

Feature Topic: Healthy Bowels and Happy You

Bowel health is a topic most of us may want to avoid, but proper elimination of waste is a critical and important body function. When it goes wrong, it can negatively affect our health in many ways. For this month, I would like to focus specifically on bowel cancer as well as general bowel health.

So far this year there have been reported 106,100 (colon) and 40,870 (rectal) with 49,920 deaths (colon and rectal combined). Bowel cancer is “quiet” in that you will not be aware you have it; it is often discovered by accident during a routine checkup. By the time it is discovered, it is often already in the advanced stages. The really tragedy is that all of this is preventable.

Bowel cancer (colon and rectal) usually occurs after years of irritation to the bowel. The most common irritants are nutritional in nature. Refined sugars and starches, alcohol, or an excess of acid forming foods are most commonly involved. All of these cause inflammation and contribute to an overgrowth of abnormal bowel flora (dysbiosis). Constipation (less than one bowel movement a day) prolongs contact of these irritants with the bowel lining. Normally a bowel movement should follow each meal. This ideal regularity is rare in our busy world, so, as a result we may become toxic and sick.

Many people also have weak digestion which further contributes to bowel irritation and constipation. So, what can you do to promote healthy bowel function and detoxification?

First, stop irritating your colon. Get off refined sugar and flour products such as white bread, white rice, or anything made with white flour. Eat whole, natural foods. We recommend reducing the intake of all starches (the **Carbohydrate Specific Diet**) for those who have serious bowel problems such as Crohn’s Disease, Irritable Bowel disease or Colitis. Following this diet and supplementing with soothing herbal and nutritional products will assist the gut in healing so that a return to normal life is possible.

Second, keep things moving! Again, the optimal bowel activity would be at least one movement per day. The stool should be well formed and shaped like a small log. We recommend **IntestiCleanse #1** for anyone with constipation or difficulty passing their stool. **IntestiCleanse** is not a laxative, but a bowel trainer that usually needs to be used only for a short time.

Third, detoxify, detoxify, detoxify! For constipation that has continued for for months or years there is some catching up to do. Even if bowel function is “normal”, periodic detoxification is desirable. We recommend a detox program twice a year; one just before Fall and one just before Spring. Going through a detox will often help prevent colds and flu while also giving the digestive tract a needed rest. The Standard Process **21 Day Purification Program** is a wonderful detox program that we recommend in our office. It is available as a kit with everything needed, including dietary recommendations and recipes. A nice side benefit of this program is that most people will lose some extra weight. Patients at our office have lost as much as 15 pounds! If you are already thin or of normal weight, you should not lose additional weight on this program.

Fourth, check for early signs of colon cancer or advanced irritation. Bleeding is one of the first indicators of serious bowel problems. A small amount of blood is impossible to see, so an occult blood test is needed to detect any bleeding. The **EZ Detect Test** is inexpensive and simple. Just drop the EZ Detect Test Tissue into the toilet and wait up to 2 minutes. A blue-green color would indicate the presence of blood. The **EZ Detect Test kits** are available at our office for \$8.00. I recommend this test to anyone over the age of 50 - or 30 if there is a history of bowel cancer in the family. Lastly, consider adding supplements like **Chlorophyll Pearls** to detoxify and heal the bowel, **Similase** plant source enzymes for better digestion, and **Flora Probiotic Plus** to replenish beneficial bowel flora. So there you go. Remember, a healthy bowel and regular elimination are vital. Take care of yours to feel lighter, more energetic and vibrantly healthy!

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