

# Top tips for a natural

# DETOX

Cleanse your body with Eva Killeen from  
CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine)

**T**he process of detoxification is your body's way of neutralising, transforming or removing unwanted materials or toxins. It is a primary function, which means that it is constantly working and interacting with all other functions. When we talk about embarking on a detox there are two aspects:

- **The optimisation of your body's own detoxification systems**
- **Minimising the toxins you eat, drink or expose yourself to**

Often when you hear the word 'detox' it can be associated with going all out on a one-week deprivation diet. The truth is that our bodies are constantly exposed to a barrage of harmful toxins, so the best thing you could do is to implement a detoxification regime that supports you all year round.

Factors like chronic stress, unhealthy habits, physical inactivity and a diet high in ultra-processed foods can negatively impact your body's natural cleansing system, making it even harder to remove toxins from the bloodstream efficiently.

Here are a few simple suggestions worth including in your daily routine:

## LET OFF STEAM

Steaming open the pores helps rid the body of waste. Try a 10-20 minute sauna or steam room session. The heat encourages increased surface blood circulation in an attempt to reduce body temperature, promotes sweating (which allows toxins in the blood to be eliminated) and saturates the body with 'feel good' negative ions. The skin is the biggest organ in the body, connected both to the lungs and the gastrointestinal tract and sweating is a very efficient elimination mechanism.

A few drops of an essential oil such as rosemary or eucalyptus can enhance your sauna or steam's circulatory stimulant effect, and help clear mucous congestion. Remember to drink plenty of filtered water to re-hydrate afterwards and facilitate further toxin elimination through the kidneys.



## Cut out the culprits

Remove, little by little, any foods that make the liver work harder. These include fatty foods, sugary foods, salt, alcohol and caffeine, as well as refined carbohydrates like white rice, white pasta and white bread.



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### GET FIBRE-RICH

*Soluble fibre from fruit and vegetables binds to toxins residing in your gut and helps flush them out when you have a bowel movement. Good sources include artichokes (including Jerusalem artichokes), peas, broccoli, avocado and pears.*



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## Brush it off

The lymph is our major circulatory system for the removal of toxins from the body. Unlike the cardiovascular system, which has the heart to drive it, the lymph relies mainly on muscle movement to work. A great way to encourage the lymph to remove toxins is dry body brushing. The practice stimulates the skin, removes dead cells and promotes a healthy glowing complexion as a bonus! Take a dry shower bristle brush and, before you take a bath or shower, brush the entire surface of your skin, working from the extremities inwards towards the heart.







## EAT RIGHT

'Clean eating' is a surprisingly simple concept. Rather than focusing on more or less of specific things (for instance, fewer carbohydrates or more protein), this method is more focused on being mindful of the food's journey from its origin to your plate. At its most basic, clean eating is about eating whole foods; foods that are un- or minimally processed or refined, leaving them as close to their natural form as possible. Numerous studies show that whole foods including cruciferous vegetables, berries, garlic, and spices like ginger and turmeric can support your body detoxify through its various pathways.

## Sleep well

Getting enough sleep is key to good health and healing. When at rest, your body is doing its regeneration and repair work. Make sure you are getting at least 8 hours sleep a night. Remove all technology equipment and anything on standby from your sleeping area.

It is scientifically proven that 'blue screens' trick the body into thinking it's still daytime, so take a break from computers, tablets and mobile phones at least 2 hours before bedtime.



## GO ORGANIC

Since we're talking about food origins, eating organic food can help decrease the burden on your liver. When you consume pesticides, weed killers, antibiotics, artificial sweeteners, preservatives, flavourings and other potentially harmful substances found in non-organic produce, your liver, being the main filtering organ, is made to work much harder in order to reduce all the toxic load consumed and drunk.

A 12-year German study found that organic food contains higher levels of minerals. The largest differences were for potassium and iron, but magnesium, calcium, phosphorus and vitamin C levels were also higher in organic veg. These minerals are vital for the body's detox functions.



## HERBAL HELPERS

### FOR THE LIVER:



Try using a milk thistle tincture. This may help to improve liver function and protect the liver from toxins. It may also help to prevent depletion of glutathione, which is very important for liver detoxification.

### FOR THE KIDNEYS:



Nettle is mildly diuretic and promotes kidney function. It's also an easy herb to take as a tea on its own or with other herbs. Try red clover in addition to nettle for a gently cleansing and balancing effect.

Dandelion leaves can be made into tea or soups - not only do they promote good kidney function but they also protect the kidneys from damage, which might be caused by filtered wastes. If picking them wild or from the garden, avoid any plants which are close to the road as they are more likely to be contaminated by exhaust fumes.



### FOR THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM:

Fresh ginger tea with fennel, cumin and cardamom is very useful to encourage the whole digestive system to work more efficiently. This mix can be put into a flask and drunk throughout the day. Grate or chop some fresh ginger root into the flask and add one tsp of the mixed spices either in powder form or as seeds and pour boiling water over them. Adding ½ tsp ground flaxseed will add a gentle scraping effect to the colon and the resulting mucilaginous infusion will gently cleanse the colon.

## MORNING BOOSTER

Start the morning with a glass of warm filtered water and half a freshly juiced lemon. You have probably heard this a thousand times, but that is because it is so powerful, so try it and see!



### YOUR EXPERT

Nutritional Therapist Eva Killeen directs the CNM Natural Chef Diploma Course at the College of Naturopathic Medicine.  
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## 10 And breathe!

Deeply that is. Deep breathing is another practice that stimulates the lymphatic system and encourages the body to get rid of toxins. You are breathing deeply if your abdomen moves when you breathe; but if only the area below your rib cage is moving, then you are shallow breathing. Introducing deep breathing to your everyday routine will support your hard working detoxification system with very little - if any - extra effort.

This information is for general guidance only. For a specific cleansing and detoxification regime individualised to your needs, it's important to consult a qualified naturopath. ♥

