



## **Newsletter – winter 2011**

### **Detoxification**

#### **This Month's Theme**

With the holidays upon us, and the New Year fast approaching, I have decided to feature detoxification in this issue. Detoxification, or cleansing, is becoming very trendy these days, and I'm sure that all of you know of someone who has tried a cleanse or detox of some sort. The New Year, with all of the resolutions, is a popular time for detoxing, so in this issue, I will try to simplify this sometimes confusing topic.

#### **New Developments**

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, the WIHC will celebrate its' 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is hard to believe that 4 wonderful years have gone by already! We would like to thank all of you for making every day possible. We are looking forward to many more great years.

#### **Upcoming Events**

If you haven't had a chance yet to get in for your Naturopathic Flu remedy, there is still time. We will have supplies on hand all winter, so just give a call. Also, right now we have a special promotion on take-home flu clinic supplies. If you've run out of tablets at home, this is the time to get some more. They make great stocking stuffers!

#### **Articles**

Detoxification Simplified – by Kelly Wallace, N.D.

As mentioned above, detoxification (detox for short) or cleansing is a hot new health trend. There are many, many versions of cleanses available, and like anything else, some are more effective than others. So how do you choose the one that is right for you? And how do you know if you even need to detox?

Let's start at the beginning. Who needs to do a detox? Well the short answer is almost everyone. The truth is that we live in an increasingly toxic world. We eat a more processed, chemical-based diet than ever before. Our water and our air are more and more polluted every day. We expose ourselves to hundreds of chemicals every day in the form of beauty products, household cleaners, air fresheners... Our clothing, bedding and toys are made of and sprayed with

chemicals. Our cities are noisy and our lives are stressful. Everyone can benefit by giving their bodies a break from some of these toxins on a regular basis. People with chronic skin, bowel, hormonal or autoimmune conditions can often benefit greatly from a detox, as can those with allergies, chronic fatigue or fibromyalgia.

Conversely, is there anyone who should not do a detox? Of course there is. As with anything in this world, there is no one answer for every person. If done incorrectly, or in certain situations, cleanses can actually be quite dangerous. As a general rule, pregnant and breastfeeding women should not do detoxes. The body uses the breastmilk and the placenta as a place to dump toxins. You don't want to cleanse your own body, only to increase the toxic burden of your infant. Also, anyone with chronic health conditions that affect the major detox organs (liver, kidneys, lungs, colon), or those on certain medications, or undergoing cancer treatments should be particularly cautious and always consult a health care professional before undergoing a cleanse.

So what is the best way to go about a cleanse? There is no easy answer to this question. Because each person is different, detox protocols can and should vary. However, there are some general principles to keep in mind. I like to think of detoxing in 3 steps. Any good detox must contain all three of these step in order to be effective, however, the details of each step can vary dramatically.

#### Step 1 – Stop the intake of toxins

Just as you would clean your car, or your fridge, in order to clean your body, you must temporarily stop messing it up! In your car this might mean keeping the dog out for several hours. In your fridge it might mean trying to eat up most of the food and refraining from shopping for a few days. In your body it means carefully monitoring what is going in for a set period of time. This is usually accomplished with dietary modifications, avoiding unhealthy foods, alcohol, caffeine, sugar... and can also include avoiding toxic cleaning products, beauty products, tobacco smoke... The extent of the restrictions will depend on the individual and what you are trying to accomplish.

#### Step 2 – Clean out the cells

In keeping with our car analogy, this is where you get the vacuum out and clean out the car. Or where you get down on your hands and knees and throw out any rotten food in the fridge and scrub out the inside. In the body, this is where you support the organs of detoxification (liver, kidneys, bowels, skin, lungs, lymphatics) and clean out the cells. You can use herbs or supplements for this task, or certain foods or herbal teas. This is the area with the most variety among cleanses.

#### Step 3 – Take out the garbage

After you clean any rotten food out of the fridge, you don't want to leave it lying on the kitchen floor. You throw it away. The same goes for your body. It is no good to cleanse your cells if you leave all of the toxins to float around in your body afterwards. You need to get rid of them. There are many ways to do this, but most are quite simple. Extra dietary fibre helps to remove toxins through the

bowels. Plenty of clean water helps the kidneys to excrete toxins. Deep breathing helps to release toxins through the lungs, and anything that makes you sweat helps to release toxins through the skin (saunas, exercise).

So now that you know the elements of a good detox, how often should you do it, and when should you start? Most people benefit from doing a detox for between 1-3 weeks, 1-2x/year. This may vary depending on your lifestyle and your health, of course, but it is a good place to start. Some people may do a 1-2 day mini-cleanse every month. Spring, fall or the New Year are often good times to start a detox. It is generally best not to start a cleanse when you are under an unusual amount of stress, travelling or extremely busy. However, there are very few absolute rights or wrongs about cleansing. If you are thinking about doing a detox, talk to your health care practitioner, and they can help you figure out what is best for you.

### **Health Tip**

Talk to your favourite health care practitioner about doing a detox in the coming year. If you don't feel ready for a thorough cleanse just yet, start simple by taking one day per month and on that day avoiding all processed and packaged food that day. Eat only "real" foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains such as oats, quinoa and brown rice, real meat, poultry or fish, beans and legumes and raw, unsalted nuts and seeds. Drink only water, herbal teas or 100% fruit or vegetable juice that day. Your body will thank you!

### **Must Read**

*"Delicious Detox"* – by Carol Morley, N.D.

Dr. Morley is a Naturopathic Doctor in southern Ontario who has compiled a cookbook of tasty recipes that are detox friendly. The recipes are free of dairy, gluten, sugar and many other ingredients that are avoided on most cleanses.