



# Hands of Health Newsletter

November/December 2007

Hello; again;

The holiday season is upon us; already! Don't allow the stress of the holiday take its toll on you. It's still important to take time to exercise, watch your diet while allowing yourself a little leeway to indulge in the festivities and foods of the season and get in for your massage! Any stress, aches, pains, and "accidents" you experienced in your day to day challenges will be offset by a good therapeutic massage. It will make it SO much easier to make it through all the holidays and its challenges. To go along with the theme of the holiday I'm reintroducing an article from May/June 2005 on liver flushing as per a suggestion from one of my clients. Think about it: most of us are indulging in foods and spirits we normally don't ingest and what better way to take care of your health than a cleanse to offset these "toxins." And so I present to you again, the protocol and information on liver health.

## LIVER SUPPORT - CLEANSE YOURSELF INSIDE AND OUT

By Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, CNS

I hear it all the time, "I don't drink a lot of alcohol, use recreational drugs, or have hepatitis...my liver is fine." While it's true that excess alcohol and drugs can be harmful, they are only two of many culprits our livers may encounter daily. In my *New York Times* best-selling book, *The Fat Flush Plan*, I uncover a number of unsuspected causes of liver toxicity.

Caffeine, sugar, trans fats, medications, and inadequate fiber intake all impact the liver's ability to burn fat and detoxify poisons. Caffeine and trans fats disturb the normal detoxification processes of the liver by inhibiting the production of liver enzymes and impeding bile production. Because we are constantly overloaded with synthetic chemicals from herbicides in our food and soil as well as parasites that lurk in our water, it's imperative to take care of your liver.

Many of us are unaware of the strain we put on this important organ. We may feel fine, or suffer from symptoms such as sluggishness, fatigue, inability to concentrate, failing memory, and digestive problems that we would never attribute to a tired, toxic liver. In any case, a liver-function test would likely come back normal. The truth is, in order for a liver problem to be detected, an individual must have already lost a great deal of liver function. Even though a person might not have a clinically diagnosed liver injury or inflammation, the liver may not be functioning at an optimum level, allowing toxins to circulate throughout the body.

### Why the Liver Is So Important

Thankfully, the liver is one of the most robust organs in the body; in fact, researchers now estimate it performs nearly 400 different functions. According to The American Liver Foundation, these include:

- Storing vitamins, sugars, fats, and other nutrients from the food you eat.
- Breaking down harmful substances, like alcohol and other toxic chemicals.
- Removing waste products from your blood.

### Protect This Vital Organ

How can you support your liver? In addition to a diet consisting of healthy proteins, omega 3-enriched foods, and vital amino acids, a number of supplements support the liver. The use of pure, unadulterated oils, such as flaxseed oil, helps boost metab-

olism and attract oil-soluble poisons lodged in the fatty tissues. With the help of adequate fiber (in the form of psyllium or ground flaxseeds), these toxins are transported out of the body for elimination.

Herbs and herbal formulations offer another natural means of protecting the liver. Research has found that a combination of several botanicals - capers, wild chicory, black nightshade, arjuna, yarrow, and other herbs - is safe and effective in protecting the liver against harmful toxins found in food, air, and water. The benefits of each herbal component, such as black nightshade's ability to assist capillaries in absorbing nutrients and expelling waste materials and arjuna's assistance with eliminating cholesterol, work together for overall improved liver function. Additionally, this herbal combination protects the liver against the toxicity of ingested medications. Even the occasional pain reliever puts extra strain on the liver, so just think what our livers contend with when one or more medications are taken daily for chronic conditions. In an experimental study conducted in 1997, this specific herbal formulation caused a marked improvement in the antioxidant status of those being treated with drugs for tuberculosis.

### Added Benefits

By taking care of your liver, you'll not only feel good, but you'll also look fabulous. In addition to its many health benefits, liver detoxification can help create beautiful skin. As I explain in my book, *The Living Beauty Detox Program*, the key to developing a beautiful physical appearance is to start from the inside out. And spring is the perfect season to start.

Use healing herbs like dandelion root and chlorophyll-rich spices (including dill, mint, tarragon, and thyme), all time-honored detoxifiers. I also recommend juice from fresh lemons and limes, as it serves as a natural diuretic and has been used for centuries as a liver toner. Eat purifying, dark green, leafy vegetables like kale and parsley, which are high in chlorophyll. And again, a liver support/detox supplement, taken daily, helps to expedite the detoxification process. By cleansing yourself inside and out, you'll be supporting good health.

## CLEAN YOUR LIVER - HOW TO DO A NATURAL LIVER FLUSH

The healthy and efficient functioning of the liver is central to well-being and disease prevention, which explains why it's advisable to periodically flush the organ clean using natural substances, says master herbalist and acupuncturist Christopher Hobbs, L.Ac.

"Liver flushes are used to stimulate elimination of wastes from the body, to open and cool the liver, to increase bile flow, and to improve overall liver functioning," says Dr. Hobbs. "I have taken liver flushes for many years now and can heartily recommend them." Here are Dr. Hobbs' instructions for preparing and administering a liver flush:

• **Citrus Juice** - Squeeze enough fresh lemons or limes to produce one cup of juice, says Dr. Hobbs. A small amount of distilled or spring water may be added to dilute the juice, but the more sour it tastes, the better it will perform as a liver cleanser. Orange and grapefruit juices may also be used, provided they are blended with some lemon or lime juice.

• **Garlic and Ginger** - To the citrus juice mixture add the juice of 1-2 cloves of garlic, freshly-squeezed in a garlic press, and a small amount of freshly grated raw ginger juice, grate the raw ginger on a cheese or vegetable grater, and then put the shreds into a garlic press to squeeze out the juice.

• **Olive Oil** - Add 1 tablespoon of high-quality olive oil (such as extra virgin) to the citrus, garlic, and ginger juice combination. Either blend or shake the ingredients to guarantee complete mixing.

• **Taking the Flush** - The liver flush is best taken in the morning, preferably after some muscle stretches and breathing exercises, says Dr. Hobbs. Do not eat any foods for one hour following the flush, he adds.

• **Cleansing Herbal Tea** - After an hour has elapsed, Dr. Hobbs recommends taking two cups of an herbal blend he calls "Polari Tea." This blend consists of dry por-

tions of fennel (1 part), flax (1 part), burdock (1/4 part), fenugreek (1 part), licorice (1/4 part), and peppermint (1 part).

	Conversion Chart	
	per quart	per gallon
Fennel	4 tsp	16 tsp
Burdock	1 tsp	4 tsp
Fenugreek	4 tsp	16 tsp
Licorice	1 tsp	4 tsp
Peppermint	4 tsp	16 tsp
Flax	4 tsp	16 tsp
	1 tbsp = 3 tps	

Simmer the herbs (except the peppermint) for 20 minutes, then add the peppermint and allow to steep for 10 minutes. For convenience, you may prepare several quarts of the tea in advance, says Dr. Hobbs.

• **Continuing the Flush** - Dr. Hobbs suggests doing the liver flush twice yearly, in the spring and fall, for two full cycles each. A cycle consists of 10 consecutive days of taking the flush ingredients, followed by 3 days off, then another 10 days on. "I have never seen anyone experience negative side effects from this procedure."

SOURCE - Christopher Hobbs, L.Ac., and Foundation of Health, *Healing With Herbs & Foods* (1994), Botanica Press, available from Interweave Press, Inc., 201 East Fourth Street, Loveland, CO 80537; tel: 970-669-7672; fax: 970-667-8317.

Hope that refreshes your memory on how to care for your liver. I strongly encourage you to consult with your doctor before beginning a liver flush if you have any serious health issues you are dealing with so you don't interfere with any medications or instructions you are following as per doctor's orders. And finally but very IMPORTANT remember that massage gift certificates are available and make great gifts for ALL the holidays from Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas or whatever holiday you celebrate this time of year as well as a way to say thank you to your customers, clients and anyone else you've conducted business with or just to show your appreciation and love to friends and family. So have a safe holiday season, a safe and Happy New Year and I'll be back in January. Call me when you need me.

Until next time,

Stay healthy, stay well,



*With proper care the human body will last a lifetime.*

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