

Detox the Body, Renew the Skin

Eliminating Toxins Can Clear Complexions

Barbara Hey

Toxins produced from stress, poor diet, fatigue, the environment, and less-than-optimum health can result in a dry, lackluster, acne-ridden, or hypersensitive complexion. If you're having difficulty stabilizing your skin, no matter how diligent the efforts to hydrate and renew, it may be time to consider another tactic: internal cleansing.

The term itself may suggest colonics or scrubbing bubbles for the digestive tract, but really it's simply a rest period for the body, a time devoted to detoxification by eschewing the bad stuff (sugar, chips, coffee, and cocktails, for instance) and consuming wholesome, clean, unprocessed foods. The aim is to give

one's internal environment," says Susan Ciminelli, founder of Susan Ciminelli Beauty Clinic in New York City. The skin, she says, reflects "how one digests, assimilates, and eliminates food."

Hale Sofia Schatz, author of "If the Buddha Came to Dinner: How to Nourish Your Body to Awaken Your Spirit" (Hyperion, 2004), agrees. The reasons for undertaking a cleanse are twofold: "to allow the body to eliminate toxins and to increase the body's natural ability to renew itself through the rejuvenation of cellular growth," Schatz says. She recommends a cleanse that focuses on proper food combinations, predominantly fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nuts.



Eating healthy, organic, whole foods is part of a skin-cleansing detoxification process.

the body time to rid itself of the detritus of a life fueled by caffeine, red meat, and refined foods, and then see and feel what happens. The benefits to body and appearance, say experts, can be dramatic.

Where to Begin?

The epidermis reflects what's going on in the body. "The skin is a mirror of

The detoxing process takes time. A few days is a good start, but a week or even a month is better. When the process is complete, the body is renewed and, Schatz says, "the skin all of a sudden starts looking more luminous, more radiant." But be forewarned: It often gets worse before it gets better.

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"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

- W. A. Ward

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"As the toxins get eliminated from the body, you see them most readily on the skin surface. Impurities in the body can come out as blemishes, eczema, or rashes," she says. And that worse-before-better phase can cause distress. "Clients will call me after the first days of a cleanse and say they've had a breakout, and I say, 'That's a healthy sign. The impurities want to get out.'" At this stage, patience is required, because whatever manifests will dissipate with time. Schatz's advice: "Listen to the body, work with the body."

Detox Basics

Following are some general detox fundamentals. As you go through the process, work with your esthetician for guidance and skin care support.

START SLOW.

With any cleanse, the best advice is to ease into it. "Most of our bodies are pretty toxic," says Schatz, noting that many people are at least somewhat addicted to the toxins of day-to-day life--those lattes to invigorate the afternoon doldrums and sugar, wheat, and dairy, all of which are tasty foods common in the American diet. She suggests starting with a preliminary period--a week or two of gradual dietary shifts--to prepare the body for what's to come. During that time, you wean yourself off caffeine (gradually, to avoid the headache), refined flour products, alcohol, and milk. Then, the cleanse can commence.

UP WATER INTAKE.

Critical during a cleanse, and always important for skin, is to increase the amount of fluids ingested. Schatz suggests doubling what you ordinarily drink, which will help the body eliminate the toxins it's releasing. That means lots of spring water, herbal teas, and fresh vegetable juices.

EAT SEASONALLY.

Make dietary selections appropriate to the weather and include fresh, seasonal food. That is, it's preferable to eat whatever fruits or vegetables are harvested in the particular season. Also, make sure to consume foods in the winter that promote warmth (soups instead of salads) and in summer that are cool (melons rather than baked yams). In all seasons, sea vegetables such as arame, wakame, and nori are

recommended, since they are rich in vitamins and minerals that benefit the liver--the organ at the front line of detoxing the body each day.

SUPPORT YOURSELF.

The particulars of a cleanse vary--what foods to eat and when--but have in common specific supplements to support the body (like a supplement of fiber, green food, or probiotics) or herbs to augment the detoxification of the liver. (Schatz recommends dandelion root, for instance.) Detoxing is also a time to relax, meditate, and rest--essential for the body to be refreshed.

Each step of Schatz's three-phase plan may last from two days to a week or two. Her plan begins with a period of just fruits and vegetables. Next, grains, seeds, and nuts are added, and finally protein (tofu, certain fish, beans). Detoxing doesn't necessarily mean bland food, either. Schatz's book includes dynamic recipes like Ginger-Leek Miso Soup and Salsa Snapper (www.heartofnourishment.com).

In between cleanses just plain eating well

can have concrete results, even in the eye zone. For example, Susan Ciminelli has a homemade under-eye lightener in the form of a soup recipe made with kidney-supporting adzuki beans (www.susanciminelli.com).

Of course, nourishing the body with healthful foods is about more than appearance. It's about maximizing health and bringing a consciousness and respect to the foods we put in our bodies. And then, the realization comes that the effort has brought about a multitude of gifts--more energy, vitality, vibrancy, and, not incidentally, looking better too.



Detoxing is an important time to nourish yourself with relaxation, meditation, and rest.

The Health Benefits of Ginger

Easing Nausea, Joint Pain, and Allergies

This pungent spice is found in cuisine around the globe, but ginger has also been used for more than 2,500 years for its medicinal properties. The ancient Chinese knew that it aided in the absorption of many herbal preparations and they prescribed it extensively as a digestive tonic.

A native root of southeast Asia, ginger is a potent ally in the treatment of nausea, motion sickness, and joint pain. Current research confirms ginger's efficacy as an anti-inflammatory, GI calmativ, and antihistamine. The active ingredients found in ginger -- gingerols and shogaols -- lower levels of prostaglandins, the chemicals responsible for pain and inflammation in joints and muscles. By reducing prostaglandins, ginger can even have a positive effect on heart health and circulation because chronic, systemic inflammation increases the risk of heart attack and blood vessel compromise.

Ginger comes in several forms. Fresh and dried ginger is available in

supermarkets for use in cooking. It's also available in capsules, an extract pill form, prepackaged tea bags, crystallized, and as a topical oil.

Recommended Uses

MOTION SICKNESS AND NAUSEA

Most medications for nausea and motion sickness work to calm the nervous system and can cause drowsiness and dry mouth. On the other hand, ginger calms the digestive tract directly and has been shown to reduce nausea after surgery and chemotherapy. For motion sickness, take 100 mg two hours before departure and every four hours afterwards or as needed.

ARTHRITIS AND MUSCLE ACHES

Massage ginger oil into affected areas and/or take up to 1 g of powdered ginger daily to reduce inflammation.

COLDS AND ALLERGIES

Drink up to 4 cups of ginger tea daily or enjoy authentic ginger ale (made from real ginger).

While ginger has no known side effects, it's always a good idea to consult your health care practitioner to make sure it's right for you.



The ginger plant has many medicinal uses.

Easing Holiday Angst

Five Stress Busters for a Joyous Season

You enter the holiday season with the best of intentions -- looking forward to time spent with family and friends, decorating, shopping, baking. But as soon as you pile holiday activities on top of an already busy life, you're likely to find yourself relating more to Ebenezer Scrooge than Martha Stewart.

Consider these five suggestions to keep holiday stress at bay:

1. DETERMINE A SHOPPING BUDGET

For many, gift giving is an important part of the holidays, serving as a way to express love and appreciation for friends and family. But when the credit card bills arrive in January, you may discover you've extended your holiday stress well into the New Year. Plan your budget in advance, determine what you can spend, and stick to the plan.

2. CREATE A TIME BUDGET

Many will make a shopping budget, but what about making a time budget? Before accepting every invitation this year, decide ahead how many parties you

can and want to attend while maintaining your sanity. Make choices about your time commitments based on what you'd really like to do this year, rather than what you think you should do or what you've always done. Don't forget to leave time for yourself.

3. SET FOOD-INTAKE BOUNDARIES

You'll likely be tempted to eat in excess, and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't stick to your pre-holiday eating standards. But do decide ahead of time just how much you'll deviate from your eating routine.

4. STICK TO YOUR EXERCISE REGIMEN

Regular exercise is a powerful stress buster. You'll feel better, sleep better, avoid weight gain, boost your immune system, and maintain a positive outlook about yourself. While it may seem like an easy time concession to make, don't give in to the idea. Stick to exercise, and you'll thank yourself for it.

5. TAKE TIME TO REST

Take time from your schedule to honor

the cycles of the season. The holidays fall during winter solstice -- the shortest day of the year. Learn from nature, and get plenty of rest.

*"Acknowledging
the good that
you already have
in your life is the
foundation for
all abundance."*

-Eckhart Tolle

Wow we did it! It has been 1 year. I can't even begin to say thank you! You chose me to help meet your skin care need. You chose me to treat you to relation. I don't know how to say, other than thank you!

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MEMBER

