

Basic Treatment Guidelines

The following are general recommendations to be followed alongside your treatment plan. There are two main goals with these treatments:

1) Establish a routine that supports health.

It's often the simplest things that have the greatest impact on health. There are several therapies or "habits" that we consider "health-giving". They are basic, foundational activities that need to be in place in order for the body to heal, and remain healthy.

2) Enhance your body's natural detoxification systems in order to promote daily detoxification.

Our bodies are presented with many stressors throughout life. We live in a fast-paced and often toxic world. As we go through life, our bodies build up a "burden" of toxins and stressors. The presence of this "body burden" makes it more difficult for the body to heal and remain healthy. The goal of daily detoxification is to encourage the body to efficiently eliminate toxins, metabolic byproducts, and other stressors on a daily basis, to relieve "body burden" and to prevent it from building up in the first place. This allows for any treatments we utilize to work better and for the body to heal faster.

The emunctories, or organs of elimination, are the routes that our body uses to get rid of waste products. The first one we all think of is the liver, which detoxifies our blood, including everything we absorb from our digestive tract and the by-products of metabolism. The body's actual exit routes for wastes are the kidneys (producing urine), digestive tract (producing stool), lungs (expelling gasses), and skin (via sweat and secretions). Achieving proper functioning of these organs is vitally important for promoting detoxification in the body. Secondly, it is important to address blood and lymphatic circulation, the two primary means by which fluid is moved in the body (this is how wastes get to the emunctories to be eliminated).

Basic Recommendations

- **Adequate sleep:** Go by what works best for you, but most adults need somewhere between 7-10 hours of sleep per night in order to feel rested and rejuvenated upon waking. Sleep is the time when our bodies repair and is vitally important for healing. Establishing a good sleep pattern is also important. Make an effort to go to sleep and rise at a similar time each day. This helps the body to fall and stay asleep easier. Sleep in total darkness if possible, with the exception of the light of the moon, to help establish a healthy circadian rhythm (black out shades and/or an eye mask can be helpful). Avoid screens, or at the very least wear blue light blocking glasses, for at least 2 hours before bedtime whenever possible. Keep your bedroom cool, avoid eating within 3 hours of bedtime, and moderate alcohol and caffeine use to help with sleep quality.

- **Exercise:** Exercise enhances circulation, promotes sweating and expiration. It also enhances metabolism, which helps the entire body to work more efficiently. It is a tremendous stress relief, and is protective against many chronic diseases. Aim for 45 minutes or more, 5-7 days per week. Vary the type of exercise you do and make sure a large percentage of the exercise you do is aerobic.
- **Water:** Aim to drink $\frac{1}{2}$ your body weight in ounces of water daily. For a small person, this is about 2 quarts per day, so most of us will need slightly more than that... and even more if we're getting lots of exercise! Our bodies are almost $\frac{3}{4}$ water. It bathes all of our cells, and has the capacity to carry toxins away and take them out of the body via our routes of elimination. If you drink caffeine or alcohol, it is necessary to match that with extra water to replace fluid loss from the diuretic effect of these substances.
- **Deep breathing:** Most of us tend to breathe in a very shallow fashion. It's important to remind our lungs of how large they really are! Taking a few moments each day to take several deep belly breaths will not only help remind us to breathe well, but also help us to relax. 50 deep breaths daily is a great goal, and is actually not hard to reach when done in sets of 10. They are best done in stressful moments, upon waking, before bed, or before meals. Example: sit up straight, inhale slowly and deeply, hold the breath for a moment, then exhale fully and slowly, taking longer to exhale than inhale. Other techniques such as the "444 breath" or "box breathing", and "alternate nostril breathing" or "nadi shodhana" are particularly helpful for calming; please ask for more information if you'd like to learn these particular techniques.
- **Diet:** Refer to the basic dietary guidelines (see handout). Pay attention to the following to encourage healthy digestion and absorption of nutrients: Eat slowly. Chew your food well. Avoid beverages while eating (this dilutes your digestive juices). Eat in a relaxed environment.
- **Spend time outside daily:** Fresh air and sunshine are vital to your health. Aim for a minimum of 30 minutes, rain or shine.
- **Have fun:** Every day! Happiness is health-giving!
- **Reduce your exposure to toxic chemicals:** make an effort to source natural, non-toxic household cleaners, laundry detergents, and personal care products. Look for "fragrance free", "dye free", "organic", etc. Consult the Environmental Working Group for a plethora of information on product safety at www.ewg.org/consumerguides.

Additional Recommendations

These are specific daily remedies chosen based on your current state of health and needs. It is recommended that you follow the checked items. You are welcome to follow all of them if you like.

- **Castor oil packs:** Stimulates the liver to detoxify, enhances digestion and bowel regularity, and promotes lymphatic circulation. Best done 4-5 times per week or more. *See handout for instructions.

- **Dry skin brushing:** To cleanse the skin and open the pores, as well as enhance lymphatic circulation under the skin surface. Using a long-handled natural fiber brush, thoroughly brush the entire skin surface using short brisk strokes. Start with the extremities, and brush toward the heart. This should take roughly 1 minute. Skin brushing is done when the skin is dry, and is best done before bed or before showering.
- **Contrast showers:** End your shower with a cool rinse daily (30-60 seconds is sufficient) to your mid back. The water does not need to be “cold”, but simply “cool” to provide a contrast. This is a stimulating treatment for the adrenal glands and kidneys.
- **Seed rotation:** For women, to establish healthy female hormone balance. *See handout for instructions.
- **Cider vinegar:** Add 1 tsp unfiltered apple cider vinegar to 4 oz water and drink 10-15 minutes before meals. This facilitates proper digestion.