

Preparing for the Change of Season

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A Science of Medicine
The Art of Care

With every seasonal change, the body has to compensate and work a little harder to maintain balance and harmony. As we say goodbye to winter, there is also the increased risk of hay fever and allergies before the summer arrives. It is thus an ideal time to take active measures to help the body renew and revitalize. Tibb philosophy advocates detoxification and elimination at the end of each season for improved wellbeing.

The body has the innate ability to cleanse itself; every second of the day our bodies are hard at work to regulate toxin levels brought about through the environment, diet and illness. Elimination and detoxification are implemented through the colon, sweat glands, liver and kidneys where toxins are removed. The liver, specifically, is like the manager of the body, regulating hormone levels, blood glucose and cholesterol levels. It plays a vital role in the production of important chemicals and bodily functions and is viewed as the cleansing machine which facilitates detoxification processes.

The importance of a detoxification

Although the body has immense abilities to self cleanse and regulate toxin levels, it benefits tremendously from a little bit of help by its owner- YOU! This can be accomplished in a number of simple ways and through self-empowerment of your individual needs.

Each individual has a unique temperament according to Tibb; that is a balance of the qualities of heat, dryness, coldness and moisture. Each temperament is inclined to different ailments and seeing as we live in harmony with nature and its climatic changes, it inevitably has an effect on our specific constitutions. Seasonal changes will thus affect each person differently, in accordance with their predisposition. That is one of the reasons why we each have seasonal and weather preferences. For example Spring, brings with it an increase in heat and moisture and will most likely affect the Sanguinous Temperaments who are often predisposed to sinusitis and allergies.

How does one embark on a cleansing programme and for how long?

In Natural medicine, there isn't a 'one size fits all' category. Every individual's uniqueness and personal health needs are investigated so that there is maximum benefit in any health or treatment program. There are however, some general guidelines that apply to any temperament.

A general rule of thumb is not to shock the body through drastic detox regimes.

Everything needs to be done gradually, and in relation to how much your physical and mental wellbeing can tolerate. Many people find that they embark on rigorous cleansing programs that soon fall by the wayside due to a sense of despondency. Another thing to remember is that simplicity is key. If you want to rejuvenate the body, treat it with respect. Keep exercises simple and eat foods that are easy to digest. This type of cleansing may last a bit longer, but ultimately are more beneficial than intense two and three day 'purgers'. With chronic patients, a check up with your doctor is advised before starting a detoxification programme.

Tibb advice for your Detoxification Programme.

Begin by drinking liquids in the form of soups and nourishing drinks for two days.

By day three, add light meals with plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit.

Choose fruit and vegetables that best suit your temperament. These are listed in the Tibb Recipe Book.

However, Figs, prunes, apples, carrots, beets and greens provide benefit to most temperament during detoxification.

Watermelon, cucumber and celery will also assist with toxin removal.

Try to avoid fatty meats and excesses of red meat.

You should aim to eat this way for at least three weeks.

Set goals and reinforce them, e.g. reward yourself with your favorite snack every weekend when you have been diligent with your regime.

Give yourself a realistic schedule that will fit into your lifestyle. E.g. from Monday to Friday I will eat my steamed vegetables, consume no processed foods and will try and drink six to eight glasses of water per day. However, on the weekend I allow myself to indulge on a chocolate bar and perhaps a fizzy drink once per day.

Make use of a natural purgative for no more than five days of the month

Allow yourself about 8 hours of sleep per night.

Go to bed an hour earlier.

Take five minutes out of the day to meditate and concentrate on breathing, rejuvenating the body with oxygen, fuel for metabolism

Spring is an ideal time to have cupping done. Regular cupping aids with toxin elimination.

Go for a massage that will aid with lymph drainage and stress release.

Air at your home by doing a 'spring clean'. There is a great deal of benefit in bringing about freshness in your immediate environment.

Exercise regularly, especially going for brisk walks.

Remember to enjoy your 'detox' and make it part of your lifestyle, especially at the onset of seasonal changes.