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Mouth detox

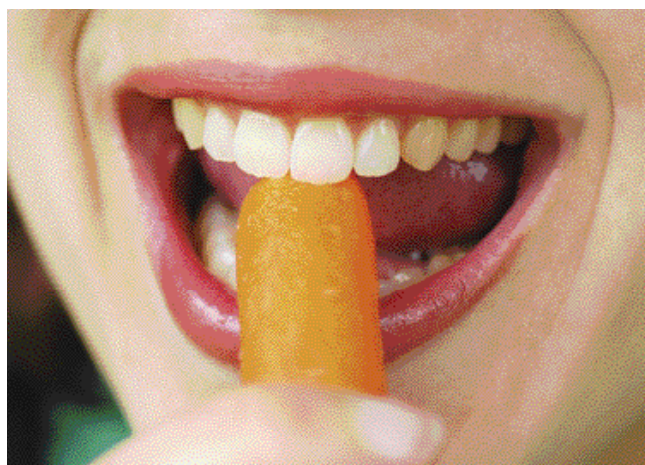
THE GUT IS A FUNDAMENTAL area of detox. When considering gastrointestinal cleansing, the focus is often on what's happening at the end. It's very easy to forget about the entry point — the mouth. Consider these tips for developing your holistic oral care protocol and enhancing your detox processes.

Inspect your tongue first thing in the morning. What's lying there? By minimising toxin intake and increasing natural wholefoods, you may wake with a fusty, stale taste and furry coating on your tongue. The Ayurvedic tradition understands this build-up on the tongue is a representation of ama, or toxins, being released from the body. A part of krija yoga tradition is to practise daily tongue scraping to purify the body.

The tongue can be scraped off with a stainless-steel or copper tongue scraper, shaped like a long horseshoe and designed for ease of use. If this is not available, you can use a teaspoon. The important thing is to bring it out of your mouth. Brushing the tongue with your toothbrush is not advisable as this merely moves the toxins around the mouth and doesn't actually get rid of them. Some toothbrushes have ridges moulded on the back of the bristle head for tongue scraping, though I've found they don't remove much at all.

Another Ayurvedic tradition is kavala gandoosha, or "pulling oil". This involves taking a mouthful of organic vegetable or nut oil and swishing it around your mouth for 10 or 15 minutes. Ayurvedic doctor Dr Karach suggests you "sip, suck and pull through the teeth". By the time you've finished swishing, sucking and pulling, you will spit out a transformed blob of white goo.

Maybe kavala gandoosha provides a gentle antibacterial effect, stimulates saliva function and tones and massages the



by Ayurvedic practitioners. It is highly recommended for everyone, but particularly for people with sinusitis or recurrent nose and throat problems, often a result of postnasal drip.

Use a neti pot, small teapot or even a spouted jug. Using a solution of 0.9mmol/L of salt and water (the same concentration as in blood) means no duress is placed on the mucous membranes of the nostrils. Add a pinch of salt to about 60mL of warm water. Taste it and add more or less until it tastes like weak seawater. A solution that is too strong or too weak will create a stinging sensation. You'll quickly get the hang of the correct concentration after a few mistakes.

Insert the spout into the right nostril, bend your head to the left and lean it slightly forward, on a 45-degree angle. Then pour the water in. It will flow up the nostril and out the left nostril. Pour for five to 10 seconds or whatever is comfortable. A quick bushman's blow removes any lingering water and mucus. Then do the other side.

Washing the mucous membranes in this way and removing any built-up mucus tones the tissue and allows the local immune cells (mucosa associated lymphoid tissue) to function optimally. This consequently increases immunity, may reduce postnasal drip and minimises stuffiness of the nose and sinuses. It can also enhance the sense of smell, which enriches your taste sensation.

Consider what's going into your mouth. Fresh wholefood enhances dental health. Chomping on raw foods keeps the teeth doing what they are made for. Eating excessive refined carbohydrates doesn't. The dental health of the Polynesian Tokelauan people is testimony to this fact. A study showed there was a four- to eightfold increase in dental decay in adults and adolescents over the 30-year period that Western foods replaced the traditional wholefoods diet. Additionally, people's teeth were no longer straight.

Austrian physician Dr Mayr's detoxification protocol heavily emphasises the importance of correct chewing. The protocol involves a week-long process of retraining chewing and saliva release to ensure adequate salivation occurs, to then affect the entire digestive tract. How many chews do you do per mouthful?

Finally, being aware of what's leaving your mouth is another element of mouth detox. Are you saying negative or toxic things? It's not hard to fall into patterns of thinking and expressing that don't serve anyone. Sometimes there is a perverse enjoyment in speaking negatively or badly about something or somebody. Contemporary common parlance isn't exactly overflowing with positive or inspiring words. But it can be. Let's start a "fresh word" revolution and contribute some clear, vital concepts to the world around us.

Watch your mouth, and watch the results! ☺

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jaw and associated muscles, I'm not entirely sure. However, the process certainly soothes minor tooth pain and irritation. For many, it provides healing from gum disease. There are claims for its teeth-whitening effect if practised consistently, as well as for a long list of other complaints of the entire body.

Brushing your teeth twice daily is general dental hygiene protocol. Follow your dentist's advice on correct technique. In terms of toothpaste use, choose one that isn't filled with synthetic chemicals, such as sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS). As far as I understand, there is little evidence of fluoride supporting teeth health. My recommendation is to use plant-based gel toothpastes. Flossing regularly is also fundamental for maintaining good mouth hygiene. Discipline may be the necessary element in this.

Neti douching is another form of cleansing subscribed to

