

The Detox Download: Liver edition

Essential detoxification tips for everyone seeking optimum health

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"Half of women and 43% of men in England are now regularly taking prescription drugs...More than a fifth of men and nearly a quarter of women are taking at least three prescriptions."

Source: BBC News, 10th December 2014¹

Welcome to the Detox Download!

There may be numerous reasons why almost one-half of the UK population takes prescription drugs nowadays¹, but 'detox neglect' is certainly prime among them. Put simply, detoxification is absolutely essential to health – and *optimum* health is impossible unless your detox organs are firing on all cylinders. By the end of this short ebook, you'll know which organs are involved, why they need some help and why detoxification is so important. You'll also have a simple tool to help keep your liver – the most important detox organ – running smoothly.

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¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-30411246>

Before we get going, though, I must emphasise that detoxification is a huge subject that would require a much longer book to tackle in detail. There are plenty out there if you're interested! It's just as important to recognise that everyone is different, with different constitutions and life circumstances that will have a bearing on the best detox regime in each case. And, while this ebook focuses on physical detoxification, emotional, mental and even spiritual detoxification can be just as important for anyone seeking truly optimum health.

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Do I need to detox?

Like most of us, do you experience some or all of the problems on this nowhere near comprehensive list:

- Tired all the time (TATT)?
- Headaches?
- Poor complexion?
- Sinus congestion?
- Poor sleep?
- Difficulty concentrating?
- Low mood?
- Skin rashes?
- Weak, brittle or discoloured nails?
- Dry, brittle or unmanageable hair?
- Unexplained aches and pains?
- Strong reaction to alcohol, especially bad hangovers?
- Strong reaction to drugs, whether prescription or over-the-counter?
- Digestive issues, such as bloating, gas or constipation?

If so, you should seriously consider giving your detox system some TLC. These symptoms can show up when our detoxification organs aren't working as well as they can – which can lead to more serious problems in the long run if nothing is done.



Why is detoxification so important?

We encounter toxins every second of every day. The air we breathe, the food and liquids that we eat and drink, the substances we touch, hold and clothe our bodies with: all of these introduce chemicals into our bodies that are potentially toxic. Not only that, but the metabolic processes that keep us alive constantly produce toxic byproducts. Fortunately, our detox organs do an incredible job of making these poisonous substances harmless and removing them safely from the body.

However, in the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, humanity is living in the most toxic environment in its history. Yes, the air may be visually cleaner than during the Industrial Revolution, and cities like London may be free of thick, choking 'pea souper' fogs. None of this changes the fact that there are more new-to-nature chemicals in our environment than ever before. They're in everything from the food and water that keeps us alive, the deodorants and cosmetics we use, the plastic in our bottles, the furniture we sit and sleep on and the paint that decorates our bedroom walls. Our detoxification systems are miraculous feats of biological engineering, but even they struggle under the pressure of removing hundreds of new-to-nature chemicals, 24 hours a day, every day.

Many of these chemicals are largely untested, which is bad enough in itself. But think about it: even if every single individual chemical was thoroughly tested for toxic effects in humans before being released into the environment, it's impossible to test for the effects of combinations of these chemicals. And this is without mentioning other culprits, such as caffeine, pharmaceutical drugs, food additives like aspartame or MSG, heavy metals like mercury or aluminium, pesticides, naturally occurring food-borne organisms like aflatoxin...the list goes on!

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What are the organs of detoxification?

- Colon AKA large bowel AKA large intestine
- Kidney
- Liver/gall bladder
- Lymphatic system
- Skin
- Lungs

So now that we've met our detox organs, let's take a quick look at how we can keep our liver – and the gallbladder, our store of digestive bile – onside. Since the liver is the real heavy lifter of the detoxification team, it's a very good idea indeed to keep it on friendly terms.

The liver and gallbladder

The liver is the powerhouse of the body's detoxification armoury, and keeping it finely tuned is among the best strategies for a healthful life. Here are some pointers for a liver-friendly lifestyle:

- Moderate (at most) alcohol consumption
- Avoid drugs of all kinds as much as possible, whether pharmaceutical, prescription or recreational
- Don't cook with vegetable oils! Use organic, virgin coconut oil or butter instead, which are much more stable with heat
- Don't use cookware that contains aluminium, and don't wrap food in aluminium wrapping
- Eat high-quality protein at every meal, up to around 50 g/day

- Eat oily fish two or three times per week, or take an essential fatty acid supplement containing a high ratio of omega-3:omega-6 fats
- Don't eat larger fish, such as tuna or swordfish, more than once or twice a week due to the possibility of mercury contamination
- Take regular exercise
- Drink sufficient water, ideally filtered
- Eat plenty of fresh, organic fruit and veg of all colours, and make sure to include sulphur-containing veg like garlic and broccoli every day
- Eat a fully organic diet as far as possible
- Don't smoke
- Avoid genetically modified foods and ingredients wherever possible
- Avoid processed food
- Minimise intake of added sugar, particularly fructose and especially high-fructose corn syrup
- Avoid artificial sweeteners, e.g. aspartame, acesulfame K
- Avoid artificial preservatives and flavour enhancers, such as monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- If you drink coffee, aim for organic beans or ground coffee rather than instant, and drink it black with no sugar. Aim for no more than 2 or 3 cups per day, and don't drink takeaway coffee through a plastic lid
- Consider minimising your intake of grains, especially wheat.

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The liver/gallbladder cleanse

To give your liver a boost, try the following morning routine. It's best to adhere to the guidelines above as rigidly as you can while doing this programme and any other detox regime. In particular, don't drink any coffee or black tea during this time, although the occasional



green tea is OK, and give alcohol a miss altogether. Do this routine for 5 days in a row, then take 2 days off, then do another 5 days – it can be repeated 2 or 3 times a year for best results. **DO NOT attempt this routine if you have a liver condition, such as hepatitis, or gallstones – see a practitioner for individual guidance.**

1. Upon rising, drink ½–1 pint (250–500 mL) of fresh, filtered, warm water. Wait 30 minutes to 1 hour
2. Pour ½ pint (250 mL) organic, fresh-pressed apple juice
3. Add the juice of 1 lemon
4. Add 1 crushed clove of garlic, or more if you're feeling brave!
5. Add a small piece of fresh, grated ginger
6. Add 1 tablespoon of (ideally) organic, cold-pressed olive oil – add 1 additional tablespoon every couple of days to a maximum of 5
7. Mix together in a blender and drink.

During the next hour, drink 2 mugs of herbal tea. A tea with some or all of the following herbs is ideal: dandelion root (*Taraxacum officinalis*), burdock root (*Arctium lappa*), milk thistle seed (*Silybum marianum*), licorice root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), ginger root (*Zingiber officinalis*), red clover flowers (*Trifolium pratense*), yellow dock root (*Rumex crispus*), nettle leaf (*Urtica dioica*) peppermint leaf (*Mentha piperita*) and fennel seed (*Foeniculum vulgare*). The Holden Clinic where I practise sells a wonderful blend called D-Tox herbal tea – get in touch at info@herbsmith.uk or call the clinic direct on 01342 826899 if you'd like some.

For the best results with the mixed herbs, add 2 tablespoons of dried herbs to a saucepan containing 1 pint of boiling water, cover and keep at a rolling boil for 10–15 minutes. Strain

the herbs from the detox tea and repeat the process – using the same herbs – with a second pint of water.

Lunch should be your first meal of the day. Make it something light and predominantly vegetable-based – but always include some protein! Protein is essential to detoxification by the liver. A green vegetable smoothie would be ideal, with protein being provided by nuts or pea protein powder; or a green, leafy salad with a small amount of grilled fish or chicken.

"You will start to feel lighter, more energetic and more clear-headed after a few days on this routine..."

What the liver cleanse does

Garlic boosts liver detox pathways, and is also a powerful antibiotic, blood cleanser and digestive tonic. **Ginger** stimulates the circulation, boosts digestion and increases the effect of the other ingredients in the mixture, as well as improving the taste of the drink. **Olive oil** causes the gallbladder to dump its store of bile, which triggers the liver to produce more bile. This drains into the common bile duct and eventually the gastrointestinal tract, taking with it any unwanted material. **Lemon** increases saliva flow and contains acids that reduce the load on the liver required to digest foods; it also has a highly alkalising effect on the body.

Don't worry if you feel light-headed after taking this drink. If you are used to eating breakfast, this effect is the result of temporary low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia), which will pass if you continue with the routine. You may also experience 'detox headaches' in the first few days. If you do, drink more water to help your body get rid of the mobilised toxins more quickly. Don't take painkillers, even paracetamol or aspirin, as the liver has to work hard to clear them from your system! You will start to feel lighter, more energetic and more clear-headed after a few days on this routine, and you will probably notice improvements in your skin and complexion as well.

Please get in touch!

Detoxification is a huge and fascinating subject, and we've barely scratched the surface in this ebook. One of the most important things to remember about detox, and in fact with all aspects of health, is that everyone is different: different genetics, different life experiences, different constitutions, etc. It follows that each person's path to true vitality is different and as unique as they are. If the concepts in this ebook have struck a chord and you'd like to explore in more depth, perhaps by working with me to develop a personal wellbeing programme that includes comprehensive detoxification, then please consider booking a consultation. I can be reached at bookings@herbsmith.uk or via the contact form at <http://www.herbsmith.uk/book-a-consultation.html>.

I'd also love to hear from you at adam@herbsmith.uk if you have any comments on this ebook.