

# Detox YOUR SYSTEM

Each one of us is bombarded by a swarm of toxins each and every day: Pollution, stress, pesticides, preservatives in food, secondhand smoke, etc. Choose to indulge in sinful delights like alcohol, cigarettes and junk food and your cells must work even harder to cleanse themselves. So how can we help our bodies get rid of these poisons? We asked several experts in the art of detoxing for the lowdown...

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Poor digestion leads to toxic build-up in the body. If you improve your body's ability to process and digest food, you eliminate a great source of toxins. One of the easiest and most convenient ways to improve digestion is by practicing the breathing techniques that are used in yoga for this very purpose. You may breathe fast and short for a period of time, or long and deep and slow, pausing briefly before every exhale and inhale. Most yoga classes incorporate breathing techniques. If you go to a couple of classes, you can learn the techniques and then practice them on your own. The diet that many yogis follow also helps the digestion process. Most yogis are vegetarians, and try to eat foods that are as close to their natural states as possible. If you eat lots of organic, whole foods, that will definitely cut down on toxins. The foods that contain the most toxins are meat, processed and fried foods.

Several yoga postures help the detoxification process. Spinal twists stimulate and cleanse the colon, liver, gall bladder, spleen and pancreas. Back bends are great liver detoxifiers. Yoga also lowers stress levels, and gets the blood flowing, which helps the detoxification process.

Regular practice of yoga and meditation is a powerful way to foster peace, serenity and harmony. Also, keeping a journal is a wonderful way to de-stress and detoxify.

Someone once told me that yoga is 99 percent waste removal. I find this to be completely accurate. It is toxic to keep things inside and not express them. Alcohol, drugs and eating things we shouldn't are often due to pent-up emotions.

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When it comes to detoxing there are several approaches you can take. Day-to-day detoxing involves getting rid of environmental toxins, which are in our water, food and air. These toxins are deposited in the liver and in every part of the body. Then there's therapeutic detox, which involves detoxing in order to treat a particular illness, so that treatment may be more effective. Thirdly, there is detoxing for spiritual purposes. The detox method depends on why you are doing it and what you hope to achieve.

For day-to-day detoxing purposes, diet is very, very important. Green leafy vegetables are excellent detoxifiers—especially beet greens, Swiss chard and carrot tops. These can be made into a soup, a clear broth or may be juiced with carrots or watermelon. Drink at least three glasses of this broth or juice every day. It's also important not to consume any animal products, because all animal products contain toxins. You also should steer clear of alcohol and sugar.

You can employ the body's natural detoxing mechanisms by sweating out toxins. To do this, detox with daily sauna visits for up to a week, making sure that you drink plenty of water and herbal tea in order to replace the fluids lost. Chinese herbs for detoxing include mulberry leaves, which cleanse the mucus membrane, and cassia tora, which cleanses the liver and brightens the eyes. If the eyes are not clear, meaning that the white part of the eye is yellowish or red, that is a sign that the liver needs to be cleansed. Using herbs can greatly help detoxify the body. Remember, when it

comes to day-to-day detoxing, there are only three ways that the body detoxifies itself: urinating, defecating and sweating.

Good circulation helps the body rid itself of poisons also. Regular exercise, like walking, helps keep the circulatory system in shape.

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The ideal detoxing program combines nutrition with physical treatments. Some spa treatments that are great for detoxing include massage and mud baths, which drains poisons out of the body. Exfoliation removes the dead cells, the first layer of skin, so that products and herbs can better penetrate the skin. Lymphatic drainage involves massaging the lymph nodes, which stimulates blood flow, which helps rid the body of toxins.

Detoxifying treatments can leave you feeling tired, which is a natural result of the body releasing toxins. It's crucial to drink tons of water after a detoxifying treatment, in order to help the body release poisons.

To aid the process, we always recommend that our patients drink lots of water on a regular basis, take the right vitamins and eat right. A purification program is great for people who have been working very hard, or who have been drinking too much caffeine and alcohol, or eating too much sugar and white flour. Sugar is the worst offender—it just sits in your body. For people who have been indulging in the above, we recommend a three-day cleansing program which requires patients to eat lots of fruits and vegetables, drink plenty of water and give up, or greatly reduce, the caffeine and alcohol.