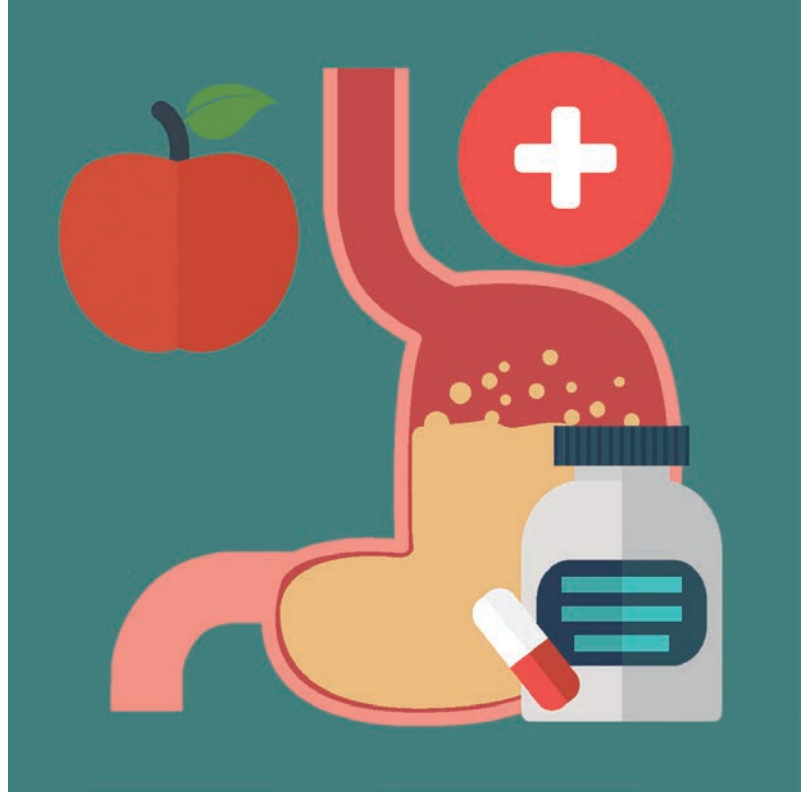


Should you do a **colon cleanse?**



Naturopath and nutritionist Amina Eastham-Hillier weighs up the pros and cons.

I don't perform colonic irrigation, but I have seen patients who have had this treatment, and while it may have helped temporarily with bloating, stool analyses showed they still harboured high levels of toxic bacteria and parasites. Occasional enemas are fine. However, when treating one patient who had enemas every day for a year, tests showed she was seriously deficient in nutrients and beneficial gut bacteria, and struggled to have a normal bowel movement as her muscles were too weak.

THE RIGHT BACTERIA


From my perspective, colon cleansing is about using food, water, herbs, nutrients and probiotics to ensure the entire gut functions well. The starting point is a stool analysis. Studies show a poor bacteria balance increases risk of heart disease and obesity, plus die-off from excess toxic gut bacteria creates endotoxins that cross the blood-brain barrier, causing depression.

The most important beneficial bacteria are the Bifidobacterium, Lactobacillus, and Bacteroides fragilis groups, and balanced levels of E. coli, and Enterococci. Dysbiotic bacteria are Klebsiella oxytoca (linked to inflammatory lung and urinary tract infections) and Firmicutes bacteroidetes (associated with an increased risk of disease, specifically through lipid metabolism, obesity and inflammation). I also look for parasites. If they're found, the whole family needs to be tested.

Probiotics such as Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium are used in the elimination

process, along with herbs, bicarbonate of soda between meals, foods such as pomegranate, papaw, grapeseed, and coconut oil. Treatment commences with a comprehensive detox over three to six weeks. Further protocols include herbal medicine to: treat inflammation and prevent leaky gut; support systemic immune and autoimmune function; improve oral microbiome and prevent other infections; address yeast overgrowth; encourage healthy microflora; support adrenal and thyroid function and stress reduction; support antibacterial and anti-parasitic action; and for brain and memory support.

Beneficial nutritional supplements are slippery elm, omega-3s, vitamin E, N-acetylcysteine, B-complex vitamins, B12, folic acid, amino acids, selenium, zinc, magnesium, vitamin C with bioflavonoids, and vitamin D. Diet should consist of: anti-inflammatory foods (leafy greens, beetroot, broccoli, blueberries, pineapple), oily fish, walnuts, chia seeds, flax seed, coconut oil, turmeric, ginger, garlic, onions, olive oil, and tart cherries. Also important are polyphenols, found in berries, green tea, and cocoa; quality protein and fats (fish; organic poultry; organic grass-fed meat); bone broth; fermented foods; prebiotics such as slippery elm; herbal teas (chamomile, ginger, liquorice); lemon juice and chlorophyll. Vegetables and fruits should be organic. Avoid gluten, processed dairy, sugar and alcohol.

My lifestyle recommendations include: encourage long-term detox and elimination; exercise daily: walking, yoga, meditation; eliminate toxins and minimise mould in the home; establish sound emotional connections with others and self; address personal needs; and evolve in personal growth to live an inspirational life. 

Could it help you?

A gut cleanse may benefit:

- Brain fog, fatigue, anxiety, dementia, memory deterioration, depression, concentration problems, ADHD.
- Gut sensitivity, IBS, constipation, diarrhoea, bloating, pain, flatulence, reflux, gurgling, nausea.
- Systemic inflammation causing aches and pains, e.g. fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis.
- Rashes, eczema, dermatitis, and acne.

MEET THE EXPERT

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