

CHAPTER 1

How Toxic Are You?

This sickness doth infect the very life-blood of our enterprise.

William Shakespeare

In this chapter you will learn

- What toxins are
- How toxins are affecting your health
- The many symptoms of toxicity
- Some of the common sources of toxins
- What detoxification is
- How to restore your health to peak performance and vitality by cleansing your body of toxic buildup

Imagine waking up without an ache or pain, cruising through your daily tasks with abundant energy, and ending your day with a refreshing night's sleep. Then imagine waking up to do it all over again. Think it is impossible? Think again. An accumulation of toxins can leave you feeling sluggish, achy, heavy, and out of shape. It can also lead to disease in the form of cancer, arthritis, diabetes, allergies, and many other serious illnesses. When you eliminate the myriad toxins in your body, you will greet each day feeling great.

Based on a decade and a half of research and experience, *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* works where other approaches fail. It works by eliminating the source of fatigue, headaches, and joint pain to help you feel great. It works by addressing the causes of minor health problems and more serious diseases such as cancer, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, depression, and heart disease. It works by addressing the underlying cause of malfunctioning bodily processes: toxins.

Toxins are substances that disrupt the normal healthy flow within our bodies. Literally thousands of toxins and harmful synthetic chemicals lurk in our food, air, water, clothes, homes, and workplaces. The very things that should nourish our bodies or comfort us are often making us ill. They take the form of foods, cleaning products, beauty and hygiene products, cooking oils, food additives, pesticides and herbicides, industrial chemicals in our air, damaging emotions, sugar, and much more. Take the following quiz to discover the myriad symptoms linked with toxins.

T H E D E T O X Q U I Z

Do you need to detoxify? Take the following quiz to find out. You may be surprised to learn of the many symptoms that are

linked to toxins in the body. Score one point for every habit or symptom you have experienced within the last year.

Sleep and Energy

- Tired in the morning or during the day even after a good night's sleep
- Disrupted sleep
- Ordinary activity leaves you feeling exhausted

Mental and Emotional

- Confusion
- Feeling agitated or nervous
- Unexplained feelings of anxiety or sadness
- Excessive anger or irritability
- Mood changes
- Depression
- Memory lapses
- Feeling restless or shaky
- Difficulty understanding new concepts
- Mentally sluggish
- Clumsiness
- Difficulty making decisions
- Negative outlook

Eyes, Ears, Mouth, and Nose

- Itchy ears
- Sensitivity to noise
- Itchy or watery eyes
- Dark circles or bags below eyes
- Swollen or inflamed eyelids
- Bloodshot eyes
- Sensitivity to light

- _ Sneezing fits or chronic cough
- _ Runny or itchy nose
- _ Itchy palate
- _ Coating on tongue
- _ Speech problems

Skin

- _ Dull-coloured, pale, greyish or yellowish
- _ Loose and flabby
- _ Wrinkling
- _ Acne or other blemishes
- _ Eczema or psoriasis
- _ Hives
- _ Cellulite
- _ Other skin problems

Digestive System

- _ Nausea or vomiting
- _ Diarrhea or loose stools
- _ Constipation
- _ Belching or gas, especially after eating
- _ Foul-smelling bowel movements
- _ Bloating or abdominal discomfort
- _ Heartburn or indigestion
- _ Certain foods irritate your stomach
- _ One or less than one bowel movement per day
- _ Frequent urination
- _ Water retention or bloating

Eating Habits

- _ Have cravings for foods
- _ Drink alcoholic beverages

- _ Eat fast foods, packaged or frozen foods
- _ Drink coffee or tea
- _ Consume sweets (including any sweetened foods: juices, carbonated beverages, condiments, or desserts)
- _ Consume white flour products (bread, pasta, cakes, cookies)
- _ Consume fried foods or margarine

Joints and Pain

- _ Aching or painful joints
- _ Joint stiffness
- _ Headaches or migraines

How did you score?

0–5—Excellent

You are probably experiencing great health. Keep in mind that being symptom-free doesn't guarantee a lifetime of great health. If you are detoxifying regularly, keep up the good work. If not, you may want to consider doing *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* once a year to maintain your health.

6–10—Good

You need to detoxify to improve your health. You will likely find relief from many of the symptoms you experience by limiting your exposure to toxins and conducting *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan*.

11+ —Time to Detox

You are experiencing many nagging symptoms that will improve by detoxifying. The energy and effort you invest in healing will pay tremendous dividends. Keep reading—*The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* will show you how to get started on the road to incredible health, amazing energy, and an improved quality of life.

Detoxification is the process of cleansing the body of harmful substances, and thereby restoring the body's natural healing ability. This process is accomplished through the use of herbs, foods, juices, aromatherapy, exercise, breathing techniques, and other therapies. Detoxification gives your body a short break from dietary and lifestyle habits that may be wreaking havoc on your health. During this time, you internally cleanse your body of waste products that clog its normal metabolic processes. Even people with minor problems or no visible symptoms often have toxic buildup.

Detoxification is comparable to cleaning your home. Imagine what your bathtub or shower would look like if you did not clean it regularly over twenty, forty, or even eighty years. Yet most people will allow similar conditions to fester in their bodies, without any form of internal cleansing.

Your body has its own ways of dealing with some toxins, but it can be overburdened by the volume and type of toxins found in our modern world. To effectively cleanse your body you must eliminate toxins from your respiratory system, liver, gallbladder, kidneys and urinary tract, skin, fatty deposits (including cellulite), lymphatic system and other detoxification organs and systems. To minimize further toxic buildup you must reduce your exposure to additional toxins.

Using *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan*, you will eliminate toxins from your cells, tissues, organs, and organ systems. The results will astound you. You will experience energy you never thought possible and pain-free movement in areas of your body you thought were permanently scarred by pain. You will experience freedom from emotional upheavals, mood swings, and depression. Cravings for less-than-healthy foods will disappear. Your skin will improve and fine wrinkles may recede. Your breathing and digestion will improve, and cellulite will diminish and, over time, may completely disappear.

In years of observing and counselling, I have seen countless people experience the miraculous healing power of detoxification. I

am one of those people. When I was only nineteen, my body was suffering from the ravages of toxins. At one point, I was so weak that I could not find the energy to answer the telephone on a nearby night table. While it was not the end of the world that I could not answer the telephone, it was symbolic of how much my life had gone downhill.

It seemed like my life changed overnight. One day I felt on top of the world, jogging, working, and volunteering after school. Then suddenly, I could barely get out of bed. Soon after, I was diagnosed with a serious and rare disorder for which my doctors offered no hope.

After being diagnosed, I was pumped full of prescription drugs to stop my body's own natural processes from working. In a very short time, I could not live without taking the medication upon which my body had become so dependent. My immune system no longer worked. Doctors explained that I could die from a cold or flu or even stress. I was constantly ill, and not long afterward I was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome, which developed because of my damaged immune system.

After seeing countless doctors and specialists, I sought help from the holistic health community. I popped dozens of herbal, vitamin, and mineral supplements. I saw a slight improvement but they were hard on my digestion.

I tried naturopathy, herbalism, acupuncture, and countless other healing modalities. They all helped a bit, especially acupuncture, which started to give me some energy back—enough to spend more time learning how to heal my body of numerous afflictions. I began to wonder whether the diseases from which I was suffering could be linked to toxic buildup. I was shocked to discover the multitude of toxins in our modern world and their insidious presence in the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the products we use.

My body became my laboratory. I experimented with countless detoxification approaches. I chugged olive oil complete with raw

garlic and lemon. I fasted on juices. I ate nothing but grapefruit for days. I used herbs and bathed in products that were supposed to pull toxins out of the body. I experimented with every food, folk remedy, fasting method, and healing therapy I read about. I learned what worked and what did not. I discovered the radical misconceptions many authors held about cleansing the body. I quickly uncovered the flaws in their approaches by experiencing terrifying reactions from cleansing too quickly or inappropriately.

Over time, I perfected my approach to cleansing so that it did not entail such drastic diets or therapies. I learned that cleansing did not have to be radical to be effective. It needed to be methodical and harmonious with the body's natural healing mechanisms. I learned that if I tried to cleanse my body while my liver remained sluggish, for example, I would experience headaches, pain, and immense discomfort. I realized that my approach needed to be truly holistic by considering the body as an integrated system, rather than tackling one organ or symptom at a time.

After years of trial and error, I developed an approach to healing that is now the premise of *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan*. It is a gentle system that minimizes any reactions. My program consists of simple foods and juices that taste great and require minimal effort to prepare. It uses foods that you can easily find in any grocery or health food store. The cost will be insignificant; your grocery bill will probably shrink while you are on *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan*.

The results will astound you as they have astounded me. Once I developed *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan*, I started healing more completely than I had in all the previous years combined. At one time, I had almost daily migraines that forced me into a dark bedroom. Now, I do not. The fatigue that plagued me has been replaced with energy and vitality. Many other symptoms that were a regular part of my life are gone. I continue to reap the rewards

of detoxification by following *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* regularly.

You will learn some truths about healing your body and afterward your mind, emotions, and spirit. In some ways the body is like a finely tuned and elaborate machine. If you put a piece of scrap metal between two cogs, they will stop turning. If you oil the machine, it will not help. Until you go to the source of the problem (the piece of metal that does not belong there), your machine will never work properly. Similar to the scrap metal that stops the machine from working properly, toxic buildup at the cellular level will be felt throughout the body in the form of disease and degeneration.

If you try to ignore the roots of toxicity, and instead merely treat the symptoms with drugs, you mask the problem and add more toxicity. The symptoms will return and you will be left in a vicious cycle of pill-popping.

The average senior citizen takes eight different pharmaceutical drugs every day. They may take one drug for pain, but it causes digestive upset, so they take another drug for the digestive problems. That drug causes other problems for which they take yet another pill. Soon the pills stop working, so they take stronger medications until they rely on a buffet of drugs just to get through the day. If, instead, they went to the root of the pain initially, they would have no need for so many pills, nor would they experience countless secondary symptoms.

The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan works on the premise that if you want to heal you must get to the source of the problem. Your doctor may have told you the source of your problem lay in a hormonal imbalance, or inflammation of your joints, or a cancerous tumour. While this is true as far as it goes, it is not the whole story. If toxins build up, the body's healing mechanisms become impaired, preventing them from adequately dealing with naturally occurring cancer cells, excess amounts of hormones, or inflammation.

The buildup of various toxins in the body is a serious contributor to disease and disorder, but one that few people consider. That is because, as we are routinely exposed to toxins, they gradually build up within our bodies. Toxins primarily affect the body at the cellular level, so many people do not get any symptoms at all. But lack of symptoms does not mean perfect health.

Few people ever experience the symptoms of clogged arteries prior to having a stroke or heart attack. Disease may appear to attack quickly and fiercely. Some people experience pain or fatigue or some other negative symptom but only for a short time prior to the diagnosis of serious afflictions like diabetes, multiple sclerosis, lupus, fibromyalgia, or chronic fatigue syndrome.

Other people wrongfully assume that certain symptoms are perfectly normal. Recently, a middle-aged woman told me she had perfect health and that toxins were not an issue for her. Yet she frequently complained of headaches, had experienced menopausal symptoms, and watched her energy plummet on many occasions. While these symptoms are common, they are not normal. They are common symptoms of toxicity and signals from the body that something is wrong. If you ignore these early signs of illness, you do so at your own peril.

Actually, many of the symptoms of illness are also symptoms of toxicity within the body. Illnesses can heal when the body is cleansed properly and rebuilt. The human body is incredible. It is designed to heal—almost anything. Trillions of cells work at lightning speed to remove barriers to health, overcome infection, and heal whatever is affecting your body. That is how broken bones mend and wounds repair. The human body can overcome even the most serious afflictions and trauma when given the opportunity.

In a single second, billions of processes are occurring simultaneously. Things go wrong with the body when we put harmful substances into it, whether we ingest them through food or drink, inhale them in our air, or absorb them through our skin.

You will soon learn the extent of a serious problem and threat to our health and well-being. The human body can withstand minor negligence, but, eventually, it will scream to be heard. It may scream in the form of pain or inflammation, degeneration or organ failure, but it will scream.

When I was seriously ill, I used to believe that my body had failed me. But I discovered that I had failed my body.

Treat your body well and it will take care of you. It has its own innate healing intelligence. Consider the fact that your skin is *totally* renewed every twenty-eight days. You have an entirely new heart in thirty days. Your lungs take seventy days to completely regenerate. So even the most serious affliction should be gone in the time it takes to regenerate an organ. But this is rarely the case. The reason is simple. Your body has specific needs: enzymes, oxygen, nutrients, a proper pH balance, a healthy system of digestion and elimination, electrically charged tissues and cells, healthy emotions, love, and a sense of purpose and fulfilment, among other things. (I will explain more about these elements throughout the book.) If any of these elements are missing, the body will continue with the same diseased pattern.

If your body is burdened with chemicals, sugars, rancid oils, and a lack of nutrients and enzymes at many of your meals, it simply cannot function properly. If every breath you take is shallow and laden with airborne pollutants, your body cannot manufacture healthy cells. If your body cannot manufacture healthy cells, you are vulnerable to ill health. If you slather chemical-laden skin- and hair-care products on yourself, your body cannot use its largest organ of detoxification (the skin) to eliminate toxins. Instead, it is working in reverse, absorbing more poisons into your cells. If you breathe the harmful vapours of chlorine bleach and thousands of other household products, you are exposing your lungs to poisons they were never designed to eliminate.

You may believe your symptoms are the result of a genetic predisposition to some ailment or disease with a name you can hardly pronounce or spell. But these are labels given to malfunctions in the body by Western medical doctors. They mean little or nothing on their own. Consider bronchitis as an example. It is really an inflammation (“itis”) of the bronchial passages in the lungs. That is the just the symptom of a problem, but what caused the inflammation? Too often, the Western approach is to provide a pharmaceutical drug for each of the symptoms of a disorder, without thought to the cause of the problem. In addition, these very drugs are synthetic chemicals that stop some process of your body and, at the same time, add further toxins to an already toxic state.

People are not all equally susceptible to toxins. Women are more vulnerable to them for three main reasons. First they are, on average, smaller than men. This lower body weight causes them to become ill from toxic buildup faster. Second, women also, again on average, have more fat in their bodies than men. Toxins have an affinity for fat. When the body cannot handle the quantity of toxins entering it or being manufactured as by-products of bodily processes, it stores them in fat.

That is part of the reason why so many people find it difficult to lose weight. The fat stores in their bodies are serving a valuable purpose: to house toxins, thereby preventing them from causing more damage if they were circulating in the bloodstream or organ systems.

Third, women’s hormonal balance is also more delicate than that of men. Many toxins produce hormone-like effects in the body, thereby throwing off this delicate balance.

Children are also more susceptible to toxins than adults. Toxins tend to collect in higher concentrations in their tiny bodies. Also, their immune systems are not fully developed and lack the strength to effectively handle toxins.

Not surprisingly, lifestyle plays a role. If you work with damaging chemicals, are inactive, or breathe toxic fumes regularly, you are more

vulnerable to the effects of toxins. If you eat nutrient-depleted food high in additives, sugar, or rancid or hydrogenated fats, you will be increasing your toxic load faster than if you ate healthily.

Exposure to synthetic chemicals also plays a role in susceptibility. Each chemical is different and may react differently in the body. Some are soluble in water while others are not; some break down quickly while others reside in the body's tissues for years. So the specific type of chemical that a person is exposed to may make a difference in how it affects them.

In Chapters 2 and 3, you will learn more about the many toxic synthetic chemicals we are exposed to and their well-documented link to such diseases as cancer, breathing difficulties, imbalanced hormones, lung inflammation, liver damage, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and much more.

While synthetic chemicals clearly contribute to toxic buildup in the body, they are not the only culprits. There are two main types of toxins: those that come from outside our bodies (exotoxins) and those that come from within (endotoxins). Other external toxins include noise, radiation, electromagnetic fields, weather, altitude, and lifestyle habits. Some internal toxins include emotional traumas and stress hormones, difficult life experiences that get stored in the body, and a loss of a sense of connection to something greater.

It is important that you start thinking of your body as a marvelous creation where millions of functions take place every second. Your body knows how to heal, but it needs your help.

Everyone will benefit from a detoxification process several times per year. People with chronic health concerns should gradually detoxify even more frequently or for a longer duration. *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* easily fits into even the most hectic lifestyle, allowing for an effortless transition into detoxification any time during the year.

I will walk you through my *Ultimate Body Detox Plan*. During the four weeks that make up the program, you will gradually cleanse and purify your body with minimal effort. You will experience few, if any, cleansing symptoms. If you experience any symptoms at all, they will typically be insignificant. They might constitute minimal fatigue or weakness, slight nausea, or a minor headache. If these symptoms appear, I will explain exactly what to do to eliminate them quickly.

Thanks to the natural laws of healing, when you eliminate toxins from your cells, tissues, glands, and organs, the body can resume healthy bodily functions. After we work to cleanse the body, I will show you how to detoxify on mental, emotional, and spiritual levels as well.

The procedures to detoxify the emotions or spirit are clearly different from those used to eliminate chemical toxins in the body. In the following chapters I will address these different approaches and provide you with the tools to start detoxifying. The results of detoxifying are truly remarkable, regardless of your symptoms.

Detoxifying your body, mind, emotions, and spirit has countless benefits. You will observe many irritating symptoms clear up. You can expect that your digestion will improve, your sinuses will clear, your blood pressure may normalize, your bowel movements will regulate, and your hormones will begin to balance. Your energy will soar, and you will see improvements with many chronic ailments.

Your mental abilities will sharpen; you will sleep better, have fewer mood swings, experience a stronger immune system, healthier skin, and lessening of allergy symptoms; and you will feel more capable of living life to its fullest. You may even feel a stronger sense of purpose in your life and a greater connection to the planet and humankind.

It may seem hard to believe that a detoxification program can offer so many rewards, but it is true. I spent years popping vitamins and herbs and trying to eat well, but I saw few improvements in my

health. When I focused on cleansing my body, I noticed tremendous improvements quite quickly.

The approach I use to healing is threefold:

1. Cleanse the body of toxins that have built up in the cells, tissues, organs, and organ systems.
2. Reduce further exposure to toxins.
3. Help the body to rebuild through proper nutrition and healing therapies, with particular emphasis on weakened or damaged areas.

This approach sounds simple because it is. Yet it is also powerful and effective. Using *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan*, you will learn how to eliminate even the most stubborn toxins from your body. You will also learn how to improve your circulation, so it is better equipped to transport nutrients and remove wastes from your cells. When cells are freed from the burden of excess waste products, they are more capable of fulfilling their purpose. That spells healthier tissues, organs, and glands since cells are their building blocks.

In the chapters that follow, I will take you through the stages of detoxification and healing.

You must first address the toxic load that has already built up in your body. Next, you will eliminate further exposure to additional toxins. Finally, you can start to strengthen any weak areas by providing the body with exactly what it needs to heal fully. I have included short quizzes throughout this book to help you determine the weakest detoxification organs or systems in your body. I will also explain how you can strengthen them to function at their peak.

You will also learn how to maintain the sense of vitality you experience after completing *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* by making small dietary and lifestyle changes. For example, selecting healthier cooking oil can help you sharpen your mental clarity, lose

weight, and boost your immunity. By choosing better food storage containers, you can reduce hormonal imbalances.

Foods, herbs, juices, increased oxygen and movement, along with natural healing therapies are the best approach to healing. Restore your body's natural healing instincts by eliminating toxins and you will experience improved health. Henry David Thoreau wrote about the healing effects of nature: "Nature is doing her best each moment to make us well. She exists for no other end. Do not resist. With the least inclination to be well, we should not be sick." If you have the inclination to be well, *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* will walk you along the path to vibrant health and vitality.

In her book *Women Who Run With the Wolves*, Clarissa Pinkola Estés compared the human body to the planet. She declared:

The body is like an Earth. It is a land unto itself. It is as vulnerable to overbuilding, being carved into pieces, cut off, overmined, and shorn of its power as any landscape. We tend to think of the body as this "other" that does its thing without us. Many people treat their bodies as if the body were a slave. We have only to pay heed to our bodies to know what we must do. The body is not sculpture or marble. Its purpose is to protect, contain, support and fire the spirit and soul within it, to be a repository for memory, to fill us with feeling. It is to lift us and propel us, to prove that we exist, that we are here, to give us grounding, heft, weight. The body is best understood as being in its own right, one who loves us, depends on us, one to whom we are sometimes mother, and who sometimes is mother to us.

In *The 4-Week Ultimate Body Detox Plan* you will learn how to be a better mother to your body—by paying heed to its communication with you via symptoms and by not treating it as a slave any longer. In this way your body will become a more effective repository for

memory; it will have a greater, more vital existence and it will be better able to fire the spirit and soul it houses.

In this chapter you learned

- What toxins are and their many sources
- How toxins are affecting your health
- That there are many negative symptoms linked with toxicity
- How to restore your health through detoxification