

IS YOUR BODY TOXIC? CHANCES ARE IT IS

By Lian Monley



Are you aware of what you are putting into your body or on your body? Do you know what most pesticides, herbicides and fungicides contain? Are you aware of what is in your drinking water or what is leached into your water?

We are talking about xenobiotics, usually synthetic chemicals often derived from petroleum oil, which originate outside the body and produce hormone-like and estrogen-like activity in the body and so have a profound impact on hormone balance.

HOW DOES THIS CONCERN YOU?

Estrogen tends to promote cell division, particularly in hormone-sensitive tissue, such as breast and uterine lining. There are several reasons why women, in particular, suffer from estrogen imbalance, some of them associated with birth control, menopause, pregnancy, increased stress levels etc.

The xenobiotics add to this imbalance and the longer they stay in the body the more opportunity they have to do damage. The bottom line is that the body has to detoxify them daily and this can become a burden.

HOW DO XENOESTROGENS GET INTO OUR BODIES?

Xenoestrogens enter the body via animal fats, particularly red meat and dairy fats. Animals are exposed to estrogenic substances as a means to fatten them for market. They are also exposed to petrochemical pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, all potent xenobiotics, through the grains they eat.

Solvents and adhesive found in nail polish, paint removers and glue are one source. Emulsifiers and waxes found in soaps and cosmetics are another.

Nearly all plastic products, including baby bottles, Tupperware, plastic water bottles, food wrappers or packaging in plastic are other sources of xenobiotics.

Use pyrex glassware and stainless steel water bottles where possible. It is difficult to identify and list the number of plastic products which do contain high levels of xenobiotics, so assume that all do.

HOW TO CHECK ON AND REDUCE EXPOSURE

- Take a saliva lab test to find out the cycle of all your hormones.

- Eat organic fruits and vegetables. Studies show that these contain 50-80 per cent more nutrients than conventionally-raised produce.
- Eat hormone-free, antibiotic-free, free-range meats and dairy products.
- If you are on a birth-control or Rx medication, start to educate yourself on what this does to your gut, immune system and hormonal system.

One common comment seeking to downgrade the harm of xenoestrogens is that they appear to be in such small amounts that they cannot do us harm. The response to that is that we are exposed every day of every year to these small but insidious amounts and so we are overloading our natural, bodily detoxification system.

SYMPTOMS OF XENOESTROGENS

There are many and there can be other causes, of course. Allergies are one symptom, so is depression, fatigue, water retention, infertility, miscarriage, osteoporosis, fat gain around the hips, waist and thighs and early menstruation cycles for girls.



Lian Monley is a qualified Corrective, Holistic, Exercise, Kinesiology (C.H.E.K) Lifestyle Coach. She takes a holistic approach when treating physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health issues. She incorporates Eastern and Western philosophies in assessing and treating clients. Her website is: www.Lianmonleywellbeing.com.

YOU REALLY ARE WHAT YOU EAT!

By Lian Monley



We have all heard the saying, “You are what you eat.” Taken at face value, this statement can be somewhat misleading. A more accurate statement would be, “You are what you absorb.”

Healthy food choices are very important, but those nutritious foods won't do you much good at all if you are not digesting them properly. Even if nutrition is a high priority for you and you spend considerable time and effort (*and money*) eating fresh, organic, nutrient rich foods and taking daily vitamins, you may not be absorbing the nutrients that your body desperately needs to stay healthy.

In fact, many people have dysfunctional digestive systems and don't even know it. Some symptoms of digestive dysfunction are gas, bloating or belching after meals, chronic or frequent fatigue, arthritis, dry or itchy skin (eczema), asthma, migraines, food and environmental allergies, brain fog, ADD and many other illnesses.

If you suffer from any of these conditions, you might want to take a closer look at your digestion. The digestive system consists of two main components: a chemical component and a mechanical component.

The chemical component consists of *digestive enzymes* and gastric juices produced by the mouth, stomach, pancreas, liver and small intestine. The mechanical component –*peristalsis*– is what pushes the food down through your gastrointestinal tract once it leaves your mouth and enters your esophagus.

The majority of digestive problems begin with a dysfunction of the chemical component. This typically consists of an enzyme deficiency and/or an imbalance in gut flora (bacteria).

Both issues are promoted and caused by poor diet, chronic stress, metabolic or endocrine disorders, use of certain prescription drugs or simply the aging process.

A deficiency in stomach acid, known as *hydrochloric acid* (HCL) or the *protease* enzymes will inhibit your ability to break down proteins. This particular

deficiency can lead to brain chemistry imbalances, loss of lean muscle tissue, impaired immunity, food allergies and even more serious metabolic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

Maintaining optimum enzyme production is tricky because it relies on the presence of other key factors known as co-factors. These are your vitamins and minerals. A deficiency in just some of these co-factors can be enough to inhibit the digestion and absorption process.

But how do you get these vitamins and minerals out of your food if you already lack the enzymes to break down the food? While this may seem like a catch-22 situation, it can often be handled simply by taking a broad-spectrum enzyme supplement with your meals.

An enzyme supplement should contain, at the minimum, protease, lipase, amylase, cellulase, lactase, sucrase and maltase.

When it comes to gut flora, keep this in mind: there are more bacteria in our intestinal tract than there are cells in our entire body. That's over 100 trillion organisms with a collective weight of about four pounds – roughly the size of our liver.

When this internal ecosystem is in proper balance, it not only promotes optimal digestion, it helps fight infectious disease, normalizes serum cholesterol and triglycerides, breaks down and rebuilds hormones that help to reduce inflammation, manufactures many vitamins in our foods and bodies and increases the bioavailability of essential minerals like calcium and magnesium.

These bacteria aid directly in the digestive process, digesting lactose, breaking down proteins into amino acids, and helping to regulate peristalsis and regular bowel movements.

The causes of imbalance in this gut flora (a condition known as *dysbiosis*) are the same as the causes mentioned above for enzyme deficiencies. Another way of describing dysbiosis is that the bad guys outnumber the good guys.

The solution is simple: eat more fresh, whole foods and take a daily probiotic supplement, consisting

of acidophilus and bifidus, at the minimum.

A dysfunction of the mechanical or peristaltic component of the digestive system is typically caused by inadequate consumption of *water* and *dietary fiber*. The minimum recommended daily fiber-intake is 25 grams.

Since most of us find it difficult to consume five to seven servings of vegetables and fruits per day, fiber supplementation is highly recommended. The minimum daily water intake should be a half ounce for every pound of body weight. One way to verify that your peristaltic component is functioning properly is if you are having two to three bowel movements per day.

The most effective way to prevent all of these digestive problems is to limit your consumption of processed foods such as breads, pastas, cereals and refined sugars. These foods deprive your body of vital, enzyme-friendly nutrients and disrupt peristalsis.

Other ways to prevent problems are to avoid overcooking your foods, limit your exposure to foodborne and environmental toxins and reduce overall stress. ■



Lian Monley is a qualified Corrective, Holistic, Exercise, Kinesiology (C.H.E.K) Lifestyle Coach. She takes a holistic approach when treating physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health issues. She incorporates Eastern and Western philosophies in assessing and treating clients. Her website is: www.Lianmonleywellbeing.com.

10 TIPS ON LONG- LASTING BEAUTY

By Lian Monley



We all want to age gracefully and maintain the beauty and vitality of youth for as long as possible, don't we? So be aware that cosmetic surgery may play a role in helping to minimize the physical effects of aging, but over-reliance on it can produce unwelcome results.

The following suggestions will help you to infuse your skin and hair with health, so that they glow with long-lasting beauty. As clichéd as it sounds, good health is the true elixir of youth. But beware: some nutritional and healthcare programs may be sabotaging both your health and your youthful complexion.

1. Never diet

Malnutrition and extreme fat loss caused by dieting is a guaranteed recipe for premature aging. Deep in our hearts we all know diets don't work—they wreck our metabolism and destroy the skin's elasticity, making it prone to wrinkling, scarring and sagging. Feeling stressed and cranky due to food cravings does not make you feel or look beautiful.

2. Choose your skin care products wisely

Cosmetics are designed to make your skin look and feel good at the cosmetics counter. There, lines and wrinkles become less noticeable as wetting agents puff your skin up

while optical diffusers hide blemishes and give your skin a false glow.

The fact is, however, that many of the chemicals in skin care products slowly degrade and damage your skin over time, leaving you more reliant on cosmetics. Most face creams are designed for stability and a long shelf life, which is at extreme odds with your skin's health as living tissue.

3. Avoid sugar

Sugar speeds up chemical reactions producing something known as Advanced Glycation End-products, also known as AGE's. Glycation involves the cross-linking of proteins and sugars to form non-functioning structures in your body and AGE's are responsible for making your skin stiff, inflexible and more wrinkled.

AGE's also damage other proteins in blood vessels, eyes, lungs and tendons and are also implicated in Alzheimer's Disease. Try to avoid all foods that cause spikes in blood sugar, such as fruit juice, breakfast cereals, soft drinks, white bread, pasta and rice crackers.

4. Eat plenty of protein

Your skin cells are built from fat and protein and a deficiency of this nutrient shows up first in your hair, skin and nails. Aim to eat a handful-sized serving of protein 2-3 times daily. Good protein choices include small fish, organic chicken and eggs, free ranged beef and lamb as well as organic organ meats, such as liver.

5. Get enough of the right kind of fat

Animal breeders know the secret of a glossy coat and healthy skin—plenty of fats and oils. Fatty acids in fish and cod liver oil, coconut oil, egg yolks, organic butter, avocados, nuts and seeds will all improve the texture, tone and appearance of your skin. Symptoms of essential fatty acid deficiency include dry but oily skin on the face, dry brittle hair and dull skin that has lost its lustre and glow.

Avoid polyunsaturated vegetable oils such as canola, sunflower, corn, soy and safflower oil which increase free radical damage. Free radical damage literally rusts your body from the inside out.

6. Take a good antioxidant-rich supplement

Antioxidant defenses in your skin drop by as much as 80 percent between the ages of 15 and 60. Skin-friendly antioxidants include the minerals zinc and selenium, Vitamins A, C and E, as well the herbs turmeric, rosemary and grape seed. Antioxidant-rich foods include green tea, berries, raw chocolate and fresh herbs such as parsley and basil.

7. Drink plenty of pure, filtered water

Dehydrated skin looks much older than it really is.

8. Get a good night's sleep

Not only does lack of sleep make you look hollow-eyed and haggard, it really does age you faster. Your body heals, repairs and regenerates while you're sleeping.

9. Give up alcohol, caffeine and cigarettes

Smoking is a definite no-no if you want to slow the aging process. Enjoy coffee and alcohol in moderation. The key words are enjoy and moderation. There is nothing enjoyable or moderate about ditching a healthy breakfast for a take-away coffee or drinking a bottle of wine with dinner every night of the week.

10. Be patient

Your body and your skin can only rebuild and regenerate at a set pace. Remember the tortoise and the hare? Tortoises live for well over 150 years while hares live for about 10 years. Slow and steady wins this race.

Lian Monley is a qualified Corrective, Holistic, Exercise, Kinesiology (C.H.E.K) Lifestyle Coach. She takes a holistic approach when treating physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health issues. She incorporates Eastern and Western philosophies in assessing and treating clients. Her website is: www.Lianmonleywell-being.com.

A Stronger, Leaner and Healthier You

By: Lian Monley

Strength training is an important part of an overall fitness program. Here's what strength training can do for you—and how to get started.

You know exercise is good for you. You look for ways to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine and you set aside time for longer workouts at least a few times a week. But if your aerobic workouts aren't balanced by a proper dose of strength training, you're missing out on a key component of overall health and fitness.

Strength training is important for everyone. With regular strength training you burn calories more efficiently.

Muscle mass naturally diminishes with age, and if you don't do anything to replace the lean muscle you lose, you'll increase the percentage of fat in your body. Strength training can help you preserve and enhance your muscle mass at any age.

Strength training also helps you:

Develop strong bones. By stressing your bones, strength training increases bone density and reduces the risk of osteoporosis.

Control your weight. As you gain muscle, your body burns calories more efficiently — which can result in weight loss. The more toned your muscles, the easier it is to control your weight.

Reduce your risk of injury. Building muscle protects your joints from injury. It also helps you maintain flexibility and balance—and remain independent, as you age.

Boost your stamina. As you grow stronger, you won't fatigue as easily.

Improve your sense of well-being. Strength training can boost your self-confidence, improve your body image and reduce the risk of depression.

Get a better night's sleep. People who commit to a regular strength training program are less likely to have insomnia.

Manage chronic conditions. Strength training can reduce the signs and symptoms of many chronic conditions, including arthritis, back pain, depression, diabetes, obesity and osteoporosis.

Strength training can be done at home or in the gym, so consider your options.

Body weight. You can do many exercises with little or no equipment—use your body weight instead. Try push-ups, pull-ups, abdominal crunches and leg squats.

Resistance tubing. Resistance tubing is inexpensive, lightweight tubing that provides resistance when stretched. You can choose from many types of resistance tubes in nearly any sporting-goods store.

Free weights. Barbells and dumbbells are classic strength training tools. You can also try homemade weights, such as plastic soft drink bottles filled with water or sand.

Weight machines. Most fitness centers offer various resistance machines. You can also invest in weight machines for use at home.

Getting started

When you have your doctor's OK to begin a strength training program, start slowly. Warm up with five to 10 minutes of stretching or gentle aerobic activity, such as brisk walking. Then choose a weight or resistance level heavy enough to tire your muscles after about 12 repetitions.

On the 12th repetition, you should be just barely able to finish the motion. When you're using the proper weight or amount of resistance, you can build and tone muscle just as efficiently with a single set of 12 repetitions as you can with more sets of the same exercise. It is important to concentrate on doing the exercise at the right tempo, not too fast.

To give your muscles time to recover; rest one full day between exercising each specific muscle group. When you can easily do more than 15 repetitions

of a certain exercise, gradually increase the weight or resistance. Remember to stop if you feel pain. Although mild muscle soreness is normal, sharp pain and sore or swollen joints are signs that you've overdone it.

When to expect results

You don't need to spend hours a day lifting weights to benefit from strength training. Two to three strength training sessions a week lasting just 20 to 30 minutes are sufficient for most people. You may enjoy noticeable improvements in your strength and stamina in just a few weeks. With regular strength training, you can increase your strength 50 percent or more within six months—even if you're not in shape when you begin.

Strength training can do wonders for your physical and emotional well-being. Make it part of your quest for better health. ■



Lian Monley is a qualified Corrective, Holistic, Exercise, Kinesiology (C.H.E.K) Lifestyle Coach. She takes a holistic approach when treating physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health issues. She incorporates Eastern and Western philosophies in assessing and treating clients. Her website is: www.Lianmonleywellbeing.com.

STAYING HEALTHY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

By: Lian Monley

For most expatriates the festive season is a time to relax and unwind and to enjoy spending time with family and friends, and rightly so! Unfortunately, along with all this time spent visiting and relaxing the temptation always arises to over-indulge and to put the year's hard work of choosing the healthier option at the back of your mind.

With some subtle changes, however, it is possible to still enjoy all the festivities and ease the blow when reconsidering New Year's resolutions.

Reducing the fat content

Fish is the best meat for a low fat content and there are many spices and marinades that can add incredible flavour to your meal.

Pork and chicken (without the skin) are also lower in fat than traditional meats such as beef and lamb. In fact, lamb contains the highest fat content. Beef rump has the most fat, with T-bone having less, then sirloin and the least fat is fillet.



Taking the greener option

Salads are a wonderful source of nutrients and can help in reducing the amount of meat you put on your plate. The options for variation in salads is incredible and can always add flavour to your meal. Use a good olive oil and balsamic vinegar as your dressing.



Portion size

Here's the tricky bit. Try and take a little something of everything you would like, placing more emphasis on the salads. And also make sure you don't try and slip in an extra large plate! This way you can enjoy everything and not over indulge.

Washing it all down

Keep in mind that alcohol contains a large amount of calories. By diluting your drinks with diet sodas or water, or choosing light beers you will still be able to enjoy a social drink and reduce the after-

effects of the alcohol.

THERE ARE ALSO SOME OTHER TIPS TO CONSIDER DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON:

Healthier snacking

Try and opt for healthier snacks such as pretzels or popcorn rather than crisps or peanuts and chocolates. Also try and choose healthier options when you go out to eat.

Grilled food has much less fat than fried food. And see what combinations you can make with a vegetarian pizza and remember to dab off the excess oil with a paper serviette. By reducing the amount of calories and fat intake over the entire festive season you will be pleasantly surprised by the end result in comparison with previous years when you may have given in to the more tempting options.

Christmas day

It is always difficult not to over-indulge on Christmas day. But again, select the less fatty morsels. Limit your intake of dark meats for the poultry and remember that most fat is associated with the skin. Depending on your options, rather pick a baked potato than a roasted one, etc. As before, have only one plate for your meal and focus on the salads rather than the meat. There's nothing wrong with a tasty pudding either – just don't devour the entire thing!

A few other general tips

Try and keep active over the festive season. A brisk walk will help to burn those extra calories and help to keep your blood pressure down.

Limit your salt intake and try to add flavour to your meals with spices.

Considering all these alternatives, there is no reason why you cannot have a wonderful festive season and still feel upbeat and fantastic when it comes to making New Year's resolutions!



Lian Monley is a qualified Corrective, Holistic, Exercise, Kinesiology (C.H.E.K) Lifestyle Coach. She takes a holistic approach when treating physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health issues. She incorporates Eastern and Western philosophies in assessing and treating clients. Her website is: www.Lianmonleywellbeing.com.