

Why You Should Detox to Lose Weight and Feel Better

By Dr. Jeannie Doig, ND

Our bodies are constantly being bombarded by toxic exposure from the food supply, household cleaners, and the environment. Some classes of toxic compounds include dioxins (from chemical plants), solvents (air fresheners, perfumes, and anything that has an artificial smell), pesticides (found in food), phthalates (found in plastics), heavy metals (mercury-found in large fish and mercury amalgam fillings), and Bisphenol A (from drinking out of plastic bottles). These toxins we are exposed to have been linked to cancer and found to be toxic to the central nervous system, hormone system, and the immune system.

When our bodies are healthy, and the liver, kidneys and digestive system are functioning optimally, we can rid the body of harmful toxins. However, when our toxic load becomes too high, we may experience symptoms such as fatigue, depression, headaches, memory problems, chronic pain, brain fog, and asthma and allergies. The increase in autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, Hashimoto's thyroiditis are also quite strongly linked to an increase in toxic burden. Weight gain occurs because toxic chemicals in the body damage the mitochondria in cells (the organelles that produce ATP and energy), slowing the metabolism down.

Most people who diet to lose weight fail. They may lose a few pounds initially, but then they gain all the weight back and more. They often feel sluggish, tired, depressed, moody, and achy after losing pounds because the toxins in their bodies (most toxins are fat-soluble and are stored in our fat cells) are released when they lose weight and are circulated through the body. The liver and kidneys are unable to detoxify the body fast enough because the toxic load is so high, and the person becomes sick.

The best way to lose weight and feel better is to make a lifestyle change that is permanent and long-lasting. We must stop new toxins from entering the body and get accumulated toxins out of the body. The ways to accomplish these goals are to clean up your diet, clean up your home environment, use toxin-clearing supplements, and improve toxic elimination through the bowels.

We can rid the diet of toxins by eating mostly organic fruits and vegetables, organic meats, and organic whole grains and avoiding all packaged foods with added chemicals and preservatives. I suggest to patients if they can't afford to eat all organic, at least avoid the "Dirty Dozen" which are the most highly sprayed fruits and vegetables. These twelve include in order of importance: apples, bell peppers, carrots, celery, cherries, grapes, kale, lettuce, nectarines, peaches, pears, and strawberries. Also, non-organic meats are leading sources of chlorinated pesticides especially non-organic beef, non-organic dairy products, farm-raised fish, and non-organic butter. These chlorinated pesticides have been documented to slow thermogenesis (the rate at which our fats are burned to make energy), making it hard to lose weight and easy to gain it.

Dr. Jeannie Doig, HBSc, ND
Naturopathic Physician

www.drjeannedoig.com
Port Alberni (250) 723-9888
Tofino & Ucluelet (250) 522-0033

Eat foods that battle toxins such as green tea, broccoli, and berries (especially blackberries). Green tea not only helps the liver detoxify, but it has been proven to lower cancer risks and increase metabolism. Green tea also has powerful anti-anxiety properties. Broccoli boosts liver enzymes to help move pollutants out of the blood, and it boosts glutathione function, which helps usher toxins out such as pesticides and solvents. Berries are powerful anti-oxidants that quench free-radical damage from toxins.

As a naturopathic doctor, I assess each patient's toxic load through a thorough case history, physical exam, weight and fat % testing, and urine testing. The pH of each patient's urine is assessed since acidity in the urine is a sign of increased toxic load. Individualized meal plans are prescribed incorporating a whole foods diet and reducing sugar and food sensitivities (often wheat and dairy). For detoxification, I give high doses of vitamins and minerals in oral or intravenous form in accordance with the patient's needs. A high fiber diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains is recommended to help increase the bowel's elimination of toxins. Patients who comply with the recommendations report feeling younger, healthier, and lose weight by undergoing these lifestyle changes.

Reference: Dr. Crinnion, Walter. [Eat Clean, Green, & Lean](#). John Wiley & Sons. 2010.