AYURVEDIC CLEANSE:
WASTE BE GONE!

by Premal Patel, MD
with special Q&A with Dr. Robert Svoboda & Dr. Scott Blossom
Imagine a day in the life of your kitchen sink. Faithfully, on a daily basis, it drains away your wastewater and leftovers. Now imagine what would start happening if the pipes were blocked and the water wasn’t flowing. Can you see the sludge building up from the vegetable rinds, the uneaten toast, the kids’ cereal, and the oil from yesterday’s cookout? Can you smell the rotten stagnation and toxicity if all this just sat there for three months? Are you disgusted yet? Then you see the need for an Ayurvedic cleanse.

This booklet describes the principles behind an Ayurvedic cleanse, and gives you practical tips for scrubbing away the sludge. Ayurvedic teachers weigh in on the why’s and wherefore’s, and we even offer some tasty recipes to promote clear-flowing energy.
Chapter 1: What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda is a healing art rooted in Vedic culture, the ancestry of modern-day India, that dates back at least 5000 years. How is something that is 5000 years old relevant to you today? Because the principles that Ayurveda is based on are unchanging and universal. Throughout the centuries, people have continued to find truth and benefit from the teachings of Ayurveda.

The Sanskrit word Ayurveda translates as the “knowledge and wisdom of life.” As its name indicates, Ayurveda is not merely a system to address illness. Rather, it is fundamentally about how to live, and through this provides the means of preventing ill health. In Ayurveda, health is defined as the well-being of body, mind, and spirit, and all three are integrally related. In other words, whatever is happening in the mind, with the emotions, and in the spirit, will eventually impact the physical body.

Ayurveda is rooted in the idea that each person has a unique balanced constitution, and it is imbalance in this constitution that leads to ill health. To communicate about these individual balances and imbalances, Ayurveda uses something called the doshas: the elemental principles of vata, pitta, and kapha.

**Vata** is composed of air and space, and it takes on the associated qualities: dry, light, cold, rough, subtle/pervasive, mobile, and clear. Vata thereby regulates the principal of movement. Any motion of the body—chewing, swallowing, nerve impulses, breathing, muscle movements, thinking, peristalsis, bowel movements, urination, menstruation—requires balanced vata. And when vata is imbalanced, these bodily movements can be affected.

**Pitta** brings forth the qualities of fire and water: sharp, penetrating, hot, light, liquid, mobile, and oily. Pitta’s domain is the principal of transformation. Just as fire transforms anything that is placed in it, pitta takes part in any converting and processing the body performs. This includes digestion, metabolism, temperature maintenance, sensory perception, and comprehension. Imbalanced pitta can tend toward sharpness, heat, or inflammation in relation to these functions.

**Kapha**, composed of earth and water, adds the qualities of heavy, cold, dull, oily, smooth, dense, soft, static, liquid, cloudy, hard, and gross (as in big, bulky, dense). Kapha governs stability and structure, and so forms the substance of the human body, from the skeleton to various organs to the fatty molecules (lipids) that support the body. Too much kapha leads to an overabundance of density, heaviness, and excess in the body.

If you are new to Ayurveda and would like to learn more about how these doshas relate to you, as well as some general tips for maintaining constitutional balance, please download the Banyan Botanicals Introduction to Ayurveda E-Booklet, available on our website.

If you would like to know what your baseline (balanced) constitution is, please take our online Constitution Quiz. And if you are interested in understanding which doshas might be out of balance for you, you can take our online Imbalance Quiz.

“Health is known as happiness, while disorder is unhappiness.”

—Caraka Samhita (classic Ayurvedic text)
Toxic Build-Up Causing Problems?

Let’s revisit the image of the kitchen sink from the beginning of this E-booklet. Like it or not, all of us are that kitchen sink to some degree. The gunk that builds up is referred to in Ayurveda as *ama* (impurities, toxic waste). Ama (pronounced “aa-ma”) occurs naturally, but to obtain and maintain optimal health, we want to minimize the amount of ama in our bodies. Making healthy diet and lifestyle choices definitely helps with this, but there’s more that we must do to keep that kitchen sink in top working order.

First, the systems in our body that remove wastes (stool, urine, and sweat) must be working effectively. Particularly important is the colon. The colon is where so much of what we ingest gets processed, and the potential for ama building up here is tremendous. The simplest way to assess the health of your colon is to consider your bowel movements. Do you have regular, daily bowel movements? Do you have to strain to pass a stool? Does your stool or flatulence have a foul odor? **While all ongoing problems should be evaluated by your health care provider,** unhealthy bowel habits may be a sign of ama build-up in your colon.

Can you think of other things that might indicate ama accumulation? What signs would you imagine are related to your body’s waste material not being disposed of properly? Foul odors, including body odor and smelly urine, can be a sign. Feeling tired and sluggish, even after getting adequate sleep, could be associated with ama build-up. A foggy, clouded feeling in the mind may indicate excess ama. Even tiredness in your muscles and joints can be an indication.

Sure, you might learn to live with that stuff. You might be thinking that this ama build-up isn’t so bad. It’s normal, right? But just like that kitchen sink, not attending to the situation could lead to bigger problems down the road. When ama builds up it can block bodily channels and functions, and increasingly lead to poor health. Think of a stagnant body of water, like a still pond. Algae begins to form. This may seem like part of the pond’s natural cycle, adding “character” and a certain life. But if the water remains still and the ecosystem is not kept in check, the algae will bloom excessively, even to the point of choking out other pond life. The stagnant water becomes an incubator for bacteria and parasites, and a breeding ground for mosquitoes carrying dangerous diseases. Just so with ama accumulation.

In contrast to the still pond, a river’s nature is to flow and constantly flush away any signs of stagnation. Like a river, you want the things that should flow in your body to move freely—blood, lymph, air, food through the digestive tract, and ultimately, wastes leaving the body. It is precisely because this free flow becomes hampered that cleanses are recommended in Ayurveda.

An Ayurvedic cleanse gives your body the opportunity to step back, stop facing an onslaught of new toxins, address the toxins that have built up, and rid itself of them.

I Lead a Healthy Life—Where Did I Get Toxins?

We face a myriad of daily exposures that our bodies must process; things we take in through our eyes, ears, nose, mouth—all of our senses. Of course, the first thing most of
Chapter 2: Why Do I Need an Ayurvedic Cleanse? (cont’d)

us think of is our mouth and the food and drink we take in. What we eat and drink really does matter. The more whole in nature our foods (for example, whole grains instead of refined flour), the less likely they are to cause blockages or ama buildup. And if what we consume is organically grown, or free of pesticides, chemicals, and hormones, the fewer the harmful toxins our bodies must process. We all have our moments of indulgence, but it is over-indulgence that gets us into trouble.

What about what we take in through our other senses? We must “digest” the sights we see, the sounds we hear, the particles we inhale, and the things we absorb through our skin. While many of these things are pleasant and beneficial, many are not. We may not be aware of pollutants we are breathing in at this moment; and sometimes, we purposely inhale harmful substances, such as cigarette smoke. Likewise, we often forget about the many surfaces that touch our skin, and the possible irritants we encounter that way. And we usually don’t realize that when we see or hear disturbing sights and sounds, our bodies must process these, too. Do you remember the last time you had an argument with somebody? It is quite likely that the “sounds” created had an impact on your body—even to the point of loss of appetite, or a headache, or sweaty palms and a rapid heart rate.

This leads us to understand that our emotions must also be digested. Things we notice through our senses often create an emotional reaction within us, be it pleasant (enjoyment, love, gratitude) or unpleasant (anger, jealousy, fear). If we are unable to process these emotions, they too can create toxic build-up—the “baggage” that we carry.

So if the “indigestion” of all these exposures leads to ama, what function of the body is responsible for digestion? Ayurveda calls this function the agni, or digestive fire. This digestive fire, when healthy, can process whatever comes along, drawing out nutrition and letting go of the waste. It does this in the colon with food and drink, and it also does this more subtly in the body with the other exposures mentioned above. So when an emotion is digested in a healthy manner by the agni, it can be converted into wisdom, without leaving any residue.

But even a healthy digestive fire can become overwhelmed when the things it must process come in fast and furious, and especially when they are heavy, already filled with toxins, and difficult to digest. An overwhelmed digestive fire may send you signals, particularly after you eat. Agni imbalanced by vata can show up as gas, bloating, or belching. If pitta is involved, the indigestion will have a sour, acidic quality. And when imbalanced kapha gets a hold of the digestive fire, your food can make you tired and sleepy instead of refreshed and reenergized.

Poorly digested materials form noxious residues, both gross and subtle, which can be deposited in various bodily tissues. Then if the body’s excretory mechanisms aren’t functioning optimally, these residues can get stuck and build up in these tissues. This is where an Ayurvedic cleanse comes to the rescue. It offers a way to help move things along expeditiously.

“Even the wholesome food also taken in proper quantity does not get digested due to anxiety, grief, fear, anger, uncomfortable bed, and vigil.”

—Caraka Samhita
Chapter 3: Traditional Ayurvedic Cleanses

The most well known of Ayurvedic cleanses is called panchakarma. A complete panchakarma treatment should be undertaken only under the supervision of an Ayurvedic practitioner. During such a treatment, you retreat from the hustle and bustle of daily activities to give yourself the time and space to go through the cleansing process. Your body is prepared for cleansing with a simple, whole foods diet; then special oil massages and mild sweating therapies are employed. Based on your individual constitution and imbalances, a regimen begins that traditionally involves one or more of five processes: herbal enemas, emesis, purgation, blood cleansing, and herbal nasal remedies. Specific herbal remedies are also usually given to help guide the body through the cleansing process. While a variety of other therapies may be included, and post-treatment rejuvenative measures recommended, the end goal is tri-fold: to rid the body of harmful toxic build-up, re-balance the doshas, and strengthen the digestive fire.

A supervised panchakarma treatment is wonderful to undertake. But you can also treat yourself to smaller cleanses, less rigorous in nature—ones that you can safely and periodically perform yourself at home. For a home-based cleanse, the goal is to:

• Give your digestive fire a rest from the challenges it must continuously process so that it can rekindle itself.
• Halt the ingestion of, or exposure to, things toxic to optimal health.
• Cleanse the body of stagnant build-up, allowing the life energy to flow freely once more.
• Balance any constitutional dosha imbalances.
• Step away from the daily routine of life, including any undesirable habits, so that you may get a breath of fresh air and a fresh perspective.

• Nourish and rejuvenate your body, bringing well-being to the fore once again.

When you feel sluggish or overburdened, consider doing a cleanse. Ayurveda also recommends cleansing at specific transitional points. For example, a top recommendation is to perform a cleanse at the change of each season to help balance doshas that may have become exaggerated during the previous season, and to prepare for nature’s upcoming changes. Ayurveda also promotes cleansing before attempting pregnancy, to allow the body’s tissues to gain clarity and vitality. There are even complex cleansing rituals done, lasting several months in isolation, to regain youthful vigor and mental acuity.

What Can I Do Now?

A gentle way to experience the Ayurvedic cleansing process is to start with a food-based cleanse at home. This gives your digestive system a rest while also being practical in the context of modern life.

A straightforward cleansing diet is the basis of this home cleanse. From an Ayurvedic perspective, two of the simplest whole foods to digest are Basmati rice and split yellow mung dal (lentils). So the cleansing meal is a combination of these two foods cooked with vegetables and helpful spices such as turmeric, mustard seed, and cumin seed, all topped with the nourishing goodness of ghee (clarified butter). This grounding food is called kitchari (see Appendix for recipe). Two meals of this each day, in combination with plenty of warm water sipped throughout the day, and the addition of an herbal remedy such as Triphala to make sure the wastes are removed from the system, provides an easy and very effective home cleanse.

Getting Started

The first step is to figure out your constitution, a term used in Ayurveda to assess an individual’s specific health needs. To take the quiz to determine your Ayurvedic constitution, go to the following link: www.banyanbotanicals.com/constitutions. Then take a look at these cleanse instructions developed by Dr. Scott Blossom, and when you are ready to start, follow the daily protocol. That’s all there is to it. This program is specifically designed for people with an active life and work schedule.
One of the most important factors for getting the most out of your cleanse is to create a stress-free rhythm to your week and opportunities for deep relaxation. In Dr. Blossom’s many years of clinical experience, he has observed the profound detoxifying power of rest and relaxation during a cleanse. Here is what you can do.

Take a look at your schedule and eliminate any non-essential commitments this week. Practicing dynamic and restorative yoga regularly this week is really useful too. It is ideal to practice on your own or with a teacher that knows you but if that is not an option, Dr. Blossom created a sequence of restorative poses to help you with that. You can find them at here, as well as many resources for dynamic yoga practices.

Regular periodic detoxing of this kind is one of the best things you can do for your health. Enjoy the cleanse!

A note on Vices and Spices - It is best to try to limit the amount of caffeinated beverages you consume this week. If you are used to having these kinds of drinks on a daily basis and find that you have a strong negative reaction to eliminating them completely, such as feeling ill or getting a headache, then it is best to try to cut your consumption down by half or one-third. The same is true for tobacco products. If you are using this cleanse as part of the process of quitting caffeinated drinks or tobacco products completely, it can be very helpful to prepare yourself for some withdrawal symptoms and get the support you need. Avoid alcohol or recreational drugs completely this week.

Daily Cleansing Routine
Follow these steps each day.

- Start each morning of your cleanse by drinking six to eight ounces of hot water or Pukka Herbal Detox Tea from your Cleanse Kit.

- Abhyanga (Ayurvedic oil massage) – Before you bathe apply warmed or room temperature organic sesame oil from your Cleanse Kit over your entire body. A thin coating is all that it takes. Use long strokes on your limbs and circular strokes on your joints followed by a hot shower and a cool rinse. Do not try to wash the oil off with soap, sesame oil is a natural skin cleanser and the hot water will wash most of it away leaving your skin with a smooth, soft feeling. When you dry off, pat yourself with your towel rather than wiping the water away to prevent the abhyanga oil from being wiped off. Because there will be a small amount of oil left on the towels it can be helpful to pick an everyday towel to dry off with. Add a tea spoon of baking soda to your laundry to remove any excess oil that has stuck to your abhyanga towels. If you have access to a steam bath or sauna it is very good to apply the abhyanga oil and then spend 10-15 minutes in the heat (enough time to break a light sweat) before bathing. Visit Banyan Botanicals for a more detailed description of Abhyanga massage.

- Exercise before breakfast is highly recommended. If this is not possible then early evening is also suitable. Balanced forms of exercise like Yoga, Tai Chi, and Qi Gong that involve both stimulation and relaxation are ideal. If you prefer to bathe after you exercise you can do the abhyanga then. For restorative yoga practice suggestions from Doctor Blossom during your cleanse along with other dynamic yoga practices, click here. For further yoga practice suggestions from Banyan Botanicals, click here.

- Breakfast – Prepare your rice or quinoa porridge and eat this in a calm environment while you sip your Pukka Herbal Detox tea from your Cleanse Kit. It is fine to prepare your breakfast porridge the prior evening and then warm it up in the morning. To read the porridge recipes, go to the recipe section in this e-book.
• Sip hot water and your Pukka Herbal Detox tea throughout the day.

• Kitchari – For lunch and dinner you will be eating kitchari (Indian Mung bean and rice stew). To read the Cleanse Kit kitchari recipe, go to the recipe section in this e-book.

• Try to avoid snacking between meals but if you are hypoglycemic or feel like you need to have something to eat you are welcome to have some fresh fruit such as apples, pears, or berries and raw nuts such as almonds or seeds such as sunflower or pumpkin. The key is to avoid processed foods during the cleanse, but it is very important to be satisfied with what you are eating so be creative and make sure you are eating enough. When it comes to detoxification a calm, centered feeling is as important as the foods you are eating.

• Triphala (Ayurvedic herbal detoxifying formula) – Approximately one half hour before bed take 2 tablets of Triphala from your Cleanse Kit. This formula contains three of the most important Ayurvedic herbs for detoxification and rejuvenation of the whole body. If you find that your bowels slow down during your cleanse you can take 4 tablets of triphala each evening to gently remedy this. Visit Banyan Botanicals online to find more information on Triphala. More information on occasional constipation remedies can be found later in this e-book.

Common Sense Precaution: Triphala, which means “three fruits”, is very gentle, but if you are taking any prescription drugs be sure to check with your physician about whether it is inappropriate for you to take.

• A day of silence and reflection – Take time on the last day of your cleanse to reflect about your experiences and to envision how you would like your life to be moving forward. What insights arose during the process? What foods and activities do you wish to bring back into your life as you return to a more normal routine? What foods or activities would you like to reduce or eliminate from your life? How can improving your own health benefit your family, community, and the natural world? Keep a journal and write down your answers so that they will serve as inspiration and guidelines for maintaining positive momentum in your life.

For the most supportive foods and herbs, choose certified organic items whenever possible, but especially when doing a cleanse. The idea is to eliminate accumulated wastes and toxic build-up. Consuming products that have been exposed to pesticides, growth hormones, and other chemicals would be counterproductive. In fact, when you eliminate waste from the body, you create space for new nourishment to come in and take root; so this is your chance to fill the space with wholesome products that bring vibrant life and energy to your cells.

There are other things that you can do on your own to keep that kitchen sink in top working order. To learn more:

• Read the works of Ayurvedic master teacher, Dr. Vasant Lad
• Follow the cleansing tips recommended in the next chapter
• See the information and protocols available online through Dr. Scott Blossom
• Consult privately with an Ayurvedic practitioner, for advice regarding both home-based cleanses and panchakarma treatment.
Ayurvedic consultant Dr. Scott Blossom offers the following practical tips for doing a home cleanse.

1. What should I do if I experience constipation during my cleanse?

Sometimes, changing your diet or reducing stimulants like coffee can cause your bowels to slow down. These are some gentle remedies for occasional constipation:

   a. Take 1 teaspoon of triphala steeped in 6 oz. of hot water right before bed.
   b. Eat a peeled apple one hour after meals.
   c. Eating two very ripe bananas can also relieve irregular or infrequent bowel movements.
   d. At night, boil 1 tablespoon of flax seed in a cup of water for 2-3 minutes and drink the entire mixture.
   e. If your bowels need more help there are alternatives including adding Haritaki to your Triphala, taking castor oil internally, and doing a basti (enema). In all of these cases we advise you to consult with a practitioner first.

2. How much water should I drink, and is cold water acceptable?

Drink when you are thirsty, ideally 48-64 ounces per day of warm or room-temperature water. Cold or iced water weakens the digestive fire and so is best avoided. It is also better to sip small amounts of water throughout the day instead of “chugalugging” a lot of water at once, which also squelches the digestive fire.

3. Should I exercise during the cleanse? What about yoga?

Daily exercise helps to stimulate the lymphatic system, which is the body’s main detoxification system. Gentle aerobic exercises like yoga, Tai Chi/Qi Gong, swimming, biking, and walking are excellent for this type of cleanse. Yoga and Tai Chi/Qi Gong have the added benefits of helping eliminate mental and emotional toxins and strengthen the fire of the mind.

4. What should I do if I get hungry between meals? What about breakfast?

If you get hungry between meals, first try just sipping mint or ginger tea sweetened with a little raw honey; and if you are hypoglycemic, try eating some almonds or a ripe pear, apricot, or apple. For breakfast, we recommend either kitchari or rice porridge. See Appendix B for recipes.

5. Why do you recommend avoiding onions and garlic during the cleansing period?

During the cleansing, we are stimulating the body to gently purify itself, and this is best achieved using light foods that mobilize circulation and encourage the release of metabolic wastes and natural toxins. Onions and garlic are heavy foods and have a strong stabilizing effect on both the mind and the body, so they are better used in small amounts during the rejuvenative phase after you have finished your cleanse.
As a part of our Introduction to Ayurvedic Cleansing, Banyan is pleased to offer you words of wisdom from two of the most highly regarded individuals in the Ayurvedic community: Dr. Robert Svoboda and Dr. Scott Blossom. (Please see our References section for a short biography on both.4,5).

In conversation, we explored the topics of Ayurvedic cleansing and the relationship between yoga and Ayurveda.

1. What does Ayurveda offer to a beginner?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
Ayurveda is very fundamentally a common-sense approach to life. It is focused on trying to make you as an organism fit into your environment as best as possible. Sometimes it is the most simple things that you do that will have the most profound effects. The way to get the best results from your own personal system is to start paying attention to the effects that you get from everything that you eat, from everything that you do, from everything that you interact with; and seriously and genuinely evaluating for yourself which things are working well for you, and which things are not. The things that are working well for you, it is good for you to do. And the things that are not working well for you, it is good for you to ask yourself whether you should be doing them or not. The important thing about Ayurveda is that its purpose is not to make things complicated in your life. Its purpose is to assist you to simplify your life in a satisfying and beneficial way.

**Dr. Blossom:**
Clinically speaking, because of urban life, most people today have a mixture of excesses and deficiencies that make up their vikruti (current imbalances). When you are in that situation, caution is the key to approaching any kind of meaningful change. If you vigorously purify yourself, it may be beneficial to the excess conditions you have, but it is also likely to exacerbate your deficiencies; and if you vigorously tonify or rejuvenate yourself, you

2. What are the benefits of doing a simple, food-based cleanse at home, versus doing panchakarma at a center?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
We’re talking about the word karma, and a karma is an action. The basic principle of the law of karma is that every action is followed by a reaction. So taking a trip to do a more fancy treatment requires more karmas, more action, rather than simply inserting a few simple measures into one’s already existing daily routine.

It is always better to begin by doing very simple action when you are trying to change the way your organism works. It is the same way when you have been living for a long time with a closet where you stuff things into when you have nowhere else to put them. Eventually you have to open the closet, and you don’t know when you open the closet, because it is overfilled, whether everything is going to fall out and land on your head or not. It is much better to make sure you open it carefully and with abundant precaution, so that the ultimate result is likely to be a good one. Because of the nature of modern life, everybody, even if they are living a relatively balanced life, will have certain excesses and certain deficiencies. And it’s better to start off with a simple process so that you get a better perspective of what is going on with you as an individual.

**Dr. Blossom:**
Clinically speaking, because of urban life, most people today have a mixture of excesses and deficiencies that make up their vikruti (current imbalances). When you are in that situation, caution is the key to approaching any kind of meaningful change. If you vigorously purify yourself, it may be beneficial to the excess conditions you have, but it is also likely to exacerbate your deficiencies; and if you vigorously tonify or rejuvenate yourself, you
**Chapter 5: Q&A with Ayurvedic Teachers (cont’d)**

will benefit your deficiencies but will likely exacerbate your excesses conditions. The food-based cleanse, because of the nature of the mung beans and rice and the spices used, allows you to get ample nutrition to nourish any deficiencies while simultaneously purifying your body to reduce the excess conditions.

3. Is a food-based cleanse safe for most people?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
There’s the theoretical possibility that this could initiate some sort of undesirable reaction in someone, but for the vast majority of people, we can be confident that this cleanse will be safe and produce valuable results. Because it is simply based in very easy to digest and generally hypoallergenic foods, it is highly unlikely that this would create any difficulty.

**Dr. Blossom:**
Mung bean and rice combination is a complete protein. While it is a light diet, it is ample nutrition, especially done for only a week.

4. How often should one do a cleanse?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
Certainly once a year. One could do it as often as every three months. It depends very much on how well you respond to it, what sort of results it provided you, and how well you enjoyed it—whether you’re looking forward to doing it again or dreading it.

5. What would be your recommendations in order to prepare for a home, food-based cleanse?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
If you were doing Panchakarma properly at another locale, you would be sequestered from the world. So during a home cleanse, you want your activities to be minimized. You may have to continue working and taking care of your family, but minimize the non-essential activity as much as possible. You’re trying to give your organism an opportunity to get rid of everything that it wants to get rid of. If you keep your body too busy, it will pay more attention to dealing with the tasks that you put in front of it, instead of dealing with the most important task, which is to get rid of all the accumulated stuff that needs to be removed.

**Dr. Blossom:**
Simplifying your schedule is an important aspect, and if possible get your friends and family to join you because it makes it much easier and enjoyable to do the cleanse for a week or more. Another thing is to taper down from anything that you are accustomed or addicted to that will be at odds with the cleansing process: caffeine, sugar, alcohol, recreational drugs, junk food. Taper down for a week or two in preparation for eliminating those things completely, or having the absolute minimum that you require during the cleanse. You also want to get together the items that you require—the food and spices and herbs, so that you don’t have to go out in the middle of the cleanse looking to procure them.

6. Is there anything that one should do after the cleanse to maintain the newfound sense of well-being?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
The most important thing is to not be in a hurry to do anything. It not only negates a large amount of the beneficial effect, but it can actually make you sicker. It takes energy to accumulate toxins, and it takes energy to get rid of them. When you fail to pay attention to what the organism requires, and you insist on it being as active immediately after cleansing as it was before the cleansing, I believe you are asking for trouble. So the most important thing is to take plenty of time to slowly re-accelerate into your previous patterns. And of course, re-evaluate some of these patterns that you have been living in, and ask yourself if these patterns are benefitting and serving you. See if you can determine, as you start to re-introduce substances and behaviors into your life, if they are doing the job for you that they are supposed to, or if they are not serving you as well as you would like for them to.

**Dr. Blossom:**
On a very practical level, what is recommended is that people avoid processed foods for at least another week after they cleanse. So they can include a wider variety of foods, but maintain the structure of eating only whole foods. Same things goes for tobacco, alcohol, drugs, caffeine; see
Chapter 5: Q&A with Ayurvedic Teachers (cont’d)

how long they can maintain limited levels, or not partake at all, especially in the case of alcohol or recreational drugs, for at least one week to one month, or completely.

When you cleanse, you’re creating space in the system—you’re clearing something out. That space is going to need be filled back in. It’s a way of recreating yourself from the tissue level out. Be very cognizant that everything that you expose yourself to, from food and drink to community and environment, will contribute to the reconstruction of those tissue areas that you detoxified.

7. If someone notices various emotions arising during the cleanse, why is this, and how should one work through this?

Dr. Svoboda:
We talk about a cleanse, and we tend to think in terms of physiological toxins that we are cleansing. But your physiology is only one aspect of the organism, and very commonly, emotional toxins are as dangerous or even more dangerous than the physiological ones. So it’s not surprising that when you stop all the things you’ve been doing, stop all the momentum for your awareness to be externally pointed, and you start allowing internal awareness to occur, then automatically, many of the things you’ve accumulated in your awareness that you have not digested will be presented to you. Then it will be time for you to start digesting some of these emotional things as well. And, as with the physiological toxins, that’s another good reason for starting off with a food based cleanse, so that you aren’t strongly stimulating your organism to cause all the emotional baggage that you have to be splayed out on the tarmac, but rather to have things come out that you can address one at a time without being inundated by them.

Dr. Blossom:
It can be useful for people to set a clear goal and intention for why they are cleansing, something that fits into the big picture of their life and life goals. If things start to rise emotionally, reflecting on that deeper intention is a way to anchor and strengthen their resolve to see things through.

8. What should one do if one feels exhausted during the cleanse?

Dr. Svoboda:
If at all possible, one should do absolutely nothing. The likelihood of feeling exhausted simply because of eating mung beans and rice is very low, because it is a complete protein. If, on the other hand, you have been overdoing the stimulation, whether it is stimulation in the form of caffeine, nicotine, video games, or anything else, then automatically, once you stop being stimulated, you are going to have the experience of feeling exhausted. The most important thing at that point is to ensure that you have sufficient time and space to allow your organism to recuperate and have its own vitality return.

Dr. Blossom:
The key thing is that you look at things through the lens of the process. Going through a cleanse process can make you feel different, and that is part of what your goal is. With it being so common that people live over-stimulated lives, it is actually sometimes a positive symptom for people to feel a little tired at the end of the cleanse, because it is revealing the need for rest, which is sometimes masked by the unending cycles that people live in. To heed that signal is a victory for you becoming more well-integrated in the body-mind. Understand in the context of the momentum of your life before the cleanse how your experience might be reasonable or not. And then understand that responding to the signals of your body is your primary objective in your rejuvenation period, which for a lot of people, is going to be asking for more rest, more relaxation, more ease, and less stimulation.

9. What happens if one quits in the middle of the cleanse, before it is over?

Dr. Svoboda:
Not a whole lot will happen, provided you don’t immediately go back to everything you were doing before. If you quit and immediately go back to everything you were doing before, you may imbalance yourself even more.

Dr. Blossom:
The nature of the whole food cleanse is that it is gentle and it moves things gradually towards purification as well as balance. If someone stops in the middle, they
will likely not experience a strong rebound. At the same time, once the process has started, the body has gotten the signal that this is the time and the coast is clear for eliminating things. Some of those processes will take a few days to quiet down. So the best advice is to gradually return to their “normal” diet. Eat whole foods for at least a couple more days, which can include a wider variety of foods, but still whole in nature.

10. How do Ayurveda and yoga correspond?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
They both evolved out of a particular philosophical system called Sankhya, and they are both concerned with understanding the way in which awareness and matter interact. Ayurveda focuses especially on the basic way in which Consciousness manifests itself in matter; how can that awareness express itself most efficiently and most satisfyingly. Ayurveda focuses on sukha: on happiness, health, and creating good spaces, inside and outside the organism. And Yoga is more concerned with enhancing the ability of that organism to become transparent to the ultimate Awareness.

**Dr. Blossom:**
They both focus primarily on prana. Sukha, or good space, is the essential ingredient for having good circulation of prana; and health, in this sense, is defined by balancing its circulation. The establishment of good flow of energy in our system is the foundation for enduring the rigors of spiritual practice. Both Ayurveda and Hatha Yoga are forms of Karma Yoga (Yoga of Action), in the sense that they are advocating practices to fulfill a potential for health and spiritual insight. All of our actions have consequences and both Yoga and Ayurveda offer ways of learning to be skillful in our actions so we fulfill ourselves and learn about the nature of life and the mysteries behind it.

11. How can an Ayurvedic cleanse benefit one’s yoga practice?

**Dr. Svoboda:**
When prana is obstructed in any way, it can’t flow freely; and when it can’t flow freely, there will be various types of disturbances. When the obstructions are removed, the prana will flow more freely, and it will be easier for both the Ayurvedic approach to life and the Yogic approach to life to display themselves. It’s very much a matter of getting out of the way of the organism, so the organism will be able to do what it knows how to do. All too often, the big problem is that the human being is trying to tell the prana what to do, when the prana knows very well what to do, and all it needs is for the human being to stop trying to interfere. Because of the way that we think about the world today, and as we tend to take a material world view of things, we think of Yoga as something being “performed” rather than something being “lived”.

**Dr. Blossom:**
When we step out of our habitual patterns of living (sleeping, eating, exercising, community, and what we expose our sense organs to), and when we change those patterns temporarily, it heightens the reflection for the person about how their life is influencing them. It facilitates the process of self-determination, so that somebody can be more aware of the choices they are making in their lives, from a place that is not as conditioned or as habitual. By enhancing the process of self-determination, one of the major highlights is that the environment within which your yoga practice is taking place has as much or more of an effect on the circulation of your prana than your efforts might on the mat. It starts to give a perspective about how prana is constantly circulating, and that in yoga practice you can attend very minutely, tenderly, and sensitively to the currents of prana within you; noticing, for example, how your life force responds to certain mindsets, certain physical movements, certain breathing patterns, etc. It reminds us that this process is continuous on a 24-hour, 7-days-a-week basis. So you become aware of the connection between yoga and your lifestyle and diet. That would be the Ayurvedic part of the equation: how the rest of your life influences the circulation of your prana. On a deeper level, perspective is everything when it comes to the experience of what you might call “Yoga”. So the Yogic process has a lot less to do with the practice, and a lot more to do with the effect that the practice has on the perspective that we have on the nature of our bodies and minds. These temporary changes to daily routine often facilitate monumental shifts in perspective, which will facilitate the practice of Yoga.
About Banyan Botanicals

Established in 1996, Banyan Botanicals was born out of a deep love and respect for Ayurveda, and the healing potential that it offers to all people. It is our sincere hope that this E-booklet provides you with greater understanding for your health and happiness.

If you are interested in learning more about Banyan, Ayurveda, or how yoga and Ayurveda support one another, please visit the Banyan Botanicals website.

Banyan Botanicals is your source for premium quality Ayurvedic products made from certified organic herbs that are sustainably sourced and fairly traded. We take pride in bringing you only the best to support your journey to wellness.

Visit Banyan Botanicals to purchase a premium quality Organic Ayurvedic Cleanse Kit designed especially for doing a food-based Ayurvedic home cleanse.

Ayurvedic Cleanse Kit

This kit was created in conjunction with Dr. Scott Blossom to provide the basic supplies you need to do a 7-day detoxifying cleanse at home.
Appendix A: Instructions for a 7-Day Whole Foods Cleanse

1. Prepare yourself for the cleanse:

Even though this is a gentle cleanse, it can still be taxing for the system. Taking steps to prepare, starting one to two weeks before the cleanse, will allow you to reap the most benefits.

a. Get plenty of rest. This includes having a regular sleep routine. If you have occasional difficulty sleeping, use the sesame oil to massage the soles of your feet before going to bed.

b. Cleansing is not just a physical process, but also mental and emotional. Find a daily routine that nourishes your mental/emotional being and helps you reduce stress to find balance and ease—meditation, contemplation, journaling, prayer, etc.

c. Eliminate or reduce caffeine, tobacco, and alcohol. It doesn’t make sense to add pollutants to your body when you are going to be doing a cleanse to get rid of them. Soothe yourself with hot herbal teas (non-caffeinated, of course).

d. Find out your natural constitution and your current condition (of dosha imbalance) to get more specific recommendations on diet and lifestyle.

2. Day 1 to 7:

a. Start your day with a warm sesame oil self-massage.

b. Nourish yourself with kitchari for lunch and dinner. You can also have kitchari for breakfast, or a lighter rice porridge. See appendix B of this Ebooklet for recipes.

c. Keep your system hydrated and kindle your digestive fire with hot water and herbal teas as needed throughout the day.

d. Take 2 tablets of Triphala (or ½ a teaspoon of powder) with warm water before bed.

e. Allow yourself to do gentle yoga and walk to keep your bodily systems moving, which facilitates the removal of natural toxins.

f. Keep supporting your mental/emotional being with the routine you have established.

g. If questions arise, see our general answers in this Ebooklet, or contact an Ayurvedic practitioner for more individualized attention.

3. Replenish:

a. As you finish the 7 days of cleansing, don’t immediately jump back into your normal routine—this will shock your system and can undo the benefits of your cleanse. Ease back into a healthy diet and your normal activities. Also take this opportunity to evaluate if there are portions of your diet or activities that you would like to change, as they may not be benefitting you.

b. Continue with foods and activities that give your body the building blocks to replenish itself with healthy tissues. This can include the daily routine you’ve developed, as well as the warm sesame-oil massage.
Appendix B: Recipes

Tea Recipes

Ginger-Turmeric Tea for Kapha Imbalances

• 1 quart purified water
• 15 ¼” slices fresh ginger root
• 5 slices fresh turmeric root or 1 ½ teaspoons dried turmeric powder

Place all the ingredients in a pot and simmer for fifteen minutes. Turn off the heat and let the pot cool. Discard the herbs and store the tea in a thermos or in the refrigerator. Drink the entire quart of tea, either warm or hot, throughout the day.

½ teaspoon of raw honey added to each cup you drink (optional) – In Ayurveda we do not recommend that you cook the honey, simply add it to your cup of tea as needed.

Cumin, Coriander, and Fennel Tea for Vata and Pitta Imbalances

• 1 quart purified water
• 1 teaspoon cumin seed
• 1 teaspoon coriander seed
• 1 teaspoon fennel seed

Place all the ingredients in a pot and simmer for fifteen minutes. Turn off the heat and let the pot cool. Discard the herbs and store the tea in a thermos or in the refrigerator. Drink the entire quart of tea, either warm or hot, throughout the day.

Kitchari Recipes

Pitta Cooling Kitchari

• ½ cup basmati rice
• ½ cup organic yellow mung dal or whole green mung beans (bulk section of the health food store). These need to be soaked for at least three hours before cooking.
• ½ of a burdock root (approx. 8 in. long), if available; if not, substitute 2 carrots.
• 1 ½ cups fresh green beans
• One small zucchini
• 2 T organic ghee (clarified butter)
• ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
• 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
• 1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger
• 1 stick of kombu (seaweed) also available at the health food store. You can substitute wakame if need be. You just need a little—one “leaf” per pot of kitchari.
• 6 cups of water
• ½ teaspoon of natural mineral salt
• 1 T coriander powder
• 1 teaspoon turmeric powder

See preparation instructions on page 17.

Vata Balancing Kitchari

• 1 cup basmati rice
• ½ cup organic yellow mung dal or whole green mung beans (bulk section of the health food store). These need to be soaked for at least three hours before cooking.
• 4 cups of water
• 3 T organic ghee (clarified butter)
• 1 teaspoon black mustard seed
• 1 teaspoon cumin seed
• 2 pinches hing (asafoetida)
• 1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger
• 1 stick of kombu (seaweed) also available at the health food store. You can substitute wakame if need be. You just need a little—one “leaf” per pot of kitchari.
• ½ teaspoon natural mineral salt
• ½ teaspoon turmeric powder

See preparation instructions on page 17.
Appendix B: Recipes (cont’d)

Kitchari Recipes (cont’d)

Kapha Reducing Kitchari

- 1 cup basmati rice
- ½ cup organic yellow mung dal or whole green mung beans (bulk section of the health food store). These need to be soaked for at least three hours before cooking.
- 6 cups water
- 2 cups vegetables such as zucchini, leafy greens like kale or collards, or green beans
- 1 T organic ghee (clarified butter)
- ½ teaspoon of black mustard seed
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed
- 1 ½ teaspoon coriander seed
- 1 ½ teaspoon oregano
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger
- ½ a small onion chopped
- 1 stick of kombu (seaweed) also available at the health food store. You can substitute wakame if need be. You just need a little—one “leaf” per pot of kitchari.
- ½ teaspoon natural mineral salt
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder

See preparation instructions on the right.

Kitchari Preparation Instructions

Wash rice and mung dal and soak for three hours or overnight. Drain soak water. Wash and peel carrots or burdock, if using, and cut in your favorite way. Cut green beans into 1-inch pieces. Cut zucchini in the way you like.

In a saucepan, warm the ghee over medium heat. Add the ginger, fennel, and cumin seeds and sauté for one to two minutes.

Add rice and mung beans and sauté for another couple of minutes. Then add the burdock or carrots, green beans and zucchini. Stir for a minute. Then add 6 cups of water and bring to a boil.

Once the kitchari has come to a boil, add the salt, powdered spices, seaweed, and leafy greens and reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and cook until everything is tender (approx. 30-45 minutes). If you need to add more water to prevent scorching, please do so. The consistency should be that of a vegetable stew as opposed to a broth.

Garnish with fresh cilantro and add salt to taste. You may add a little chutney to make it tastier. You can also have avocado with a little salt and lemon as side dish.

Kitchari helps the body purify the blood and also supports proper kidney function, the reproductive organs, liver, and thyroid. Try to remember this if you get tired of eating the kitchari twice a day. It is mainly the mind and emotions that rebel against such a routine. That is also why you can help yourself by creating yummy, fresh side dishes. Steamed vegetables are always good.
Chutneys (Sauces)

Fresh Coriander Chutney

- 1 bunch fresh coriander (also known as cilantro or Chinese parsley)
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup grated coconut
- 2 tablespoons fresh ginger root, chopped
- 1 teaspoon of barley malt or raw honey
- ¼ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

Blend the lemon juice, water, and fresh coriander until the coriander is chopped. Add the rest of the ingredients and blend until it is like a paste. This can be stored in the refrigerator for up to one week. For a silkier texture use only the leaves and the tops of the fresh coriander stalks.

Sesame Seed Chutney

This tridoshic recipe is especially good for people with vata and kapha imbalance. Reduce cayenne pepper by half if there is pitta imbalance.

- 1 cup roasted and ground sesame seed
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon natural mineral salt

Blend ingredients together and serve.

Pre-Made Chutney and Sweeteners

Mango chutney may be useful for vata imbalance, but is not appropriate for kapha or pitta imbalance. Maple syrup is the more useful sweetener for vata and pitta imbalance. Raw honey in moderation is more useful for kapha, but do not cook the honey.

Breakfast Grain Dishes

Seasoned Barley

This is a great grain dish for kapha and pitta imbalance, especially when there is constipation.

- 1 cup dry barley
- 6 cups water
- 1 burdock root, washed, peeled, and finely chopped
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt or 1 teaspoon of vegetable boullion
- ½ stick kombu
- 1 teaspoon dry sage
- Black pepper and organic ghee or coconut oil to taste

Place all ingredients except the sage, ghee, and black pepper in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Cover and lower heat to medium low. Cook until tender, about 50 minutes.

Add sage, ghee, and black pepper and simmer for five more minutes. This makes about 4-5 servings.

Rice Porridge

This is a good breakfast porridge for pitta and vata imbalance. It slightly increases kapha if it is eaten in large quantity because it absorbs large quantities of water. Quinoa can be substituted for rice, which is a better choice for kapha dosha.

- 1 cup basmati rice
- ½ tablespoon organic ghee, coconut, or sesame oil (coconut or ghee is best for pitta)
- 1 pinch cumin seed
- ¼ teaspoon natural mineral salt
- 2 cups hot water

Wash rice thoroughly. Heat the ghee or oil over medium heat and sauté the cumin seeds for a few moments until the aroma starts to come out. Add the rice and mix well. Add the salt and hot water. Bring all this to a boil and boil for 2-3 minutes. Turn down the heat to very low and cover. For stickier rice leave the lid ajar, for drier rice keep the lid on tight. Cook until the rice is tender—about 15-20 minutes.
Appendix B: Recipes (cont’d)

Rejuvenative Broth

Potassium Vegetable Broth

This tridoshic broth is an excellent electrolyte source and blood builder that is very useful for the rejuvenation period after cleansing.

Fill a large pot with:
• 25% potato peelings
• 25% carrot peelings and whole chopped beets
• 25% coarsely chopped onions
• 25% whole chopped celery and dark greens

Note: Use only organic vegetables if possible. We do not want to consume any toxic, immune suppressive insecticides, pesticides, and inorganic chemical fertilizers while we are cleansing.

Add enough purified water to just cover the vegetables and bring to a low boil. Turn heat down to very low and simmer slowly for 1-4 hours.

Strain and drink only the broth. Drink three cups a day. This will make about two days worth of broth.

Puree the vegetables to have as a side dish, mildly spicing as you please.
References


3. Caraka Samhita. Sharma, P.V. Sutrasthana Ch XXVIII, V. 41.

4. Bio on Dr. Robert Svoboda: Dr. Svoboda, Ayurvedic teacher and well-published author, was the first Westerner ever to graduate from a college of Ayurveda (in 1980) and be licensed to practice Ayurveda in India. He lived in India from 1973-1980 and 1982-1986. Since 1985, he has traveled the world lecturing, consulting, teaching, and writing. He has served as Adjunct Faculty at the Ayurvedic Institute, Albuquerque, NM, and Bastyr University, Kenmore, WA.

5. Bio on Dr. Scott Blossom: Scott Blossom is a licensed practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), an Ayurvedic consultant, and a Shadow Yoga teacher. He is on the faculty of the Kripalu School of Ayurveda. His primary teachers are Shandor Remete, founder of Shadow Yoga, and Dr. Robert Svoboda, Ayurvedic physician and scholar http://www.doctorblossom.com/wordpress