

# Bodies need annual spring cleaning

By Mandy Kendall

With the sunshine streaming through the window, highlighting every surface in need of a dusting, coupled with the hangover from a particularly indulgent weekend in Las Vegas, it has become clear that it is the spring-cleaning time of the year again.

Now, when cleaning houses all it really takes is the will, some determination and a bit of elbow grease and the job can be accomplished in a day. (OK, maybe two.)



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However, when it comes to spring cleaning our bodies, you definitely need the will and determination, but the elbow grease and getting the job done in a day or two is possibly not the best way forward. We are exposed to approximately 4,000 toxins each day in our food and from our environment. Most of these are manmade substances that our bodies can't process or don't know what to do with, and they can lead to fatigue, digestive problems, headaches, skin issues and a weakened immune system.

As a defense, our bodies tend to try to store the toxins that enter our bodies in places where they are least likely to do us any harm. Fat stores are one of the most common areas, and

could explain why some areas of fat are so difficult to get rid of, as the body is reluctant to release something from which it has been protecting us. So getting rid of the toxins needs to be a slow steady process, allowing the body to safely eliminate toxic waste substances without harming us in the process.

There are obviously plenty of cleansing programs you can buy, but for a start our bodies would probably just appreciate a rest from some of the clogging stuff we put into it. Imagine a drain that you poured sludge into every day; you probably wouldn't be surprised to see the drain coated, if not blocked, with sludge.

However, if you spent a few days just flushing clear water down the drain, you would probably expect to see a large amount of the sludge had been washed away in that time.

So, working on a similar theory concerning our bodies, here are a few *Qwik-e* (quick and easy) tips for a natural seven-day spring cleaning detox.

**Start the day** – A hot mug of water with a quarter squeezed lemon and some sliced ginger (with a dash of cayenne if you can take it) will kick start your system and flush out your digestive track (and get things moving if you know what I mean).

**Keep it light at first** – A fruit based breakfast with some Greek yogurt, or a freshly made smoothie will be a gentle start for your body. The fiber in the fruit helps slow down the sugar absorption nicely, but try and avoid fruit juice, as that will spike your blood sugar too quickly.

**Caffeine** – Try to do without (or severely restrict) caffeine and alcohol, as they are a strain on your liver, which will be working very hard to help eliminate the toxins. Try herbal teas instead (check they are naturally caffeine free) as these will support the liver in its arduous job. Also juiced fruits

and vegetables (pulp included) are fabulously nutritious and cleansing, so try to have at least one serving a day, on an empty stomach if possible.

**Clog or cleanse?** – If we were to ask ourselves whether a food is going to clog or cleanse us, I'm pretty sure most of us would instinctively know the right answer. However, general rule of thumb is anything in a packet with more than two ingredients has usually been processed in some way and will not be helpful in our cleansing process. Try and eat foods in their natural, unaltered state, as much as possible, and eat them raw if you can manage it. If raw food is not your favorite, then try to cook it as little as possible by steaming or lightly boiling. Obviously, organic foods, if they are an option, during the cleanse, will help greatly in the process.

**Sugar** – This, all too frequently added, food, has been labeled as this past century's legal cocaine. The form of sugar that is most added to our food (high fructose corn syrup for example) is highly addictive and incredibly toxic to our bodies, so check labels for any ingredient ending in "ose" and avoid it if at all possible. Natural fruit, in its whole form, can help to stave off any sugar cravings.

**Eat the rainbow** – Try and aim for 60 percent of your lunch and dinner plate to consist of a variety of vegetables, with as many different natural colors as possible. This will ensure a great variety of nutrients that your body will need to help breakdown the stored toxins.

**Curb your carbs** – Try and avoid wheat as much as possible as digesting this puts a huge strain on our digestive systems. If you absolutely must have your carbs try some wheat free alternatives like oat cakes, or bread made with rye or spelt flour. Check the labels. Many rye breads are made with wheat flour as well.

**Snack attack** – When the munchies kick in, try to have some cleansing support foods like vegetable sticks, fruit, nuts or seeds to hand to help avoid those sugary temptations.

**Don't have a cow** – Animal products are also a huge strain on our systems and are often full of more toxins. Try and replace animal meats (especially processed) and dairy products with fish, eggs, lentils and beans, seeds and nuts (try nut milks instead of dairy milk) to provide you with protein. Greek yogurt is made with sheep or goat's milk and is full of protein and much more easily digested.

**Be kind to yourself** – You may feel a little different for the first few days as your body adjusts. Keep hydrated and get plenty of sleep to give your body the best chance of making the most of this cleansing time.

Until next time.

*Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and wellbeing topic, please feel free to drop me an email at [healthconnective@gmail.com](mailto:healthconnective@gmail.com), visit us on Facebook, or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.*