

5 Ways to DETOX YOUR LIFE

by Jacob Teitelbaum, MD

If you're feeling nauseous, sluggish, and foggy, you may be dealing with toxin overload. During the holidays, your exposure to toxins can increase dramatically thanks to special holiday food, festive cocktails, and spending more time in crowded environments such as parties, malls, and airports.

Unfortunately, toxin exposure doesn't start or end with the holidays. You come into contact with harmful substances every day. Over time, those toxins accumulate in your body, and that can take a toll on your overall health and well-being. Luckily, there's a lot you can do to minimize your exposure and help your body safely and gently neutralize the toxins you do encounter.

COULD YOU BE FEELING THE EFFECTS OF TOXIC EXPOSURE?

When toxins build up in your system, they can affect you in surprising ways. Some of the more common symptoms of overload include:

- *Scent intolerances*
- *Constipation and diarrhea*
- *Irritability*
- *Frequent colds*
- *Body aches*
- *Brain fog*
- *Sugar cravings*
- *Skin rashes*
- *Headaches*

To rid yourself of these symptoms, you first need to know where your exposure comes from. And that may surprise you as well.

YOU'RE CONSTANTLY EXPOSED

Whether you realize it or not, toxins are part of your everyday life—they're virtually unavoidable. From chemicals to heavy metals, these compounds hide out in seemingly safe places like furniture, cosmetics, and dish soap. Hundreds of these everyday toxins are known to cause negative health issues in people, yet they're still regularly included as ingredients in consumer products.

Common household cleaning products are full of noxious chemicals like chlorine, ammonia, and formaldehyde. There's a reason warning labels caution against breathing in their fumes or getting even one drop on your skin. These highly toxic chemicals can do a great deal of damage, even if you take precautions. Frequent exposure to very low levels can lead to toxin buildup in your body.

Alarmingly, personal care products like shampoo, soap, hair dyes, and makeup can contain equally harmful ingredients. Many commercial brands contain chemical additives for texture or fragrance and heavy metals like lead or cadmium. These seep into your body, adding more to your existing toxic burden.

EXPOSURE INCREASES DURING THE HOLIDAYS

From holiday parties to free samples to family dinners, opportunities to eat sugary, fatty, unhealthy foods abound. On top of that, most people drink more alcohol than usual. Those two changes alone can be enough to overwhelm your body's natural detoxification capabilities. But the extra exposure you experience doesn't usually end there.

During the holiday season you may find yourself in different environments like airports, train stations, and shopping malls. The professional cleaning products they use may have increased chemical concentrations. Enticing scents that draw you into stores typically contain artificial compounds that end up in your lungs. But no matter how these toxins make their way into your body, they can take a toll on your overall health.

TOXIC BUILDUP AFFECTS YOUR HEALING ABILITIES

Cleaning up your life takes more than just changing what's on your plate, although it's an important component of detoxing. Along with rethinking the

foods you eat, it's also important to clean up the household and personal care products you use. But even as you clean up your environment, you'll also want to provide extra support to your gut and your liver. Those two vital organs play key roles in your body's natural detoxification pathways, so heavy exposure to holiday toxins hits them extra hard. This way you can thrive in the modern environment.

Your liver handles over 500 critical functions in your body, including removing toxins from your blood. Those toxins get filtered, contained, neutralized, and sent out for elimination. But when toxins overwhelm your liver, these processes become sluggish. Active toxins can then remain in your system for longer than your body can manage.

Your gut microbiome—the trillions of bacteria in your gut—is also affected by toxins, especially the ones that enter the body through your digestive tract. That includes things like:

- Pesticide residues
- Recombinant bovine growth hormones
- Artificial colors and flavors
- Mercury and other heavy metals

Many of these substances kill beneficial probiotic bacteria in your gut microbiome, while allowing harmful pathogens to overgrow. That creates a condition called dysbiosis where pathogens vastly outnumber beneficial bacteria. And those pathogens can create even more toxic products for your body to deal with. That's why it's so important to limit your toxic exposure as much as you can. And it's equally important to give your liver and gut microbiome plenty of support to help them overcome toxin overload.

5 SIMPLE WAYS TO DETOXYFY YOUR LIFE

By addressing the biggest culprits—food, household products, and

personal care products—you can greatly reduce your body's exposure to toxic substances. At the same time, giving your gut and liver ongoing extra support can help remove existing toxins and keep you healthier for the long term.



1 *Eat clean.* The holidays come packed with unhealthy foods and extra alcohol, and that combination can tax your body's tolerance. Processed foods can be laden with chemicals and additives. Non-organic produce gets bathed in pesticides like glyphosate. Fortunately, you can lower the toxic burden of the foods you eat by choosing whole, organic, and non-GMO foods as often as possible.



2 *Use non-toxic household products.* Many household cleaning supplies are packed with toxins. Whether they touch your

skin or you breathe them in, they add to your body's toxic burden. You can avoid this by switching to all-natural cleaning products, or making your own using ingredients such as white vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils like lavender and tea tree oil.



3

Clean up your personal care products.

Carefully read the ingredients on anything you put on your body, from lotion to body wash to deodorant. Try to avoid products that contain parabens, phthalates, mineral pigments, fragrances, and chemical stabilizers whenever possible.

4

Try these liver-loving herbs.

To clear toxins as much as possible, you need your liver to function

optimally down to the cellular level. You can give your liver the support it needs with its strongest herbal defender: berberine. A meta-analysis of clinical trials published in the journal *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* found that berberine improved markers of liver function better than standard drugs in patients with liver disease. Berberine has also been found to offer protection against toxin-induced liver damage through its powerful antioxidant properties.

Andrographis is another herb that supports the liver's detoxification capabilities. In a study published in the journal *PLoS One*, the andrographolides in andrographis were just as effective as the compounds in milk thistle for reducing your toxic load. Andrographis also stops liver damage and toxicity by boosting the antioxidant activity of glutathione, superoxide dismutase (SOD), and a protein called Nrf2 (pronounced "nerf-two"). To get all of this herb's detoxifying benefits, look for an andrographis supplement standardized to 80 mg per dose and that provides leaf and stem extracts.

5

Keep your gut in healthy balance with probiotics.

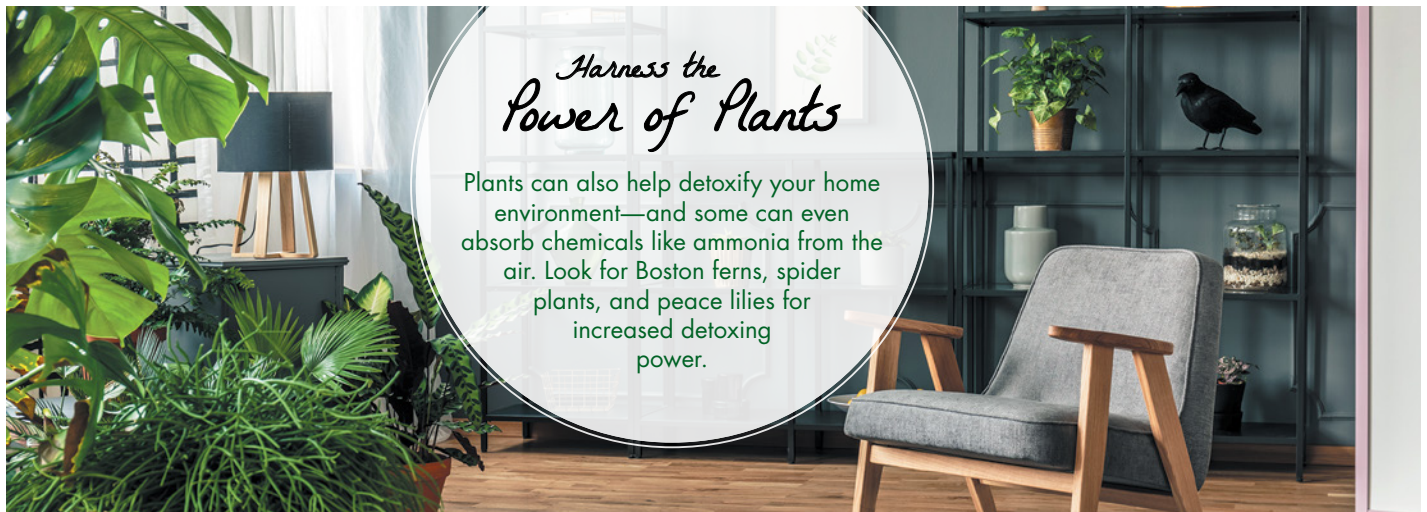
For extra detoxifying power, it's smart to rebalance your gut microbiome with



a high-quality probiotic supplement. This serves the double purpose of eliminating toxic pathogens and recruiting beneficial probiotic bacteria in the detoxification process. When choosing an effective supplement, pay attention to both the count and the probiotic strains. For the best results, you'll want at least 20 billion live, active probiotic bacteria including clinically studied strains such as *Lactobacillus plantarum*, *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, and *Bifidobacterium bifidum*. ■



Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, is a board-certified internist and an expert in chronic pain. He is the author of numerous books and booklets including *The Complete Guide to Beating Sugar Addiction*. Visit his website at vitality101.com.



Harness the Power of Plants

Plants can also help detoxify your home environment—and some can even absorb chemicals like ammonia from the air. Look for Boston ferns, spider plants, and peace lilies for increased detoxing power.