- Body cleansing



SUPPORT FOR YOUR NATURAL DETOX SYSTEM

Words by Lisa Guy

When you hear the word "detox," you might first think of juice cleanses, supplements or complex protocols. Yet every day, detoxification occurs in your body through a network of organs working behind the scenes to filter, process and eliminate waste. By supporting these systems with key nutrients and simple lifestyle shifts, you can help your body function at its best.

PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR RESALE
PERSONAL COPY

Every day, our bodies are exposed to toxins from the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink and those generated internally. Fortunately, our bodies are equipped with incredible detoxification systems that process these toxins into safer substances for elimination. The liver, kidneys, skin, lungs, digestive and lymphatic systems all work tirelessly together to remove toxins and keep us in balance. However, when these systems become overwhelmed or lack the right nutritional support, toxins can accumulate, triggering inflammation, oxidative stress and increased risk of chronic health issues. Understanding how these pathways work and what they need to thrive is key to supporting your body's natural detox capacity.

Key detoxification organs

The liver is the body's primary detoxification organ, filtering toxins from the bloodstream and transforming them into forms that can be safely eliminated. It processes everything we ingest including food, drinks, medications and substances absorbed through the skin. The kidneys flush waste through urine, while the digestive system removes toxins via bowel movements. The lungs expel carbon dioxide and airborne toxins with each exhale, and the skin releases waste through sweat. Meanwhile, the lymphatic system clears cellular waste, supporting immune function and easing the burden on other detox organs.

Phases of liver detoxification

Liver detoxification occurs in three essential phases. In phase one (activation), the liver uses cytochrome P450 enzyme to break down fat-soluble toxins, creating byproducts that may be more harmful if not quickly neutralised. Phase two (conjugation) takes over by attaching these byproducts to protective molecules like glutathione, sulphate or amino acids. Finally, in phase three (elimination), the neutralised toxins exit the body through bile into the digestive system, where they are removed via the stool or through the kidneys into the urine. Supporting all three phases with the right nutrients helps ensure a smooth and effective detox process.

Burdens on the system

The body's detoxification systems are influenced by various environmental, dietary and lifestyle factors that can either support or hinder their function. Exposure to xenobiotics, which are foreign substances not naturally produced by the body – including medications, chemicals in skincare and cleaning products, air and water pollution, pesticides, herbicides, heavy metals, mould and micro-plastics – place a significant burden on the liver, kidneys and other detox organs. These toxins, often fat-soluble, accumulate in tissues over time, disrupting hormonal balance, impairing cellular function and contributing to oxidative stress.

Ultra-processed foods with additives, preservatives and trans fats strain detox pathways, while offering little nutritional support. Alcohol, smoking and chronic stress deplete critical detox nutrients such as glutathione and B vitamins. Low-fibre intake can cause constipation and the reabsorption of toxins, while poor hydration hinders waste removal via urine. Combined, these factors can overwhelm the body's detoxification systems. Therefore, a whole-food diet, stress management and minimising exposure to environmental toxins are essential for supporting detoxification systems.

Signs your body needs detox support

When detox systems are sluggish, symptoms may include persistent fatigue, frequent headaches, brain fog, anxiety, irritability, low mood, constipation, bloating, indigestion, muscle and joint pain, skin issues, worsened allergies and heightened sensitivity to chemicals. Fat-soluble toxins often accumulate in the body's fatty tissues, mainly adipose fat stores (visceral and subcutaneous fat), and can also build-up in the brain, bones and muscle, where they may persist for years.

Support detoxification naturally

A well-designed detox-friendly diet is rich in nutrients, antioxidants, fibre and amino acids and minimises exposure to harmful chemicals, additives and ultra-processed foods. It also reduces the intake of sugar, alcohol and inflammatory ingredients, thereby easing the burden on the liver and gut.

Focus on whole foods

A clean eating approach that emphasises fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables, fibre-rich whole grains (brown rice, oats, quinoa), quality proteins (wild fish, organic chicken and eggs, organic tofu and tempeh, legumes, organic Greek yoghurt) and healthy fats (avocado, extra-virgin olive oil, raw nuts and seeds) provides the nutrients needed to optimise liver function, promote toxin elimination and enhance overall health. Where possible, choose organic free-range pasture-fed poultry, eggs, dairy and meat, and wild-caught low-mercury fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines and anchovies.

Opt for organic

Choosing organic foods is a powerful way to lower pesticide exposure and support your body's natural detoxification processes. Organic produce is grown without synthetic pesticides, herbicides or fertilisers and is free from GMOs, reducing your intake of

Image: Pexels

PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE



Fat-soluble toxins often accumulate in fatty tissues, the brain and even bones, where they may persist for years and interfere with hormonal balance, cognition and other bodily functions.

Image: Pexels

COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED
PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE
periodicalacpublicliblibrary@gmail

PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE
PERSONAL COPY
COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED

harmful chemicals. Prioritising organic options whenever possible helps create a cleaner, more nourishing diet. For the freshest seasonal organic produce, visit your local farmers' market.

Increase fibre intake

Insoluble fibre keeps bowel movements regular, preventing constipation and ensuring toxins are effectively removed from the body. Soluble fibre, on the other hand, acts as a prebiotic, feeding beneficial gut bacteria that aid digestion, detoxification, immunity and overall health. For optimal detox support, include a variety of fibre-rich foods in the diet that contain soluble and insoluble fibres, such as whole grains (brown rice, oats), vegetables including root vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds (flaxseeds, chia seeds, quinoa), as well as psyllium husks and gut-soothing slippery elm.

Boost antioxidants

Antioxidants neutralise free radicals and reduce oxidative stress. Vitamin C-rich fruits (citrus, berries, kiwi) and beetroot support liver detox. Green tea, turmeric, coriander and ginger provide antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. Avocados, rich in vitamin E, glutathione precursors and healthy fats, enhance phase two liver detox pathways.

Benefits of brassicas

Broccoli, kale, Brussels sprouts and cabbage contain glucosinolates, which convert into sulforaphane and indole-3-carbinol – compounds that enhance phase two detox. These vegetables also provide fibre and antioxidants.

Include bitter foods

Bitter foods, such as dandelion greens, arugula, chicory, mustard greens, collards and Swiss chard, stimulate bile production in the liver, aiding in the breakdown and elimination of fats and toxins. Add them to salads, smoothies, soups or stir-fries or lightly sauté them with olive oil and garlic. Apple-cider vinegar and lemon juice are also considered bitters. Add a tablespoon of apple-cider vinegar or lemon juice to a glass of water each morning, use it as a tangy salad dressing or squeeze fresh lemon juice over dishes.

Switch out sugar

Replace sugary drinks and treats with water, herbal teas, protein smoothies and whole fruit. Choose nourishing breakfasts like oats or granola with fruit, nuts and yoghurt. Opt for good-quality dark chocolate (at least 70 per cent cacao). Make healthy homemade desserts and baked goods from wholesome ingredients rich in fibre, protein and healthy fats, like almond and coconut flour, nuts and seeds, healthy oils (coconut, olive oil, macadamia nut) and naturally sweeten with fresh fruits, stevia, a little coconut sugar or raw honey.

Eliminate ultra-processed foods

Avoid heavily processed and refined foods like convenience meals, pre-packaged snacks and store-bought baked goods. These are often stripped of nutrients and fibre, while being loaded with unhealthy hydrogenated fats and artificial additives, which can burden your body's detoxification systems and harm overall health. Swap processed meats like bacon, ham, hot dogs and sausages for healthier options including grass-fed beef, wild-caught salmon or organic chicken. Avoid seed oils such as canola, soybean, vegetable, rice bran and cottonseed oil. These oils are highly processed, often refined using chemical solvents and can be high in inflammatory omega-6 fats. Opt for healthier alternatives like extra-virgin olive oil, avocado oil, macadamia nut oil or coconut oil.

Keep well hydrated

Staying hydrated is vital for kidney function, nutrient transport and waste removal through urine, sweat and healthy bowel movements. Proper hydration also helps keep lymph moving efficiently, as lymph fluid is primarily composed of water. Aim for around 2.5L of filtered water daily to support these processes. Herbal teas and sparkling mineral waters are included in your daily water intake.

Nutrients that support detoxification

Your body's detoxification systems rely on key nutrients to function optimally. Antioxidants, amino acids and essential vitamins and minerals play a crucial role in supporting liver detox pathways, reducing oxidative stress and ensuring efficient toxin elimination. By providing your body with the right nutritional support, you can enhance all three phases of liver detoxification, promoting overall health and vitality.

B vitamins (B2, B3, B6, B12, folate): Support phases one and two, especially methylation. Found in leafy greens, legumes and eggs. Consider an activated B-complex if needed.

Amino acids: Needed for phase two detox. Glutathione (from glycine, cysteine and glutamate) is the body's master antioxidant. Taurine, methionine, glycine and arginine also support detox. Ensure adequate protein from quality sources.

Vitamin C: Antioxidant that supports glutathione and heavy metal clearance. Found in citrus, berries, tomatoes, kiwi and red capsicum.

Selenium: Boosts glutathione and supports metal clearance. Brazil nuts are an excellent source. Also found in tuna, eggs and mushrooms.

Zinc: Activates detox enzymes and supports antioxidant defences. Found in pumpkin seeds, quinoa, eggs and grass-fed meats.

PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE
periodicalspublicliblibrary@gmail

PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER



NOT FOR SAL

Supporting detoxification through a nutrient-dense, whole-food diet, stress management and reducing toxin exposure is essential for maintaining optimal health.

Magnesium: Supports both detox phases and heavy metal excretion. Found in leafy greens, nuts, cacao and whole grains.

Herbs

Incorporating certain herbs into your diet or supplementation routine can optimise detoxification and improve health.

The gallbladder plays a key role in detoxification by storing and releasing bile, which helps eliminate fat-soluble toxins, including excess hormones, heavy metals and environmental chemicals. Sluggish bile flow (cholestasis) can lead to toxin build-up, causing digestive issues, hormone imbalances and inflammation. Herbs such as artichoke leaf (*Cynara scolymus*), dandelion root (*Taraxacum officinale*) and barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) have been shown to support healthy bile flow and aid detoxification. Globe artichoke and dandelion root are also both effective in supporting digestive health and relieving constipation. With their mild laxative effects, they help promote regular bowel movements to facilitate the elimination of toxins from the body.

Several other herbs are known for their ability to enhance liver health and detoxification. Milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), with its active compound silymarin, protects liver cells, promotes regeneration and supports both phase one and two detoxification, making it a powerful liver herb. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) offers strong anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, helping to protect liver cells and stimulate bile flow. Schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*) modulates liver enzymes, boosts detox pathways and reduces oxidative stress, while bupleurum root (*Bupleurum falcatum, Bupleurum chinense*) supports overall liver health and detoxification.

Burdock root (*Arctium lappa*) is a potent blood purifier that supports kidney and liver function, assisting in the removal of heavy metals and toxins from the bloodstream. Nettle leaf (*Urtica dioica*), with its natural diuretic properties, promotes kidney function and toxin elimination through urine. Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) further supports detoxification by helping to remove heavy metals such as mercury, lead and aluminium, often paired with chlorella to enhance toxin binding and excretion.

Together, these herbs provide comprehensive support for detoxification.

Limit environmental toxins

Reducing your exposure to environmental toxins is essential for supporting your body's natural detoxification systems. Daily exposure to pesticides, plastics, heavy metals, mould and air pollutants can burden detox pathways and increase your toxic load. Minimise this by choosing 100 per cent natural cleaning products, fragrances, skincare, deodorants and beauty products. Reduce plastic use by opting for glass or stainless-steel drink bottles and food containers. Improve indoor air quality by incorporating air-purifying plants, ensuring good ventilation. A high-quality water filtration system is also beneficial.

To reduce heavy metal exposure through food, choose smaller fish like wild-caught salmon, trout, cod, sardines, herring and anchovies, which are lower in mercury. Avoid larger, high-mercury fish such as tuna, king mackerel, shark and swordfish.

Enhance lymphatic flow

The lymphatic system clears waste, toxins and excess fluid, supporting detoxification and immune function. Unlike the circulatory system, it doesn't have a central pump and relies on movement and deep breathing. Sluggish flow can lead to bloating, fatigue and a weakened immune system. Lymphatic massage, dry brushing, regular movement such as walking or yoga and deep breathing can all support healthy flow.

Sweating and sauna

Sweating is an effective way to eliminate toxins, helping to lighten the body's detoxification burden. Sauna therapy amplifies this process by promoting heat-induced sweating, boosting circulation and supporting the excretion of toxins through the skin. Encouraging regular sweating through exercise or sauna use will enhance detox pathways and support overall health.

The brain's nightly detox

During deep sleep, the brain's glymphatic system flushes out waste and harmful proteins like beta-amyloid, linked to cognitive decline. Disrupted sleep impairs this process, contributing to toxin buildup and inflammation. Prioritising good sleep enhances brain detox and long-term wellbeing.

Small, consistent changes can make a big difference in reducing toxin buildup and lowering the risk of inflammation and chronic disease. Prioritising detox-supportive habits will leave you feeling more energised, balanced and resilient.

COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED
PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE
PERSONAL COPY
periodicalspublicliblibrary@gmail.com





COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED
PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER
NOT FOR SALE
periodicalspublicliblibrary@gmail.com