

## **Spring Cleaning Isn't Just for the House**

**Thomas A. Kruzel, ND**

Most cultures around the world have some sort of fasting ritual or drink that is associated with the springtime and cleansing away of wastes accumulated during the winter months. Additionally, most religious traditions specify one day [most often Sunday] of fasting in order to give the body a rest and promote detoxification. Many of the herbal preparations used by naturopathic physicians are high in lymph clearing and liver stimulating compounds needed by the body to detoxify. In recent times, cleansing is often associated with drinking large amounts of water, taking some extra herbs or vitamins and staying away from junk foods.

The human body is constantly clearing itself of unneeded waste materials and follows a 24 hour diurnal cycle of nutrient use and waste removal. Under normal conditions, the body is able to clear itself of toxic wastes without difficulty through the organs of elimination such as the colon, kidneys, liver, mucus membranes, lymph tissues, lungs and skin. Most waste elimination occurs during sleep, which means that when you awake in the morning, internally you are fresh and clean! A feeling of being "toxic" occurs when the buildup of waste products becomes greater than the organs of elimination can handle. The person may feel fatigue, have a stuffy or runny nose, plugged sinuses, joint aches, itching eyes or skin, perhaps a slight fever and a little loss of appetite or even nausea. Other signs may be a skin rash, constipation or sleeplessness. The person may feel as if they are coming down with a flu or cold as the body has become overwhelmed and is now susceptible to illness.

These symptoms are most often associated with holidays, periods of increased stress, dietary excesses, travel and lifestyle changes from your normal routine, working too hard or lack of a good diet and exercise routine. In other words, just about anytime.

A detoxification program is best individualized as each person is unique and requires a different approach. A detoxification program should be gentle and adjustable as everyone detoxifies at a different rate. Dietary changes, botanical medicines, fasting, sauna's, constitutional hydrotherapy, massage, and high levels of antioxidants can be combined to help your body eliminate accumulated waste products.