

## **Moonhawk's Musings**

Greetings.

This month I am returning to a discussion on detox programs. With the industrial revolution came what is sometimes called the chemical revolution. Our planet, and bodies, have been inundated with a myriad of synthetic chemicals. In many cases the long term effects of these chemicals are not known, or are only just beginning to be known. The human body is able to process and eliminate toxins, but not necessarily in the quantities that bombard our body on a daily basis. Detox programs often refer to weed seed and feed; or remove, renew, release, and start with the gastro-intestinal tract (GIT). Once you fully understand the role the GIT has in ongoing health, you truly understand the express "you are what you eat".

The recipe this month is an Italian apple torta. The recipe was recently in the Canberra Times Sunday magazine. I've made it several times already and all who eat it agree that it is delicious. It only has 2 tablespoons of butter and 2 eggs, so qualifies as low fat, unless you add cream and/or ice-cream when serving.

### **Wishing you many good things**

## **Moonhawk**

### **Detox Programs**

Symptoms of toxic overload include recurrent headaches and/or infections, fatigue, tiredness, lethargy, muscular aches and pains, acnes, eczema and other skin conditions, and hormone imbalances.



Toxins are generally eliminated through one of the five elimination systems. These five elimination systems are the liver, gastro-intestinal tract (large intestine), urinary system (kidneys), lungs and the skin. Because the main detox pathways are via the liver, large intestine and kidneys, these are the body systems that are generally the focus of detox programs.

A detox program generally follows a weed, seed and feed regime for the gastro-intestinal tract, along with herbs and supplements that support the liver and kidneys to remove toxins from the body. Simply put, the liver processes

toxins by disassembling them into component parts that can then be eliminated via the large intestine and kidneys. If the large intestine and kidneys are already trying to deal with a toxic overload, then the toxins cannot be successfully eliminated. This can lead to

While a detox program can be undertaken at any time, it's often not a good idea to start one when you know there will be difficulties sticking with it, such as around Christmas and New Year. Some people like to coincide detox programs with spring, or other seasonal changes. You need to be able to commit yourself to a 6-8 week program for optimum results.

## Diet

A detox diet is similar to the wellness diet. It is recommended that during a detox program you avoid caffeine based drinks, wheat, and dairy. This can be a challenge, particularly if you consume coffee, tea, bread, and milk/milk products on a regular basis. My method of dealing with this is to instruct clients in the wellness diet 2-4 weeks before detox, and have them slowly reduce caffeine, wheat and dairy. Some patients are comfortable going 'cold turkey'. I like to work on diet design with clients to ensure they feel able to meet the dietary requirements of a detox diet. A detox diet is:

- high in fresh and vegetables
- includes good sources of protein such as nuts, seeds, fish; with small serves of organic red meat
- includes organic produce where possible
- avoids packaged and processed foods
- eliminates artificial additives – colours, flavours, preservatives etc
- includes 1.5 to 2 litres of water daily

During the first few days of a detox diet it is not unusual to feel generally unwell, have a headache, be grumpy, and have little energy. Some people feel like they have the flu or at least a bad cold. Do not despair, **this will pass**. For this reason, I usually recommend that a detox diet starts on a Friday, giving the client the weekend to get over the worst of the symptoms. Alternatively, schedule a few days off work.

### Step 1 – weed/remove

This step involves increasing fibre in the diet as well as taking a herbal supplement that will weed out/remove bad bacteria and microbes from the gut.

### Step 2 – seed/renew

The worst of the detox program is over. The bad bugs have been eliminated. This step involves putting back good bacteria into the GIT, and repairing the lining of the GIT so it is better able to process food and absorb nutrients.

### Step 3 – feed/release

This step involves supporting the liver and kidneys to continue the detox process and eliminate toxins.

### Step 4 – maintenance

This phase involves permanent adjustments to diet and lifestyle that will support ongoing toxic elimination. Generally during this phase I recommend a good quality multi-vitamin/mineral supplement.

As usual, consult a qualified naturopath or herbalist to ensure that the detox program you choose will meet your individual needs. Contact the [Australian Traditional Medicine Society \(ATMS\)](#) or the [National Herbalist Association of Australia](#) for a list of qualified practitioners in your area.

This month's herb image is liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) root and seed heads. This herb is part of the formula used to repair and restore the GIT during the detox program. You'll note that it looks quite different to the liquorice you buy as a sweet treat. Liquorice extract or tincture is produced from the roots, which when cut have a creamy white interior. Liquorice root tastes quite nice, as does the liquid herb, and is often used as a flavouring agent to mask the taste of

some of the more unpleasant tasting herbs. Its uses include an adrenal tonic, to soothe a sore throat, calm certain types of cough, and soothe the GIT.

**Reference:** Herbs & Natural Supplements: An evidence based guide (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), by Lesley Braun and Marc Cohen. Medicinal Plants of the World by Ben-Erik van Wyk & Michael Wink. In-Tele-Health © 2008 (from Hyperhealth Pro CD-ROM).

### **Italian apple torta**

1kg apples – granny smiths are ideal	2 large eggs
¼ cup milk	2 tablespoons melted butter
1 cup caster sugar	1&1/2 cups plain flour (gluten free)
1&1/2 teaspoons baking powder	Juice of 1 lemon

Grease and line a 23cm cake pan.

Preheat the oven to 170c

Peel and core the apples, cut into quarters then slice finely. Put the slices into the lemon juice and enough water to cover the slices. This will stop the slices browning while you prepare the batter.

In a large bowl beat the eggs, melted butter and milk until well mixed. Add the sugar and continue beating until the sugar dissolves. Sift flour and baking powder. Gently beat into the egg mix until a thick batter forms. Add the sliced apple, making sure that the slices are separate. At this point you'll wonder how the cake works, there seems to be far too much apple for the batter. Believe me, if you mix the apples into the batter it will work.

Pour batter into prepared tin. You can add 12 whole cloves to the top before baking for a little extra flavour.

Bake for 50-60 minutes. The top should be brown and the apples soft when pierced with a skewer.

Remove from oven, cool in the tin for at least 15 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack.

Serve warm or cold, with or without cream.