



Spring-Clean Your Body

A dozen great ideas for the most successful detox ever

BY SUSAN SMITH JONES, PH.D.

One of the most important relationships we have is with our own bodies. Yet we drink, eat, breathe, and live in a soup of toxic compounds that are hard, if not impossible, to avoid. Thousands of environmental toxins surround us, including pesticides in our foods, chemicals in our water, and pollutants in the air we breathe. Even common cosmetics and toiletries are full of chemicals.

Fortunately, we each have control over the pollution in our own bodies. In fact, optimizing our health by regularly detoxifying is vital. If we keep a balanced and clean internal environment, we won't succumb to the toxic buildup that enhances disease. That's why embarking on a detox-cleanse program a few times a year is an important way to support our physical wellness (along with our mental and spiritual well-being). People who cleanse regularly look and feel younger, are much healthier, and live a longer life than people who don't.

Our modern diets are to blame for many of our most common ailments. Many people are digging their graves with their knives and forks. Excess sugar, carbonated beverages, and chemical food additives (not to mention antibiotics and over-the-counter drugs) can alter the acid/alkaline balance of the intestinal tract, often

killing beneficial bacteria and creating the perfect environment for harmful microbes to grow. Without the "good" bacteria to keep them in check, these "bad" bacteria can eventually overrun the body, severely depressing the immune system.

In addition, mucoid plaque, a slimy gel-like substance covering the inner lining of the intestines and bowel, harbors toxins and interferes with nutrient absorption. And the colon has been known to hold more than 30 pounds of old matter and can be packed with undigested food and disease-promoting bacteria.

When the colon and liver are clear of all these excess toxins and waste, the intestinal tract can more easily absorb nutrients from food. The body can then free up more energy to use for healing, repair, and maintenance. The list of benefits from detoxing includes relief from bloating and constipation, improved digestion, a flatter abdomen, a stronger immune system, better sleep, more youthful and healthy skin, clearer thinking, and more energy and confidence. Doing a cleanse is also one of the best ways to break bad food habits such as always salting foods, being addicted to white sugar and white flour products, and drinking too many sodas. Simply put, detoxing can dramatically improve the quality of your overall health.

With that in mind, here are a dozen helpful elements to consider for a successful total body cleanse:

1. Organization: The first day of a detox program sets the tone for the entire regimen. So do what needs to be done to get ready, including shopping for the best foods and teas, having a good source of alkaline water, getting a dry skin brush, and organizing the other things recommended below.

2. Plant-Based Food and Fresh Juices: While on a cleanse, adopt a plant-based diet with as many raw or “living” foods as possible. These fresh, colorful foods take stress off your digestive system because of their high water content. Be sure to emphasize leafy greens because they are the most detoxifying and rejuvenating. For short cleansing programs, consider consuming only raw food or drinking only fresh vegetable juices throughout the day. I also recommend organic detox teas, available from any health food store.

3. Hawaiian Vitality: I take two natural products daily, and when I’m detoxing, I take a few extra milligrams of each. One is Hawaiian Spirulina Pacifica, a high-protein, low-calorie, immune-boosting, energizing, detoxifying, and rejuvenating superfood. The other is Hawaiian Astaxanthin, a supernutrient and powerful antioxidant that supports the eyes, joints, skin, brain, and circulation; quells inflammation; and helps detoxification and rejuvenation.

4. Supportive Environment: Just as your body is your temple, your home is your sanctuary. Find simple ways to de-clutter your surroundings to cleanse your environment while you are cleansing your body. Also, make your bedroom a peaceful haven for quality rest time, starting with a good hypoallergenic mattress pad and fresh, clean bedsheets.

Remove footwear before entering your home to help avoid distributing a host of environmental toxins around the house on the soles of your shoes. And regularly open your windows to improve the indoor air quality, which is compromised due to the off-gassing of carpets, conventional cleaning products, fabrics on household furniture, and so on.

Go outside to do deep breathing exercises with fresh, clean air several times each day. Get about 10 to 20 minutes of healing sunshine daily on as much of your skin as possible (although avoid the midday sun).

5. Water and Hydration: Our bodies, the cells inside them, and our planet are all 70 percent water. That’s no coincidence. So each day we need to drink at least eight glasses of purified water for proper hydration. Although herbal tea, freshly extracted vegetable juice, and diluted fruit juice can count in the water tally, coffee, caffeinated tea, colas, and alcoholic beverages don’t because they are dehydrating.

Carry a reusable, earth-friendly bottle of water with you to encourage drinking more water. You can refill these bottles at home from a filtered or purified water source. I recommend the Ionizer Plus to create alkaline water because most toxins are acidic. Drinking alkaline water is one of the quickest ways to keep your body detoxified, even if your everyday diet is less than perfect.

6. Heat Therapy: In these times of water and airborne pollution, toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and poor dietary and exercise habits, the therapeutic internal cleansing of regular sweating is critical to maintaining a healthy body. The easiest key to a good sweat is a sauna. (I use an infrared home sauna called Thermal Life.)

7. Meditation and Rest: Find time for quiet reflection and relaxation during your detoxification program. Instead of unlimited activity, choose to slow down, smell the flowers, read books, keep a gratitude journal, and simplify your life. Whenever possible, meditate outdoors in the fresh air, surrounded by nature.

8. Positive Focus: Take a moment each day to be grateful for all you have in life. Gratitude, after all, is a great stress-buster and whole-body purifier. What you think about consistently brings more of the same into your life. So focusing on the positive alleviates stress, rejuvenates your body, and transforms your life.

9. Exercise and Massage: It’s important to work out during a detox program, especially because aerobic activity (including walking) will help your circulation. At least plan to do some yoga stretches or other simple movements.

A cleanse is also a great time to schedule a massage. Find a massage therapist who knows how to do a lymph massage, which helps flush the toxins out of your body. At the very least, ask a family member or close friend to give you a foot massage.

10. Skin Brushing: Weighing in at approximately six pounds and covering an area of about two square yards, skin is the largest organ of the body. Along with the bowel, lungs, and kidneys, the skin is a major channel for the elimination of toxic wastes.

That’s why skin brushing is a great way to detoxify, in addition to promoting good circulation. To remove the most dead skin cells and toxins, brush your entire body (except your face and private areas) *before* you bathe. I use a special smaller, softer brush for my face and neck. Use a brush made from natural vegetable fibers, not nylon or other synthetic material. (I recommend brushes from Bernard Jensen International.) If you do this as a daily practice for one month, your skin will feel and look about 10 years younger.

11. Efficient Elimination: Once toxins have been released into the blood and neutralized by the liver, they must be eliminated safely from the body to make sure they don’t get reabsorbed. To help prevent constipation, I recommend the Squatty Potty toilet stool—a simple, natural solution for better elimination. This sturdy, custom-designed stool allows for full squatting and semi-squat positions on Western-style toilets. (When it’s not in use, it slides conveniently out of the way, under the toilet.)

12. Cleanse With Friends: Having someone to share the experience with is more comforting and supportive, so find a detox buddy who will do the cleanse along with you. Be sure to compare notes and encourage each other daily.

Follow as many of these suggestions as possible for the most successful cleanse experience. You’ll find that when your body is clean and detoxed, your health will improve on many levels. After all, the more cleansed you keep your miraculous body, the more room you’ll have to be filled with light. 🌿

Susan Smith Jones, Ph.D., is the author of more than 25 books, including *Recipes for Health Bliss, Detoxify and Rejuvenate, The Joy Factor, and Walking on Air: Your 30-Day Inside and Out Rejuvenation Makeover*. For a free copy of her e-book *Detoxify and Rejuvenate*, as well as specific cleanse regimens and more information on the products she recommends above, visit SusanSmithJones.com.

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Symptoms of Toxic Buildup

- constipation
- chronic yeast infections
- brittle fingernails and toenails
- frequent colds
- weight gain
- acne
- dry or pale skin
- mood swings or depression
- low sex drive
- lack of concentration
- poor short-term memory
- sleeping problems
- frequent headaches
- chronic urinary tract infections
- arthritic bone pains or rheumatism
- allergies
- gas, bloating, or flatulence
- feeling weak or lacking in energy