

To Cleanse or Not To Cleanse

Marie Bouvier-Newman

It is a common practice to give our homes a good cleaning once in awhile. We open the windows to change the air. We wash the curtains, clean behind the furniture and organize the clutter, disposing of things that are no longer useful. Similarly, we maintain our vehicles and clean other things that require our attention to perform optimally.

While a clean environment is important to our well-being, we often forget that our bodies require the same kind of consideration. I'm not talking about a daily shower. I'm talking about an inner cleansing that gives our cells the opportunity to "change the air" and remove the clutter. I can tell you from personal experience that the feeling you get when your house is clean and fresh is nothing compared to the energetic feeling you get when you've taken the time to clean your body from the inside out.

Isn't the body built to clean itself, you may ask. The answer to that question is quite frankly yes. The body has filters and elimination channels responsible for general cleaning. These filters and channels are constantly separating the good from the bad; absorbing the good stuff and eliminating the bad. Occasionally though the body reaches a point when it can no longer process the clutter that has accumulated through poor diet and habits. When saturation occurs the body begins to fatigue and sooner or later we get sick. The body shuts down normal operations and focuses on cleaning itself out. This "natural" cleanse drains us and makes us feel downright awful. If the sickness is severe enough the residual damage lowers our body's "clutter limit" and we get sick more frequently, seeming to catch everything that goes around!

Think for a minute about what our bodies endure every day. Many of the foods we eat contain chemicals that are hard to process. Consider the sticky, unhealthy flour we regularly consume in cereals, breads, pastries, cookies and the like. Consider also the cluttering effects of sugar, table salt, meats, additives and preservatives present in most diets. Consider other things in our daily lives such as the air we breathe and the soaps we use to wash ourselves, our clothes and our homes. There's also nicotine, caffeine and alcohol as well as the chemicals in over-the-counter and prescription drugs and finally, the granddaddy of them all, the continuous stress we put ourselves under every day. All of these things accumulate in one way or another.

We can usually tell when we need to cleanse because a general feeling of heaviness and fatigue envelopes our whole being. We're tired and we can't quite figure out why. We can't think straight or we find ourselves waking up frequently during the night. We may feel congested in our sinuses, may have skin rashes, or chronic constipation or diarrhea. Instead of waiting for these signs to appear, a good plan is to cleanse regularly. The beginning of each season is a wonderful routine to establish with spring being the most important time to take action. It is a time when we want to shed our heavy coats in exchange for lighter outdoor gear. So it is as well with our bodies. A good cleansing program can help us accomplish this task.

An intentional cleansing program along with improved diet and habits helps us manage the clutter before it reaches the level of saturation that causes us to get sick. Sometimes, if we are really in need of a cleanse and we begin one, we may experience a day or two of feeling a bit out

of sorts but this discomfort is nothing compared to what can happen when we wait for the body to reach its limit.

What is involved in a cleanse? Perhaps most importantly, we consume very clean and light foods to lessen the burden on our bodies. We then open our elimination channels using specific herbs and fluids to get things flowing properly. This step is extremely important because if the body cannot get rid of things easily, the clutter we are trying to remove will have no place to go and our efforts could cause further accumulation. Once we have good flow, we use more herbs, fluids and exercises to continue the cleansing process. We move methodically, one body system at a time until we have flushed out every cell. Depending on our level of clutter this process can take a few days to a few weeks. There are a variety of good products available to help us cleanse properly and most are pretty easy to use.

When is cleansing not recommended? Cleansing should be avoided during pregnancy. Also, in people who have been weakened by severe sickness, a careful balance between building and cleansing must be carefully orchestrated. It is usually wise to have guidance whenever there are any health concerns.

BIO

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