial overgrowths, accumulated wastes and entrenched mucoid plaques can absorb nutrition optimally from the food being ingested
- d) Acting to establish healthy circulation and blood capable of carrying the nutrients and oxygen around the body with efficacious delivery to all the tissues
- e) Establishing a clear and free flowing extracellular matrix that promotes efficient delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the deeper cells within tissues, as well as promoting efficient removal of cellular wastes back to the blood vessels for elimination by the kidneys and lungs
- f) Proactive lifestyle rituals that promote exceptional and comfortable elimination of all waste materials

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Our Tubular Physiology

The enormous numbers of cells outlined earlier in the article are basically tubular constructs that receive nutritional elements, converting them into physiologic products that are then released into our system. The cells also combine with each other forming into tissues that go on to form more tubes, the tissues form into organs and the organs become our body systems. Reflect for a moment on our tubes (hundreds of thousands of kilometres of tubes) – arteries, veins, nerves, bones, gastrointestinal tract, glands, lymph system, kidneys, pancreas, spleen, testes, cells, liver, in fact everything about us are tubes. We are basically a tubular being, and just like your house, when the plumbing is blocked or distorted there is a problem. If you enjoy dark humour, then fundamentally a Naturopath is little different to a body plumber – It is all about drainage and filtering.

There are four filters within the body that strive to protect us and therefore require our effective and careful nurturance and consideration:

- a) The Gastrointestinal Tract (GIT)
- b) The Liver
- c) The Immune System, and
- d) The Kidneys

These organs and systems have been superbly designed to protect us from environmental issues providing each individual with varying levels of genetically predetermined tolerance to cope with life encounters. Some experience early overwhelm in their infancy, while others can seemingly abuse their body for decades without a hint of illness or disease. Eventually however, an awakening occurs that has us contemplating our past and our life choices. When the filters have each in turn become toxically overwhelmed, the cells themselves and even the cell nucleus become toxic, impacting directly on both cell replication and energy production. Unfortunately this is the advanced stage of disease and this is where most people become acutely interested in the plumbing and drainage of their body systems.

The intricate diversity of detoxification

So then, let us get down to business, what are our detoxification choices and how should we use them? For most people this is an arduous challenge, and their whole life has to be reconstructed. A lifetime of bad habits has to be turned around. We are not taught these basic activities in our schools or our clinics any more. Perhaps that should change, but for the time being let's just begin by adjusting the things within our control one step at a time. Recovery of optimal health is a lifestyle opportunity requiring a complete adjustment of the modern mind state. It involves the discipline of holistic activities and conscious choices that promote health.

Begin with the Breath. Breathing effectively and regular participation in some level of exercise are the catalysts of effective detoxification. The body eliminates both carbon dioxide and acid wastes via the breath. This is one of the reasons meditation can be so beneficial. Also, have you ever noticed that during periods of excessive anger and stress how we sigh and groan? The body is attempting to eliminate its accumulation of stress derived toxic chemicals. Whole therapies, such as the Alexander technique and yoga disciplines, have evolved to develop correct breathing techniques. We must expand and compress the chest and lung tissues to push deep lymphatic fluids back into the blood stream. Congested lymphatic fluids harbour the elements of toxicity that contribute to further degeneration. Breathing deeply and rhythmic muscular activity promote enhanced drainage removing accumulated tissue wastes and toxic residues. Our modern life has become comfortable and overly sedentary compared to the lives of our ancestors.

Adequate high quality water intake is essential. It is unfortunate that one of the most vital nutrients is so frequently neglected. We are composed primarily of water and that water needs freshening up frequently. Keep in mind also that the solution to pollution is dilution. The body will accumulate and hold both sodium and unhealthy water if we do not drink enough fresh water to dilute and remove toxins. The formula of water, H₂O, is also a clue to its necessity. Oxygen is needed in the tissues and hydrogen assists to catalyse electrical impulses.

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A frequently recommended traditional water treatment involves the consumption of three to four litres of water upon rising in the morning, followed by another two to three litres throughout the day. I don't suggest this volume for all my clients though one to two litres first thing in the morning begins to provide the hydration that the body craves. Dehydration is one of the leading causes of health distress.

There is also a salt water cleansing practice utilised by many cultures over the centuries. Minerals found in quality salt facilitate life and encourage detoxification. They should be used both internally and for bathing in. Put one or two teaspoons of Celtic or Himalayan salt into 1.5 litres of pure filtered water and sip on this through the day. Heed cautionary medical advice though, if you have very high blood pressure issues and only use this technique infrequently. Use salty bathes regularly to relax in and ease away some of the toxic burden.

High intake of quality fibre is a must. Fibre ensures toxins are dragged out of the bowel rather than recycled back into the system, enhancing bowel and liver health. High fibre intake must be accompanied by adequate consumption of (2-4 litres) high quality water. The choice of fibre is also critical to your health and it is best to stay well away from the boldly advertised commercial products as they may contribute to nutritional deficiency.

Professionally guided fasting programs. Well trained Naturopaths use a combination of structured eating patterns, fibre, water, liver support, clay, prebiotics, probiotics and herbs (weed, seed and feed), followed by skilled programs of colonic hydrotherapy, homoeopathy and mental emotional clearing. Capable practitioners will effectively guide you through the confusing maze of diverse fasting practices, adjusting the program to accommodate your body reactivity and your bioindividuality. **Homoeopathic detoxification procedures** are an excellent inclusive protocol to promote a healthy extracellular matrix, good nutrient delivery and cell health and should also be selected carefully paying particular attention to the individuals needs. **Cleansing the toxic accumulations of the mind** is a fundamental necessity. Clearing of the negative emotional and mental influences from our past is an imperative activity fundamental to ridding the body of unnecessary residues of personal history that have an implicit overlay on our health. Forgiveness and acceptance of our personal responsibility begin this resolution, though the work is optimised when supported by skilled practitioners in kinesiology, counselling or other psycho-spiritual therapeutic disciplines.

Appropriately structured eating rituals to maximise digestion and minimise inflammation caused by large ineffectively digested molecules entering the blood stream and triggering an immune system response. The bitter principle is a must to promote acid secretion (digestion) and Intrinsic factor (B₁₂ cofactor) production. Bitter tonics or herbs 20 – 30 minutes before eating assists to improve gastric secretion production. Don't forget to chew, and chew, and chew, and ch... Did I mention the importance of chewing? Ensure healthy teeth, and get rid of those mercury fillings. Food combinations are important considerations as different enzymes control the digestion of differing food constructs. Mixing inappropriate foods creates a fermentation process, adding to reflux, rather than digestion. Avoid starch with protein, which means avoid typical Ozzie meals. Strictly avoid liquids from 20 minutes before and up to 40 minutes after meals so as to not dilute the gastric secretions. Ensure a nutrient rich, whole food diet that provides abundant nutrients necessary to allow the body to detoxify properly. Recommended dietary intakes are levels necessary to prevent disease states, but when disease is already present nutrient demands are significantly increased. Learn about intermittent fasting - Therapeutic meal replacements. Therapeutic meals act as a detoxifying catalyst and appetite pacifier, but only use them if you have the body resources to cope. Weekly therapeutic meal replacements assist the elimination and detoxification process. This is similar to a weekly internal body clean up. Just as we refresh our homes regularly we need to systematically refresh our bodily temple.

Sleep and harmonising body rhythms. Sleep is obviously important but the process is about understanding much more than just eight hours sleep. It is highly appropriate to establish an effective diurnal rhythm avoiding heavy meals, bright lighting, EMR and other stressful activities after sunset. This promotes an increased production of melatonin, the hormone that heals, detoxifies and restores the body. Living according to your

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natural Diurnal Rhythm promotes optimal daytime energy as well as optimal night-time rest, recovery and detoxification. Essential harmonising lifestyle rhythms must be reinstated. The cortisol curve begins its upward trend at sunrise and should be minimising by sunset. Bright lights, big meals, caffeine, stressful activities such as TV or the news keep cortisol elevated. The melatonin curve in a healthy diurnal rhythm begins its upward trend after sunset and is minimising by sunrise. Lifestyle activities that elevate cortisol maintain diminished levels of melatonin and inhibit healing.

Optimum detoxification is the vital key to an enduring restoration of optimal health. You have one organ that is responsible for most of your bodies direct detoxifying activities – the liver. Supporting the liver detoxification pathways, involving two main phases and several sub pathways, and enhancing cellular membrane function with optimal nutrient intake prevents the harmful effects generated from endogenous (coming from within – usually the bowel) and exogenous (coming from without) toxic sources. This promotes the effective management of historic toxic accumulations as they are released from various tissues as well as enabling your system to cope with unavoidable current exposure.

Thorough detoxification is a skilled practice implemented by qualified practitioners, but there are also many fundamental lifestyle rituals that can be learnt and undertaken that are easily understood and implemented. According to medical models, cancer has many possible causes, the research is broad and intensive exploring many avenues. Fundamentally however, the dramatic escalation of numbers of people within our communities that have to cope with this concern must awaken us to the need to monitor and recover from worsening toxic body and environmental conditions. Much can be learnt from historical practices of traditional healers and much can be achieved by observing the natural rhythms and practices of a healthy existence and seeking the qualified advice of contemporary, skilled natural therapists.

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