

Nutrition Notes from Angela

Too Late to Detox?

Believe it or not, summer *is* just around the corner and it's not too late for a spring detox. Just as the season's change, so do our bodies. This makes spring a perfect time to detoxify. Our body is ready for lighter, cooler foods and liquids and gearing up to shed some of those winter pounds when our appetites naturally decrease during the spring and summer months.

So, why should we detoxify? The body is exposed to many toxins in our food, homes, air, and water, as well as internal toxins like free radicals and metabolic waste. Our liver works hard filtering these impurities and producing bile, which carries the pollutants out of our bodies. It also produces essential enzymes that help break down toxins. Our kidneys and GI (gastrointestinal) tract also play a role in detoxification. After the liver does its job, the toxins can be eliminated by the kidneys. The GI system is protected by enzymes, mucus, and friendly bacteria, which help defend against bacteria, viruses, yeasts, parasites, and toxins. You could say all of these work together as the body's sanitation system.

Here are a few signs that the body might be in need of a detoxification:

- Headaches, fatigue weakness, joint aches, poor concentration, irritability, depression and mood swings;
- Allergies, stuffy nose, coughing, rashes, hives, itching;
- Digestive symptoms (*IBS, GI upset, constipation*);
- Sensitivities to chemicals, food and drugs.

A cleanse/detox need not be boring, limited to juice or veggies and rice. A cleanse supports detoxification by increasing elimination, enhancing circulation, and eliminating foods that are allergenic. It should also provide nutrients that support and protect the liver, the main organ involved in detoxification. Foods should include organic veggies, fruits, whole grains, fermented foods and/or probiotics, as they provide nutrients, enzymes, and fiber that aid in digestion and the elimination of toxins.

Start your cleanse on a weekend, or on a day you won't be busy or distracted. Let the experience be relaxing and a time of renewal for your body. Be kind to yourself, relax and let others know you are taking care of **YOU** or a few days. The length of your detox can be 2 days to 2 weeks; 7 days is typical.

Increasing the flow of bile plays an important role in the detox process. Bile carries fat soluble toxins away from the liver and excretes them from the body. Signs of poor bile flow include constipation, gas, dry skin and hair, indigestion 1-2 hours after eating (*especially fatty foods*) and small, hard stools. During this time the liver needs nutrients for detoxification.

Nutrients and support for liver, gall bladder, and kidneys include:

- High quality multi-vitamin taken 2-3 times/day are usually more readily absorbed than "one-a-day" vitamins;
- Triphala – an Ayurvedic herb that supports cleansing and strengthens the bowels;

- Vitamin C – helps lower effects of detox;
- Milk Thistle - liver support herb;
- Probiotics – Restores natural friendly bacteria back to the gut.

Foods to enjoy during your detox:

- Fresh fruit – avoid grapefruit
- Fresh veggies – avoid corn (*can be allergenic*) Beneficial in detox are: broccoli, broccoli sprouts, cauliflower, onions, garlic, artichokes, beets, red and green veggies.
- Whole grains and beans – brown and wild rice, quinoa, amaranth, millet, buckwheat, oatmeal and sprouted bread (*avoid if you are celiac*). Avoid corn and wheat products.
- Nuts and seeds (*unsalted*) – Soak for easier digestion. Avoid peanuts.
- Fish – poached or steamed in moderation.
- Miscellaneous – Extra virgin olive oil, veggie salt, vinegar, sea salt, naturally fermented soy sauce or tamari, raw sauerkraut, herbs and spices, herbal teas (*decaf*), water, lemon water, coconut milk

Avoid:

- Sugar, dairy, wheat and products containing wheat, gluten, corn, and yeast; caffeine, alcohol, food additives and preservatives, chocolate, and high fat foods.

Daily detox/cleansing routine:

- Upon waking: 8 oz. warm water with half of a squeezed lemon (*or 1tbsp. raw apple cider vinegar*)
- Eliminate foods mentioned above
- Eat freely of raw and steamed veggies, raw fruits, rice, nuts, seeds, soups, (*non-dairy*), greens salads, sprouts, fermented condiments.
- Include 2 cups fresh veggie juices or 1-2 “green” drinks/day.
- 1 protein smoothie
- 6-10 cups water
- Quality multivitamin morning and evening
- In evening take hot detox bath after skin brushing (*can be found at drug stores, health food stores, or body and bath stores*).
- Take probiotics, liver support formula and triphala before bed.
- **YOGA** – Energizing asana in the morning and restorative asana in the evening.

See 0806 Detox Menu (pdf) for Ideas and Recipes for a 2 Day Detox/Cleanse