

“Green” Your Body

Staying Healthy by Reducing Your Total Load

By Adrienne Cook, ND

In the age of Green Living, we are all charged with finding ways to aid the health of the planet by reducing pollutants and discovering earth friendly homes, lifestyles, and methods of transportation. This focus on cleaning up the environment will also improve our own health.

Our bodies have detoxification and elimination processes, just as the earth does, but when burdens are greater than what the body can manage, toxins accumulate and cause dysfunction. Gradually, dysfunction becomes disease and more debilitating symptoms appear. This phenomenon is referred to as “total load.” A helpful analogy to explain this is “The straw that broke the camel’s back.” If the camel’s “total load” wasn’t maxed out, he could tolerate additional burdens, or straws, without harming himself.

We are exposed to environmental pollutants and allergens, eat chemicals in our foods, have a nutritionally poor diet, and are under chronic stress. The body manages these toxins through the organs of elimination: lungs, colon, skin, liver, and kidneys. When toxin exposure adds up and burdens the body, we begin to breakdown and to react. Signs of reactivity include: fatigue, dull mind, depression, headaches, allergies, frequent infections, skin rashes, acne, asthma, arthritis, constipation, high blood pressure, and blood sugar instability. In addition, elevated “total load” contributes to many chronic health problems: cancer, heart disease, neurodegenerative diseases (Parkinson’s disease and Alzheimer’s), kidney disorders, cataracts and glaucoma, and fatigue syndromes.

One of the keys to good health is to keep your “total load” low by identifying and avoiding toxic junk. It’s good for you and the planet.

Our homes should be a haven from the toxins of the rest of the world:

- Use biodegradable, perfume free and dye free cleaning products.
- Avoid using herbicides and pesticides on your lawn and garden.
- Use hair, makeup, and deodorants with natural ingredients.
- Reduce your use of plastic as it may contribute to infertility, precocious puberty, and cancer.
- Wash new clothes and linens, and air out dry cleaning before wearing.
- Use water filters on your drinking water and shower to eliminate chlorine exposure.
- Do not wear shoes in the home because they carry in pollutants from the outdoors.
- Remove clothing and shower after working/playing with known allergens and chemicals.
- Vacuum and clean regularly to reduce dust and molds.
- Consider home air purifiers (www.iqair.com or www.blueair.com).

We can also reduce our “total load” by altering what we eat:

- Avoid known food sensitivities or foods that “don’t agree with you.”
- Avoid foods with high insecticide residue. The Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org) regularly updates a list of fruits and vegetables that are the most contaminated.
- Avoid sugar, especially high fructose corn syrup, as it blocks liver elimination of toxins.
- Avoid non-organic beef, dairy, and oils to reduce hormone, antibiotic, and toxin exposure.
- Avoid farmed raised Atlantic salmon and large carnivorous fish (shark and swordfish). Check www.seafoodwatch.org for the best fish in your region.

Lifestyle changes can also improve your ability to handle toxic exposures:

- Incorporate stress management strategies like exercise into your daily life.
- Get sufficient sleep.
- Avoid smoking, drug use, and excessive alcohol use.

- Eliminate negative self-talk and unhealthy relationships. Live your truth and maintain personal boundaries.

The ideas presented here are just the beginning. The Holistic Health Clinic helps every patient reduce their “total load” through diet, metabolic cleansing, and colon hydrotherapy. Our patients get stronger, healthier, and improve their ability to handle burdens. The first step to affect the health of the planet is to create a “greener” you!