

BioBites: Tackling Toxins

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Toxins & Detoxification: Overview

The basics. Over time we accumulate toxicity in the body. Toxins in the body come from the foods we eat, environmental toxins, and toxins inherent to our body's daily functioning. The body's toxic load reflects the toxins that the body bears over time. When we are in-utero, our load is significantly less. Toxins build up over time; and as they do, we experience symptoms that we can recover from (e.g.. headaches). We typically reach a point where our bodies can no longer recover or recover well, however. It is when we are no longer able to recover that we are more likely to see a doctor; for women, this is typically at age 40+ and for men, this typically happens at age 50+

Misconceptions surrounding detoxification. It is common to talk about detoxing as a 1-2 week process; however, the body is detoxifying all the time. Most of the toxins in our body are endogenous toxins, or toxins that are the byproduct of cellular metabolism (a natural byproduct). We tend to focus more on exogenous toxins such as heavy metals and pesticides. Other toxins we should be mindful of: emotional toxicity, dogma, and learned perceptions.

Why detox? Detoxing involves cleansing toxins (physical and emotional) from the body. We detox to add health and vitality and to reduce the body's toxic load. Dietary changes are an important component of detoxification. Reducing consumption of refined foods, sugar, caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, and medications reduces congestion to the body's systems.

Detoxing & the organ systems. Detoxing involves more than just our gastrointestinal tract. The lymph, blood, skin, colon, lungs, and liver all have significant parts to play. Moving the body, dry skin brushing, drinking purified water, consuming herbs and nutraceuticals, deep breathing, utilizing castor oil packs, and consuming probiotics can support healthy organ function.

The place to start is with our diet; the foods that we choose to eat can help reduce the load placed on the body. We should include as many whole foods as we can (including organic): steamed fresh organic vegetables; organic fruit; raw nuts, seeds, and sprouts; fish oils and healthy fats (including coconut oil); wild fish, free range organic chicken and turkey; legumes, herbs, spices; fresh filtered water. Avoid: wheat, corn, flour products, dairy and non-organic eggs, refined sugars, peanuts, tomato and potato, fruits and citrus fruit, hydrogenated oils, alcohol and coffee, fried foods. By reducing the load we place on the body through our diet, the body's organs are better able to help the body detox. Utilizing the additional methods above supports healthy organ function

21-Day Renew You Challenge. [Join the Marion Institute and Dr. Thom in a 21-day Renew You Challenge.](#) Through the challenge, participants will receive further guidance and support around lifestyle changes that encourage natural detoxification and wellness.

Q&A Synopsis

Should I worry about toxicity with regular dark chocolate (70-100%) consumption? Yes. Chocolate becomes refined sugar once consumed; this causes congestion and puts strain on the lymphatic system. Regular consumption equates to more congestion.

Should citrus be avoided? Is lime alkalizing? Citrus is a common food sensitivity because it is not native to most diets. In small quantities, lemon or lime can be health promoting. Either can be used to help stimulate the digestive process, for example. With respect to acidity/alkalinity in the body, you cannot alkalize the body through diet.

Fermented foods. Every day we should be eating some form of a fermented food, which is where we get our probiotics from. Between 2-4 lbs of bacteria (probiotics) live in our GI tract; we need to replenish probiotics passed out of our bodies through natural processes or disrupted by antibiotics, etc.. Adults require approximately 25-50 billion probiotics daily to replenish; children require 10-15 billion probiotics per day. Kimchi, sauerkraut, pickles, kombucha, etc. are a great way to replenish the probiotics in our GI tract. When our diet is balanced, we should not need a probiotic supplement; however, many people do require a supplement to meet requirements.

Can we overload the liver and become toxic by taking too many vitamins or supplements? Yes, this is especially true for fat-soluble vitamins, such as Vitamin D. Vitamin E and Vitamin A are also fat-soluble and can be toxic if too much is consumed. Don't rely on taking a bunch of pills; this is not a substitute for a well-balanced diet. Nutrient needs are individual-specific (spectracell micronutrient testing can diagnose).

What specific vitamins or probiotics are generally recommended? Most Americans are deficient in at least one nutrient. Taking a B Complex vitamin is generally recommended (water-soluble); Vitamin B helps with energy production and mitigating impact of stress. Probiotics are also recommended. It is common to see mineral deficiencies, as there are 75 essential minerals and these are harder to absorb; therefore, mineral supplements are recommended. Most people are Vitamin D deficient; 2000-5000 international units per day is generally recommended, depending on sun exposure. Vitamin C may also be required during the winter months.

Particular brand of vitamins or minerals? Yes, the BioMed center does recommend certain brands. Generally speaking, however, you can perform your own evaluation of quality by calling the 800 number listed on brand packaging and inquiring whether the company performs individual nutrient assays on their products. An assay tells you what's in the product, post-production. Pure Encapsulation is one company that has been recommended in the past.

Should I take a prebiotic? Prebiotics help probiotics grow. You should not need to take a prebiotic unless your diet is deficient in terms of the foods that provide these (leeks, onions, artichokes, etc - FOS foods). You can find products that combine prebiotics with probiotics. Probiotics stimulate the Peyer's patches in the intestinal system. Peyer's patches are responsible for stimulating the immune system and allow more probiotics to grow.

Detoxing/Cleansing safely. When cleansing in the winter, stay away from cold foods, like smoothies or refrigerated foods unheated. The body can only efficiently digest foods that are warmed up. When we eat cold foods, our bodies have to send blood to warm the food up to digest it; this increases the chance that we do not get the nutritional benefits from that food. Broth, soups, stir fry, and crock pot dishes are recommended. Whatever you consume, warm it up. Pick whole foods that don't add to the body's congestion. Also don't detox if the body's organ systems aren't functioning properly (for example, if experiencing constipation). The body needs to be able to eliminate toxins from the body.