

How to Detox Naturally

Analysis by [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#)

July 04, 2026

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › In my May 2026 CBS Chicago interview, I explained that your body already contains detox systems that work continuously through your liver, skin, kidneys, and digestive tract, but processed foods, seed oils, and dehydration overload those pathways and slow recovery
- › Regular sun exposure and increased outdoor activity naturally support detoxification by improving sweating, circulation, hydration, and cellular energy production
- › Seed oils stored inside your tissues contribute to fatty liver disease, impaired detox capacity, and increased sensitivity to midday sunlight, which helps explain why many people burn and photoage more easily
- › Sweating through sunlight exposure, walking, or sauna use helps your body eliminate waste products naturally while also supporting circulation, hydration balance, and temperature regulation
- › Simple daily habits like eliminating processed foods, hydrating consistently, spending time outdoors, and building regular sweat sessions strengthen your detox systems far more effectively than restrictive cleanses or expensive detox products

Many people today are running on fumes — pale from spending too much time indoors, sluggish from heavy processed meals, depleted from too little sunlight, and too much screen time. But that depletion isn't permanent — there are ways for you to detox naturally, giving your body a real opportunity to recover.

That kind of shift is also ideal when it comes to clearing out the buildup of modern life. For years, I've watched the detox industry sell people on the idea that real cleansing requires powders, pills, or expensive kits. I disagree. Your body came equipped with detox systems that work continuously, and they don't need a marketing campaign to function. What they need is for you to stop standing in their way.

That distinction shapes everything I shared in my May 2026 CBS Chicago interview, and it guides everything in this article.¹ Detoxification isn't something you buy. It's something your body already does — once you stop overwhelming it and start giving it the conditions it needs to work properly.

The Right Environment Gives Your Body the Support It Needs to Detox

In my interview, I explained that your body already contains highly sophisticated **detox systems** designed to remove waste products and environmental toxins naturally.² Your liver, skin, kidneys, and digestive tract work around the clock to process this toxic burden.

The problem is that modern life overwhelms those systems continuously through processed foods, **polluted air**, plastics, and industrial chemicals. I called this a "toxic soup" — phthalates leaching from plastics, glyphosate residues on produce, **microplastics** in drinking water, particulate matter in the air you breathe. Your body wades through it every hour of every day.

- **Most commercial detox programs completely miss the root issue** — You can't overload your body with processed foods, **seed oils**, and chronic dehydration for months, then expect a three-day cleanse to reverse the damage. Instead of framing detox as something you purchase, I focused on removing the major stressors that overload your biology in the first place. Once you stop overwhelming your detox systems, your body redirects energy toward repair, recovery, and waste elimination.

- **The right environmental conditions naturally strengthen detox pathways** – More time in sunlight, warmer temperatures, and increased outdoor activity improve circulation, sweating, and hydration rhythms. During the interview, I explained that **sunlight** "facilitates many of our body's natural abilities," especially those tied to liver function and cellular energy production.

Cellular energy production happens inside your mitochondria, the microscopic power plants in every cell that turn food and oxygen into the fuel your body runs on. Your body responds differently when you spend more time moving outdoors, absorbing sunlight, and regulating body temperature through sweating.

- **Sweating acts like a built-in detox mechanism** – I stated in the interview that "when you sweat, that's one of the most effective ways to eliminate toxins." Your skin functions as a secondary elimination organ. Once body temperature rises through **sauna use**, walking outdoors, or sunlight exposure, sweat glands help move waste products out while improving circulation at the same time.
- **Simple habits are often the most effective detox protocols** – I emphasized practical strategies instead of restrictive cleanses or starvation-style detox plans. These included:
 - Spending more time outdoors
 - Sweating regularly through movement or sauna use
 - Drinking enough water consistently
 - Eliminating processed foods
 - Supporting liver health through whole-food nutrition
- **Hydration is a central theme of detoxification** – Sweating removes fluids alongside waste products, so dehydration slows detoxification rapidly. Even mild fluid loss reduces circulation, energy production, and temperature regulation. If you feel

sluggish, foggy, drained, or irritable during warmer weather, your body often lacks hydration long before you notice intense thirst.

Consistent hydration supports blood flow and helps your detox systems move waste products more efficiently throughout the day.

Seed Oils Sabotage Your Detox and Midday Sunlight Tolerance

I explained during the interview that processed foods overload your body because they contain seed oils, which are high in **linoleic acid** (LA), and heavily refined ingredients. In fact, I stated that avoiding processed foods "is probably the single most powerful intervention you can use to detox." That shifts attention away from trendy supplements and toward the foods that burden your body every single day.

- **Seed oils are associated with fatty liver disease and reduced detox capacity** – **Fatty liver disease** means your liver cells get clogged with fat, the way a kitchen drain clogs with grease. The organ keeps trying to do its job, but every process – filtering blood, processing nutrients, packaging waste for excretion – slows down. Over time, this disrupts blood sugar control, energy production, and toxin processing.

Seed oils contribute heavily to these fatty acid accumulations inside the liver. Since your liver acts as your body's primary filtration system, an overloaded liver forces your body to spend more energy dealing with inflammation and less energy maintaining repair and recovery.

- **Why sunlight became controversial** – Many people have been taught to fear midday sunlight entirely. However, much of the skin damage associated with peak sunlight exposure may stem from seed oils stored inside body tissues. These unstable polyunsaturated fats appear to contribute to photoaging, meaning premature skin aging linked to sunlight, and may also contribute to wrinkles and increased skin damage risk.

Polyunsaturated fats are chemically unstable because their double bonds are vulnerable to oxidation, and when ultraviolet light hits skin tissue loaded with these fats, it triggers lipid peroxidation; essentially, the fats in your skin go rancid and damage surrounding cells.

- **Diet quality heavily influences how your skin responds to sunlight** – Individuals who recently eliminated processed foods and seed oils still carry those fats inside tissues for months. That is why I advised limiting intense direct sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. until you've avoided seed oils for at least three months.
- **Sunlight exposure improves far more than sweating alone** – Once you spend more time outdoors, your body starts recalibrating mood, sleep cycles, and energy regulation naturally. Increased sunlight exposure **optimizes cellular energy**, influences hormones tied to alertness and recovery, and encourages more movement throughout the day.

That creates a reinforcing cycle where you move more, sweat more, hydrate more consistently, and support circulation more effectively. Small daily habits build momentum rapidly when your environment supports those changes naturally.

- **Breaking detox into small repeatable habits lowers mental resistance dramatically** – Many people fail because they try extreme protocols that overload their schedules and attention spans. I focused instead on realistic actions that fit into normal life. Examples included:
 - Taking regular outdoor walks
 - Sweating consistently for short periods
 - Replacing processed meals with whole foods
 - Drinking water steadily throughout the day
 - Using sauna sessions strategically

Remove the Toxic Overload Before You Focus on Detox

Your body already detoxes every minute of every day. The real problem is overload. If you keep overloading your body with processed foods, dehydration, poor sleep, and constant indoor living, with little time outdoors, no detox tea or cleanse fixes that bottleneck.

Focus first on removing the things that clog your detox pathways before adding anything additional. Once you lower the toxic burden, your liver, skin, and circulation systems start working more efficiently again. Simple habits repeated every day create stronger results than extreme short-term cleanses.

- 1. Eliminate seed oils and ultraprocessed foods first** — Your liver struggles when you constantly feed it seed oils, additives, and heavily processed meals. Seed oils, including soybean, corn, sunflower, safflower, and canola, accumulate in tissues, increase oxidative stress, and contribute to fatty liver disease. If you're serious about detoxification, this is the first place I would clean up.

Avoid restaurant foods, packaged snacks, bottled dressings, and frozen convenience meals. Even "organic" processed foods often contain seed oils that overload your liver and skin. Instead, focus your meals around:

- Grass fed beef, lamb, or bison
- Whole fruits and root vegetables
- Pastured eggs cooked gently at lower heat
- White rice if your gut health is compromised
- Tallow, ghee, or grass fed butter instead of vegetable oils

- 2. Use sweating as a daily detox tool** — **Sweating** helps your body move waste products out through your skin while improving circulation and temperature regulation. You don't need complicated detox programs for this. Your body already

built the system. If you're new to sweating regularly, start simple:

- Take a brisk outdoor walk during warmer parts of the day
- Use a sauna several times per week
- Perform short body-weight workouts that raise your heart rate
- Sit outdoors in natural sunlight while staying hydrated

Turn this into a personal challenge. Track your consistency instead of chasing perfection. Five short sweat sessions per week build more momentum than one exhausting "detox day" every month.

3. Hydrate in a way that supports energy production – Your body loses fluids continuously through breathing, sweating, and daily activity. Focus on steady hydration throughout the day instead of flooding your body with huge amounts all at once. Sip fluids consistently, but let thirst guide how much water you drink. Your urine color gives useful feedback here.

Pale yellow urine generally reflects healthy hydration, while darker urine usually signals that your body needs more fluid. If you spend time outdoors or sweat heavily, increase your intake earlier in the day instead of trying to "catch up" at night. Fruit with pulp, mineral-rich fluids, and whole-food carbohydrates support hydration far better than sugary sports drinks or heavily caffeinated beverages that increase stress hormones.

4. Build your sunlight tolerance gradually – Sunlight supports cellular energy production, circulation, and healthy detox pathways. But if your tissues are loaded with seed oils from years of processed-food intake, intense sun exposure at midday damages your skin more easily. If you recently removed processed foods, ease into sunlight exposure gradually:

- Start with short periods of morning or late afternoon sun

- Increase exposure slowly over several months
- Avoid harsh midday sun until you've avoided seed oils for at least three months
- Spend more time outdoors without sunglasses when appropriate so natural light reaches your eyes

As your body clears stored seed oils over time, your skin handles sunlight differently. Many people notice improved energy, sleep quality, and mood once regular sunlight exposure becomes part of their daily rhythm.

5. Make detox habits automatic instead of dramatic – Most detox plans fail because they demand too much mental energy. Extreme cleanses create burnout. Your body responds better to routines that feel manageable enough to repeat daily. Consider simple scorecard-style habits that reduce overwhelm. Pick a few daily targets:

- Outdoor sunlight exposure
- One sweat session
- Processed-food-free meals
- Consistent hydration
- Earlier bedtime

Then track your streak. Small achievements compound. The walk you took yesterday makes today's walk easier. The seed-oil-free dinner you cooked Monday makes Wednesday's grocery list healthier. Once your energy improves and your body feels lighter, those habits stop feeling like chores and start feeling normal.

FAQs About Natural Detox

Q: What makes natural detoxification easier?

A: Increasing sunlight exposure, outdoor movement, and sweating, all support your body's built-in detox systems. Regularly spending time outdoors also helps regulate sleep cycles, circulation, and cellular energy production. Your liver, skin, and kidneys already remove toxins continuously, but these environmental conditions help those systems work more efficiently.

Q: Do detox teas, juices, and cleanses actually detox your body?

A: Your body already contains detox organs that handle waste removal naturally. Short-term detox cleanses often ignore the real issue, which is chronic overload from processed foods, dehydration, poor sleep, and constant indoor living. Removing the daily stressors that burden your liver creates far greater benefits than relying on expensive detox products.

Q: Why are seed oils such a problem for detoxification?

A: Seed oils accumulate inside tissues and contribute to fatty liver disease, inflammation, and impaired cellular energy production. Your liver acts as your body's main filtration system, so when excess fat builds up inside liver cells, toxin processing becomes less efficient. Seed oils also increase sensitivity to sunlight and contribute to premature skin aging.

Q: What are the best natural ways to support detoxification?

A: Simple daily habits strengthen detox pathways more effectively than extreme cleanses. The most helpful strategies include eliminating processed foods and seed oils, sweating regularly through movement or sauna use, staying consistently hydrated, spending more time outdoors in natural sunlight, and eating whole foods that support liver health.

Q: Why does hydration matter so much for detox?

A: Your body loses fluids continuously through breathing, sweating, and normal daily activity. Even mild dehydration slows circulation, temperature regulation, and waste removal. Consistent hydration helps your blood transport nutrients and move waste products out more efficiently, especially during warmer weather when sweating increases.

Sources and References

- ^{1, 2} [YouTube, CBS Chicago, May 12, 2026](#)