

# 10 Ways to Detoxify Your Body

Feeling sluggish or out of sync? Having skin problems, aches and pains, or digestive problems? Straying from your healthier habits lately? Having trouble kicking off your weight loss? It might be time for a body detox.

Practiced for centuries by many cultures around the world — including [ayurvedic](#) and Chinese medicine systems — detoxification is about resting, cleaning and nourishing the body from the inside out. By removing and eliminating toxins, then feeding your body with healthy nutrients, detoxifying can help protect you from disease and renew your ability to maintain optimum health.

"The body has its own natural healing system," says Peter Bennett, N.D., medical director of Helios Clinic in Victoria, B.C., and co-author with Stephen Barrie, N.D. and Sara Faye, of *7-Day Detox Miracle* (Prima Health). "Detoxification enhances this system," he explains.

## How Does Detoxification Work?

Basically, detoxification means cleaning the blood. It does this mainly by removing impurities from the blood in the liver, where toxins are processed for elimination. The body also eliminates toxins through the kidneys, intestines, lungs, lymph and skin. However, when this system is compromised, impurities aren't properly filtered and every cell in the body is adversely affected.

## A detox program can help the body's natural cleaning process by:

- 1) Resting the organs through fasting;
- 2) Stimulating the liver to drive toxins from the body;
- 3) Promoting elimination through the intestines, kidneys and skin;
- 4) Improving circulation of the blood; and
- 5) Refueling the body with healthy nutrients.

"Detoxification works because it addresses the needs of individual cells, the smallest units of human life," says Bennett.

## How Do You Know if You Need to Detoxify?

Bennett suggests that everyone should detox at least once a year. A short detoxifying

program or whole body cleanse is generally safe; in fact, scientific studies show that a detox is beneficial for health. However, Bennett cautions against detoxifying for nursing mothers, children, and patients with chronic degenerative diseases, cancer or tuberculosis. Consult your health care practitioner if you have questions about whether detoxing is right for you.

Today, with more toxins in the environment than ever, "it's critical to detox," says Linda Page, N.D., Ph.D., the author of *Detoxification* (Healthy Healing Publications). Page recommends detoxing for symptoms such as unexplained fatigue, sluggish elimination, irritated skin, [allergies](#) or low-grade infections; bags under the eyes; a distended stomach even if the rest of your body is thin; menstrual difficulties; or mental confusion.

### **Where Do You Begin?**

First, lighten up your toxin load. Eliminate alcohol, coffee, cigarettes, refined sugars and saturated fats, all of which act as toxins in the body and are obstacles to your healing process. Also, minimize use of [chemical-based household cleaners](#) and [personal health care products](#) (cleansers, shampoos, deodorants and toothpastes), and substitute natural alternatives.

Another deterrent to good health is [stress](#), which triggers your body to release stress hormones into your system. While these hormones can provide the "adrenaline rush" to win a race or meet a deadline, in large amounts they create toxins and slow down detoxification enzymes in the liver. So it's a good idea to detox stressful life situations along with detoxifying your body. [Yoga](#) and [meditation](#) are simple and effective ways to relieve stress by resetting your physical and mental reactions to the inevitable stress life will bring.

### **Which Detox Program is Best for You?**

There are many detoxification programs and detox recipes, depending on your individual needs. Many programs follow a 7-day schedule because, as Bennett explains, "it takes the body some time to clean the blood." His program involves fasting on liquids for two days, followed by a carefully-planned five-day detox diet to allow the digestive system to rest. He also advises supplements, herbs, exercise, and practices such as dry-skin brushing and hydrotherapy to enhance circulation.

Page recommends a 3-7 day juice fast (drinking only fresh fruit and vegetable juices and water) as an effective way to release toxins.

Other popular detoxing programs and natural body cleanses include:

- Cleansing supplement packages, which generally contain fiber, vitamins, herbs and minerals. There are several safe products on the market, with easy-to-follow instructions.
- A routine of drinking only water one day each week — an ancient practice of many cultures.

## **10 Ways to Help Your Body Detoxify**

After a detoxification program, you can cleanse your body daily through diet, supplements and lifestyle practices.

1. Eat plenty of fiber, including brown rice and organically-grown fresh fruits and vegetables. Beets, radishes, artichokes, cabbage, broccoli, spirulina, chlorella, and seaweed are excellent detoxifying foods.
2. Cleanse and protect the liver by taking herbs such as dandelion root, burdock and milk thistle, and drinking green tea.
3. Take vitamin C, which helps the body produce glutathione, a liver compound that drives away toxins.
4. Drink at least 2 quarts of water daily.
5. **Breathe deeply** to allow oxygen to circulate more completely through your system.
6. Transform **stress** by emphasizing positive emotions.
7. Practice hydrotherapy by taking a very hot shower for five minutes, allowing the water to run on your back. Follow with cold water for 30 seconds. Do this three times, and then get into bed for 30 minutes.
8. Sweat in a sauna so your body can eliminate wastes through perspiration.
9. Dry-brush your skin or try **detoxifying patches** or **detox foot spas / foot baths** to remove toxins through your pores. Special brushes are available at natural products

stores.

10. What is the most important way to detoxify? "Exercise," says Bennett. "Yoga or jump-roping are good. One hour every day." Also try [qigong](#), a martial-arts based exercise system that includes exercises specifically for detoxifying or cleansing, as well as many other exercises with specific health benefits.

**Want more information on Detoxing? Check out:**

**[1-2-3 Detox for Radiance](#)**

**[Detox Buyer's Guide: Top Products to Help You Cleanse](#)**

**[VIDEO: How to Detox With an Ayurvedic Diet](#)**

[Detox Yoga How-To Sequence with Photos](#), by yoga expert Sadie Nardini

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*Consult your doctor before using any health treatment — including herbal supplements and [natural remedies](#) — and tell your doctor if you have a serious medical condition or are taking any medications. The information presented here is for educational purposes only and is in no way intended as substitute for medical counseling.*

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