

TOXINS

THE ADDITIVE EFFECT

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Do you experience unaccountable symptoms of migraines, headaches, seasonal allergies, muscle or joint pain? Are feelings of depression, nervousness or sudden anger present for an unknown reason? All of these symptoms can be caused or attributed to the 'additive effect' of toxins.

Imagine your body as a barrel that begins empty at birth. As you continue to grow and interact with the world, you are exposed to many toxins that fill this barrel. Once the barrel reaches its full capacity and begins to overflow, we experience symptoms such as headaches, chronic pain and allergies that were not prevalent in the past. On a wellness scale, these symptoms indicate that the immune system is functioning at approximately 35 percent. This decrease in immune system function leads to frequent illness, longer sickness and an increase in overall symptoms.

We are exposed to an infinite amount of contaminants in this modern world, which make living a toxic-free life virtually impossible. Have you ever considered how these chemicals are affecting your body? As products of our culture, we have adopted the faster and bigger is better mentality, but what cost is this to our health and well-being? Consequently, for those of us who purchase certain products to maintain health may be in for a rude awakening to discover the harmful chemicals, which are unnecessarily added to our water, our food and even our personal care items.

The amount of toxins emitted into the environment is growing at a rapid rate. This is apparent as the number of cancer patients continues to rise, along with an increase in illness and disease. In fact, 60-80 percent of all cancers are a direct result of toxins in the air, water and food. Our daily activities are inundated with various contaminants which contribute to the exorbitant amount of toxins absorbed into the body. When we have absorbed or ingested more toxins than our bodies can process and eliminate, we store these toxins in different areas of our bodies. (This is when our barrel begins to overflow.) However, before we reach this point, we possess the ability to process and eliminate a finite number of toxic agents. First, the liver metabolizes or neutralizes toxins, which can then be eliminated through the different systems of digestive, urinary, skin or respiratory track. For instance, a dry cough, skin rash or intestinal discomfort may be a result of toxin elimination. In addition to the liver, the lymphatic system helps flush toxins from the tissues. In toxin overload, this system becomes congested with harmful chemicals and cannot eliminate them all. Since the lymphatic system is also a part of our immune system, this leads to a decrease in immunity, which in turn causes us to become more susceptible to illness, leading to a downward spiral.

Many people are not aware of the toxins found in the products we use every day. Advertisements for toothpaste, which nine out of ten dentists recommend, claim to brighten teeth and prevent gum disease. Although Fluoride is a trace mineral and we require small amounts for optimal function, larger doses of Fluoride are linked to cancer, genetic damage, nervous system dysfunction and bone diseases. The amount of fluoride present in toothpaste and some municipal water supplies are known to lower the IQ of children. Furthermore, the main ingredient that is used for its detergent and foaming abilities in toothpaste and other products, sodium lauryl sulfate, is a chemical that causes eye irritations, skin rashes, hair loss, and allergic reactions. This carcinogen is often misunderstood for a natural ingredient when disguised as "comes from coconut" in shampoo, conditioner and body wash. It is also known for causing vaginal yeast infections and may mimic estrogen and roughen the skin. An alarming FDA testing of 124 cosmetics showed that half were contaminated with harmful chemicals. The following is a list of other chemicals found in personal care products; benzoates (preservatives) in most cosmetics are linked to asthma and eczema; lauramide DEA creates foam and later in shampoo, conditioner, face wash and body wash and may cause cancer; and parabens (methyl, propyl, butyl, and ethyl) added to cosmetics to extend the shelf life are highly toxic and have caused many allergic reactions and skin rashes. Take time to read the labels of the products you are purchasing. There are safe alternatives.

What about the food we eat? Most of us are too busy to consider food preparation a priority when easily and quickly prepared foods are so readily available. But, what are we really trading for this convenience? Hydrogenated oils and trans fats have made headlines in current publications. These oils have been super heated for the purpose of preventing foods from becoming rancid, therefore, extending their shelf life. Over 90% of the foods we eat contain

hydrogenated oils and at no level are these oils safe to consume. Our bodies cannot break down these oils and they tend to clog the cells as a drain becomes clogged. Research studies show conclusively that they cause non-insulin dependent type II diabetes or hyperinsulinemia, a disease, which can eventually burn out the pancreas and cause insulin dependent diabetes. Hydrogenated oils dramatically increase the risk of coronary heart disease, breast cancer, other types of cancers and autoimmune diseases. In addition to these silent killers, other food additives are associated with common illnesses or diseases. Many vitamins made for children and adults include chemicals such as food colorings and preservatives. Food coloring, synthetic flavoring and refined sugar are associated with ADD and ADHD. Refined sugar also contributes to symptoms of arthritis. MSG frequently causes migraines and artificial sweeteners have been implicated in symptoms of neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis. Be aware of pesticides and herbicides found in the various fruits, meats, and vegetables that you eat because they are also carcinogenic. Freshly prepared foods taste better than processed foods and by integrating whole foods and organic products into your diet, you may reduce the 'additive effect' of toxins in your system.

The last topic of importance is the water we drink. Copper, arsenic, radon, lead, fluoride, chlorine, gasoline additives, pharmaceutical waste, herbicides and pesticides are some of the harmful toxins known to be found in our water supply. Copper toxicity is indicated in children with learning disorders, schizophrenia, depression and anxiety. Chlorine is added deliberately to provide health benefits; however, it has been proven to be carcinogenic. Pollutants found in well water include herbicides, pesticides and other ground or soil contaminants resulting from dumping or spillage. 80 percent of the streams sampled by the U.S. Geological Survey were contaminated by human and veterinary drugs. Pharmaceutical drugs found in water supplies may affect the thyroid and the immune system. Although there are no mandatory regulations regarding these impurities, it is a simple matter to have your well tested.

In order to avoid contact with toxins one hundred percent of the time, we would have to survive in a bubble. So, what can we do to make our personal environment less toxic? Make reasonable and informed decisions. Read labels on foods and products we buy. Purchase items free of additives, pesticides, herbicides, steroids and carcinogens (some extra time may be spent in choosing where and how we shop.) In addition, installing water filters will help decrease contaminants in our household water. Of course, there are also ways to encourage body detoxification without fasting. Participating in a detoxification at least 3-4 times a year will decrease the 'additive effect' of toxins in your system. Treatments offered at alternative health care clinics such as massage, Acupuncture, and the Neuro Modulation Technique detox the body in non-invasive and safe way. Finally, exercising and sweating out the toxins through yoga, running, and aerobic workouts will stimulate your body to eliminate harmful toxins.