

Detox VS. Cleanse

The New Year is the time to reflect on the past and manifest for the future. This is also an ideal time to cleanse, and/or detox. Those words spark questions such as, what is the difference between the two? Or Are they same?

Detoxification is a metabolic process that converts the toxins in our bodies into waste. That waste is then eliminated through the body's pathways; the liver is the primary detoxification organ. Toxins can include the following: heavy metals, chemicals, cleaning solutions, cigarette residue, and other environmental elements. Detoxification is long-term and requires lifestyle/diet changes.

Cleansing is a short-term diet intended to remove toxins from the body and clean out the digestive tract. The human body is amazing and comes equipped with great supportive properties. The main body systems for detoxing are the lungs, skin, liver, kidneys, and digestive tract.

Lungs help to detox by removing carbon dioxide and replenishing it with oxygen which is carried to the body's cells. A wonderful exchange indeed! Yoga, an ascetic discipline, is a good example of a deep breathing exercise.

Skin is the largest external organ of the body and is an often overlooked source of detoxification. Through the skin's glands we sweat, which assists the body in the elimination of waste products specifically uric acid. Uric Acid is the chemical produced within the body during the breakdown of food waste.

Kidneys also help eliminate Uric Acid and other toxins. Kidneys help with the production of urine and filtration of blood. Prior to the production of urine; fluid, electrolytes and waste are filtered from the blood. The kidneys' big job is to act as a filter; eliminating waste, adjusting fluid balance, releasing hormones to regulate blood pressure as well as the production of red blood cells, which help carry oxygen to the body.

Digestion takes the undigested food residue and waste and eliminates it into our intestinal tract and creates feces, which we then eliminate.

The Liver is the star of detoxing and eliminating waste, and is located on your right side under your rib cage. The liver's main job is to filter blood coming from the digestive tract before processing the blood through the body. The liver is a big filter and has many jobs processing medications, detoxifying chemicals/toxins, helping in the absorption of vitamins, hormone production creating bile for breakdowns of fats, and regulating blood sugar levels.

With all the hard work our bodies do without us thinking about it, it can be good body maintenance to do a detox or cleanse once or twice a year. Usually people like to schedule them for the first of the year and then later in the spring. The first of the year is great to start the year off on a good foot and cleanse out the old, and later spring is good to create movement after being less activate over the winter. There are many herbs, supplements and kits that help with the detox process and supporting the liver.

Herbs

Dandelion: Dandelion leaf is a powerful diuretic. Unlike other diuretics that affect and lower potassium levels; it is a natural source of potassium so it is not disruptive to the kidneys and cardiovascular system. The root of Dandelion is helpful for inflammation and congestion of the liver, it stimulates of the gallbladder bile which then helps break down fats and is used as a blood cleaner.

Milk Thistle: Seeds of the Milk Thistle are used as a liver tonic. There is research showing that it protects liver cells from chemical damage and treating liver function impaired by disease.

Burdock- Roots help stimulate bile production and helps to support the kidneys.

Ginger: This root has many benefits for the body. In keeping on topic Ginger helps in bringing circulation to the extremities and the promotion of perspiration.

Supplements

Bentonite clay: “Bentonites mechanism of action is physical, due to its colloidal structure and charged particles of sodium, calcium, magnesium and potassium ions, which allow it to bind with unwanted substances in the stomach, small intestine and colon. It is not digested, nor is it absorbed into the bloodstream. Since unwanted substances are bound to the bentonite, they are excreted from the body when the bentonite is eliminated through bowel movements.” (Yerba Prima Supplements,)

Psyllium Husk: “Psyllium Whole Husks is a high quality colon cleansing dietary fiber for promoting regularity and supporting heart health. Psyllium husks help promote normal regularity. Unlike stimulant laxatives, psyllium husks are gentle and are not habit forming. Psyllium husks’ bulking action makes elimination easier and more comfortable. At the same time, psyllium sweeps waste and toxins more quickly out of the body, so toxins are not reabsorbed from the colon back into the bloodstream. ” (Yerba Prima Supplements)

Bitters: “Bitter plants ignite digestion, balance blood sugar, buffer toxicity, and improve metabolism and proved gentle daily detox” in stimulating the liver, gallbladder and digestion tract.

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