

# **Polyvagal Explorations: Reviewing the Fundamentals**

Catch this first of four review episodes in our months of polyvagal explorations. Today we go back to basics and look at the terms hierarchy, neuroception, and co-regulation and what they have come to mean for us.

In this organic series, Gemmotherapy expert and educator Lauren Hubele, Japanese Acupuncturist Maegan Lemp, and the Passionate Polyvagalist Cameron Scott explore the blended use of the Polyvagal Theory, Asian Medicine and Gemmotherapy extracts to restore a sense of safety and connection.

Watch this episode on my YouTube channel [here](#)!

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## **Happy Healthy Babies Part II: Infrequent Elimination**

I LOVE working with babies! I so appreciate the opportunity to share with parents the benefits of natural remedies for the simple ailments of infancy such as constipation, acid reflux, colic, and croup. Gemmotherapy can provide exactly the support these young developing bodies need for their digestive system because of its unique ability to clean and fortify organ tissue. Unfortunately, when seeking help, most parents are given advice to either wait it out until their baby's discomfort passes or they are handed a prescription to suppress the symptom. I'd like to say neither is acceptable or helpful to baby or parents.

The early development of the digestive system is critical in the building of a healthy immune system. Science is making more gains on this by the day as we learn that the chronic dis-eases of our generation stem from disturbances in this highly sensitive system. So it IS critical we pay attention to these early symptoms and set healthy patterns at the beginning of life. If you'd like to read more about this topic, I recommend this in-depth article by my colleague Dr. Ron Whitmont, a MD Homeopath, who discusses the body's microbiome and chronic disease.

I introduced this series last week, sharing the impact over time of poor elimination. One version of poor elimination is infrequent stools. Let's take a look at how simply a case of infrequent stools from my practice was solved with Gemmotherapy.

## **Ella's Story**

Ella was a 6 week old, c-section delivered, breastfed infant. I met with Ella and her parents when they came in for help with what they perceived as her inability to settle. They described her pattern of falling asleep (day or night) and waking shortly afterwards in distress and her inability to settle back into sleep after a night feeding, searching for comfort. She could not easily bring up a burp and would wail in discomfort. New at the game of parenting, they weren't sure if this was normal or not.

I questioned Ella's parents about her bowel elimination. Was she passing stools easily after each breastfeeding or at least several each day? I was not surprised to hear that Ella sometimes skipped a day of bowel movements, and mostly had only one. While their pediatrician had shown no concern, I knew from my own clinical experience that when the bowels do not empty completely, sleep is disturbed among a host of other things. So how does a parent know if their baby is eliminating

enough? Breastfed babies should have 3-4 bowel eliminations, spread out in the day. These stools should never produce any discomfort in passing or be explosive, blowing out the top of the diaper. Formula fed babies should have 2-3 stools daily that are never pellet like, produce any discomfort in passing or are explosive, blowing out the top of the diaper.

## Extracts to Consider

If your baby has any secondary symptoms such as sleep disturbances, acid reflux, colic, skin conditions, or sinus congestion you can be sure the bowel elimination is not optimal as these are all a result of the body using alternative pathways to compensate.

There are two Gemmotherapy extracts I use in my practice for digestive disturbances in babies and over the next blog posts you will see how I employ them separately or together in babies depending on the circumstance. These two extracts are Fig and Walnut. Fig is known to support digestion from the mouth to the stomach. Walnut supports the large intestine creating a terrain that supports the development of healthy strains of bacteria.

Ella, being a c-section baby, had missed a healthy dose of good bacteria from her mother that babies gain in vaginal deliveries. Now that research has exploded on the microbiome of the body we know this is significant. Today I suggest the use of Walnut Gemmotherapy extract for all c-section babies to help build naturally what has been missed.

In Ella's case specifically I decided to use a combination of the two extracts due to her difficulty burping or releasing gas after feeding along with her infrequent elimination. I made a combination bottle of the two Gemmotherapy extracts for easy handling and instructed Ella's parents to give her four drops directly in her mouth right before nursing, 4x daily. Typically Gemmotherapy extracts are dosed in water but this

can be complex for a young infant. In these cases, I generally advise the drops be given right on the tongue at the start of a feeding so they are washed from the mouth with breast milk.

Within one week, Ella was passing 2-3 stools a day and settling well into sleep. I suggested to her parents that after another week they taper the drops back to twice daily. If there is no return of symptoms, then this would continue along for her first months of life supporting Ella's maturing digestive system with the benefits of Gemmotherapy.

Will Ella have a problem again? It might flare at another developmental stage. However, now her parents know what to look out for and have a safe and effective tool to use should future distress occur.

We're just getting started in this series and there is a lot more to discuss so be sure to check back next week to learn a protocol for acid reflux in infants. Has this sparked your interest in Gemmotherapy? You can learn more about this topic in my latest book *Building Immunity in Babies and Children*. Looking for a deeper dive into the uses of Gemmotherapy? Consider joining my upcoming *Foundation of Gemmotherapy Series*.

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## **Happy Healthy Babies Part I: It Really Is All About Elimination**

As a mother of three children, I lost many a night's sleep with a child who could not settle or woke every few hours needing comfort and attention. Little did I know of the close

relationship between their nighttime discomfort and their diet and less than optimal daily bowel elimination. I think about the sleep and worry I would have saved not to mention the stress and strain on their young digestive and immune systems. While I can't restore my sleep I can absolutely help yours and along with that build a healthy immune system for your child.

I am always thrilled for the opportunity to work with a new mom and baby. Not because I don't enjoy all whom I have the honor to support, but because those first years of life are when the most profound changes can occur – and simply! The immune system we depend on as adults is developed in our first three years of life. Early support of these maturing organs is critical and can prevent a host of what have become normal chronic childhood conditions such as interrupted sleep, eczema, or recurring inflammation of the ears or upper respiratory system.

Much of my work with individuals of all ages is focused on elimination. It plays a critical role in the health of all living beings but is never more clearly evident than it is in babies and toddlers. However, I've often been told by parent after parent, that I am the first practitioner to question their child's elimination and they often wonder why that is so.

It is rare that an allopathic or conventional MD will raise an eyebrow at your baby or child missing a bowel movement or two or even three. There is reason for this. Medical doctors are trained to look at the body through the lens of disease diagnosis and medicine. A missed or infrequent bowel movement is not a disease. If the missed bowel movements lead to discomfort or impaction however, then there are medicines available to control the symptoms. To be clear, controlling symptoms does not resolve the underlying issue. It is this limited perspective that leads many to seek alternatives.

I practice an alternative that combines the use Gemmotherapy

Extracts, a Plant Based Diet and Homeopathy, My protocols resolve symptoms rather than control symptoms. Elimination is key in my work. When elimination it is not optimal, the natural pattern of the body to clean and heal are disturbed and the body begins to compensate for this inadequate cleaning system. Infrequent elimination is the start of a chain of increasingly serious symptoms that can be completely prevented quite easily in the babies.

So, join me for these upcoming weeks as I discuss the common symptoms experienced by babies and children and how simple protocols to optimize elimination can resolve them.

It is my hope that by shedding some light on this subject, you may gain a new perspective on your baby or child's health.

If you are interested in learning more about caring for your baby or child using Gemmotherapy extracts please consider my latest book, Building Immunity in Babies and Children. Information regarding my online and in person trainings can be found here.

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## Rethinking Elimination

Thoughts about how well your body is eliminating don't really make it to the top of your list unless you are faced with a sudden change of too much or not enough. It turns out that your elimination should get as much attention as what you are feeding yourself each day. That is because how your body eliminates is actually a very clear barometer of your health.

Imbalances in the organs that clean your body negatively impact your immune system

I talk a lot about elimination in my practice and I admit I am

a bit obsessed, but for good reasons! Time and time again I see radical health shifts occur simply by improving the frequency and quality of bowel movements, urination and, in women, menstruation. What is particularly interesting is that when these shifts are made in children, all secondary symptoms just heal.

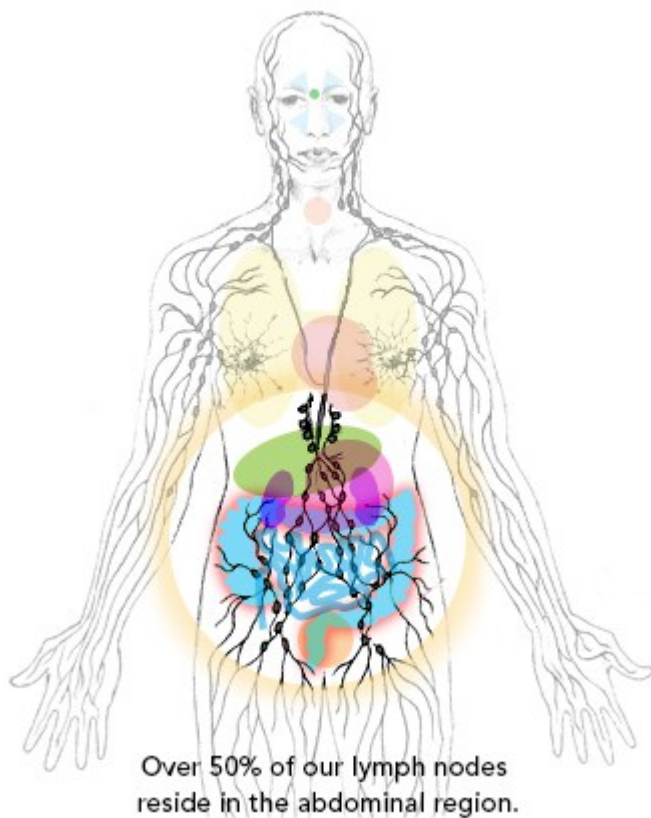
The restoration of optimal elimination for adults is more complex because the years of built-up waste damages tissues. When change is made however, the shift towards healing is apparent and significant.

Important to note:

1. Elimination patterns that you have come to believe are “just how you are” can and should be shifted.
2. Other secondary symptoms such as migraines and asthma cannot be healed until this occurs (see this article on secondary symptoms of poor elimination)

## **Bowel Movements**

Let's take a look at healthy bowel elimination. Our bowels should clean twice a day and optimally every time you eat a meal. Those of you with a diet high in raw fruits and vegetables may already experience this type of elimination pattern. While there are many individualized reasons why your bowels may not clean efficiently, we can be sure one factor pertains to lymphatic stagnation in this region and another pertains to your diet. Just take a look here at all the lymphatic vessels and organs in this region.



Over 50% of our lymph nodes reside in our abdominal region. The lymph fluid carries away the acidic wastes from digestion.

**When the lymph is stagnant, so is bowel activity.** Your diet directly influences lymph movement, so eating high-alkaline foods to stimulate the elimination of acids is one of the best things you can do for your well-being.

What about over-active bowels? Simply put, the body is working overtime encouraging your bowels to dump the acidic wastes which are not being processed by your kidneys.

## Urination

Signs of urinary distress are usually quite obvious. Frequent urging, involuntary urination, painful urination, and night waking to urinate are all symptoms to raise concern. All are signs that the kidneys are overworking. In my practice, I most often see that when these symptoms appear the bowels are not doing their job. When bowel elimination is optimized these symptoms typically resolve themselves.



# Menstruation

Women are fortunate in that they have a third method of elimination which engages the lymphatic system and helps the body clean itself. However, painful periods, spotting, no period or irregular periods are all symptoms of weaknesses in other organ systems and should be taken into top consideration when assessing your health. Blocking that flow or reducing it through the use of hormonal birth control methods not only puts increased responsibilities on the bowels and kidneys to eliminate acid wastes, but causes a variety of secondary symptoms due to the toxic build-up.

## Answers for You

Simply put, we are living in an environment and leading lifestyles that our bodies were never designed to handle. The natural correction would be to make the necessary modifications so that these align. That means returning to eating, working, and living in a way that support the functions of the body we have. It means eating whole foods as close as possible to their natural state, taking breaks from our chairs and getting exercise outdoors in nature, and turning off the constant stimulation and noise of the world when we can.

The human body has not changed in the last three generations, our lifestyles, however, have changed dramatically. Just one generation ago we did not sit in chairs working in front of a screen 8-10 hours a day. Two generations ago fast and processed foods simply did not exist, families cooked real food together at home. Three generations ago they likely grew their own food in gardens and the gardening process provided exercise, sunshine and time in nature!

Because of the natural processes of our body, functions such as elimination often need support, and that is exactly what

Gemmotherapy extracts can offer. The inclusion of meristem cells, the part of the plant with the ability to regenerate tissue, gently restores the organs of elimination. You can read more about Gemmotherapy [here](#).

*This post was originally posted on September 23, 2014. Updated on February 16, 2018*

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## **Happy Healthy Babies Part I: It Really Is All About Elimination**

In my perfect practice I would have an opportunity to work with every new mom and baby. Not because I don't enjoy all the other age groups that I have the honor to serve, but because that is when the most profound changes can be made – and simply! With minor support to the vital organs in the first year or two of life, a host of chronic conditions can be prevented completely.



My reason for focusing on elimination and its critical role in the health of all living beings is never more clearly displayed than it is in babies and toddlers. However, I've been told by parent after parent, no other practitioner has shown any concern about their child's elimination until now. Why is that so? I'll tell you what I know to be true...

It is rare that an allopathic MD will raise an eyebrow at your baby or child missing a bowel movement or two or even three. And the reason why is that medical doctors are trained to look at the body through the lens of disease diagnosis and medicine. A missed or infrequent bowel movement is not a disease. If there is discomfort from missed bowel movements, then there are medicines that will relieve the symptoms and they can be prescribed. They have, at their disposal, a solution.

It is this limited focus on solutions rather than cure that has led countless health practitioners towards the various alternative health practices. These practitioners wanted to

offer their patient/ clients more, so they looked to chiropractic training, naturopathic training, acupuncture, homeopathy, and often a combination of fields. This is certainly what led me, first for healthcare for myself and my family and next for my own training.

In the alternative form of medicine that I practice, combining Gemmotherapy Extracts, a Plant Based Diet and Homeopathy, I search for the cure not a solution. Elimination is key because when it is not optimal the natural pattern of the body to clean and heal are disturbed and the body begins to compensate for this inadequate cleaning system. Infrequent elimination is the start of a chain of increasingly serious symptoms that can be completely prevented quite easily in the babies.

That is why I'll be kicking off a new series this month of May on *Happy Healthy Babies* and sharing a story or two along the way. We're going to talk about colic, acid reflux, cradle cap, croup, and more. If only I had known what I do now my years as a young mother would have passed with much more ease. More importantly, I would have prevented a host of symptoms in my children. Due to my personal experiences and my clinical practice I am absolutely passionate about sharing this knowledge. It is my hope that shedding some light on this subject, for new parents and even those who have been at it for some years, will provide you a new perspective on your baby or child's health. As you follow along this month you may be led to discover the root of your child's symptoms and help restore their natural abilities to clean and heal their young body.

I've written a lot about elimination in the past years (to say the least) but for the purpose of this new series on babies I'd like to call your attention to this article and graphic. The article explains my fundamental philosophy on elimination and what the lack of leads to. As for the graphic, I am fortunate to have on my team the gifted designer Christine Terrell who I owe so much to for her ability to bring sense

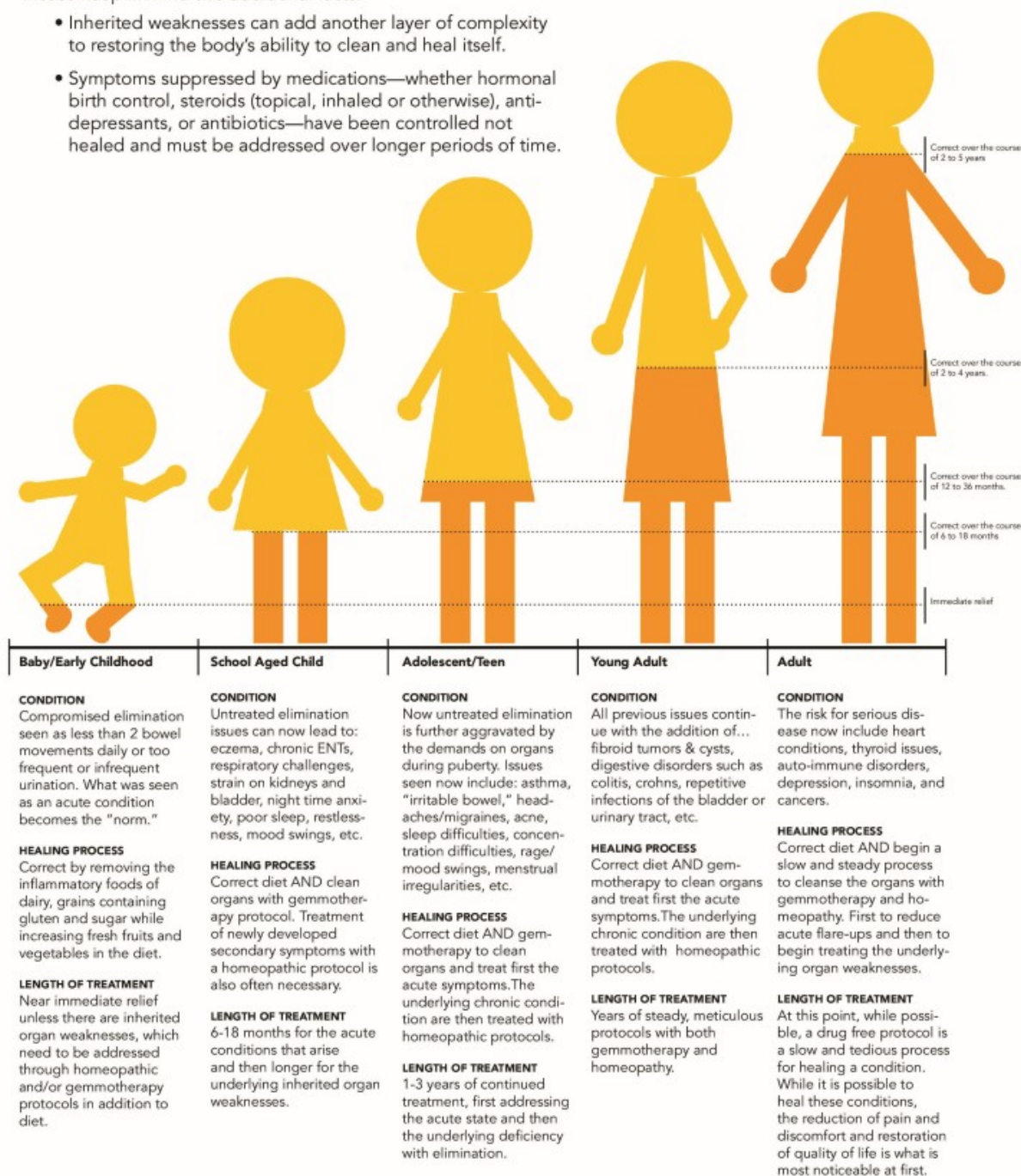
and life to all the wild connections I make in my head. This graphic is a classic example of her work and clearly depicts the importance of addressing elimination early.

## THE TOLL OF TOXICITY

This graph depicts the increasing symptoms that arise throughout our lifetime when the body's most basic need to eliminate toxins is ignored.

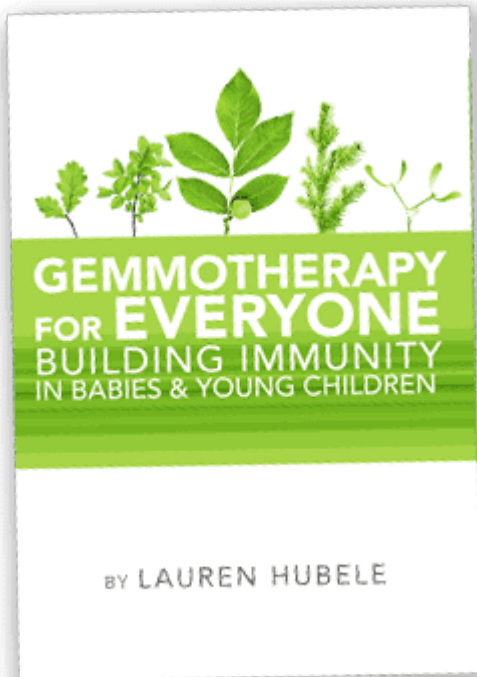
Please keep in mind two additional facts:

- Inherited weaknesses can add another layer of complexity to restoring the body's ability to clean and heal itself.
- Symptoms suppressed by medications—whether hormonal birth control, steroids (topical, inhaled or otherwise), anti-depressants, or antibiotics—have been controlled not healed and must be addressed over longer periods of time.



Looking forward to the weeks ahead!

If you are a practitioner that works with babies you may be interested in my upcoming training on Gemmotherapy Support for Fertility, Pregnancy & Infants held July 9th in Austin, Tx. Additional trainings are available online.



## **Gemmotherapy for Everyone: Building Immunity In Babies & Young Children**

This book is full of easy to use Gemmotherapy protocols for everything from colic and sinus congestion to skin conditions and ear infections. An indispensable guide for anyone caring for young ones.

Buy the Book

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# **Living Well Series: Stage One—Optimize Elimination and Let the Healing Begin!**

Regardless of your list of symptoms, the road map to natural healing will always begins with optimizing elimination. Optimizing Elimination is Stage One in the path to restoring immunity that I teach my clients and practitioners.

## **Why is this true?**

When your physical body's ability to clean is compromised, your natural ability to heal (immunity) is also compromised. This is particularly clear in babies and children but equally true for adults.

We know a lot about the body and its workings, but the function of elimination is often overlooked as a likely root-cause of symptoms. Learning more about how your body cleans will bring your awareness to what might not be working for you. Noticing and taking action before chronic symptoms develop, is essential for your health now and in years to come.

Before we discuss what might compromise the body's ability to clean, let's look at some of the key players. While there is a complex system of excretory organs for this purpose, we are going to simply look at the organs and systems directly involved in producing and eliminating urine and stool.



# How does a body clean?

First, let's consider how the body cleans from the food we digest.

As food passes through the mouth it enters the pharynx. Important to note is that the pharynx plays a vital role for both the digestive system and the respiratory system. It is a passageway for both air and food. Because of the physical connection present between the two systems, inflammation or mucus produced in one can easily pass to the other through the pharynx.

The esophagus is a long muscular tube that pushes food into the stomach. Important to note here is the ring shaped muscle at the opening of the stomach. This ring is called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). When digestion/elimination process is compromised in any way, this muscle may not have the ability to hold back digestive acids and reflux occurs.

Using acids and enzymes to break down food, the stomach acts as a mixer and grinder turning the consistency to liquid or paste. Taking acid blockers to suppress reflux changes this perfect balance and adversely affects the absorption of nutrients that will occur in the digestion process next.

## Workings of the Small Intestine

Further on, the small intestine is responsible for breaking down the paste/liquid from the stomach using enzymes produced by the pancreas and bile from the liver (stored in the gallbladder). This is where the nutrients are absorbed into the bloodstream, and the remaining waste moves on. The small intestine also relies on a healthy population of bacterial microbes to prevent pathogens in food from taking hold and supports the immune response. An imbalance of the bacterial microbes will result in a lowered immune response and greater



susceptibility to foodborne illnesses.

Finally, the undigested waste is moved to the large intestines (bowel or colon) which is the storage organ for the undigested waste products. Parts of the large intestine take on the responsibility of absorption of leftover vitamins, water, and salt. When the large intestine is full, stool should pass through into the rectum to be emptied. When this doesn't happen on a regular basis, the entire interrelated system can be adversely affected leading to a variety of disruptions.

## Metabolic waste

Digesting food is only part of the body's cleaning process. There are also waste by-products from tissue cleansing and regeneration that are continually produced, managed by the lymphatic and circulatory systems. These fluids are referred to as metabolic waste. The lymphatic and circulatory systems perform interrelated tasks delivering the waste to the liver where it is filtered and then transported to the kidneys through the circulatory system.

Serving a multi-functional role is the liver, responsible for breaking down toxic substances, chemicals, pharmaceutical medications, and byproducts of the body's own metabolic process, such as ammonia, into urea. This urea moves on to the kidneys, eventually becoming urine.

Then there is the urinary system, filtering and removing the liquid waste. The urinary system and large intestine, also called the bowel, have their own interactive communication system, signaling one to take over in the work of reducing acidic waste when the other is at its limit.

The ureter, bladder, and urethra team together to move the waste fluid from the kidneys, store it, and discharge it as urine.

# Adrenal glands

Playing an accessory but critical role in keeping the body clean are the adrenal glands. The adrenals sit on top of the kidneys and are made up of two parts, the medulla and the cortex, each with its own function. The medulla secretes the hormone adrenaline, which helps the body adjust during high stress situations by increasing heart rate and speeding up blood flow. The cortex produces cortisol, which reduces inflammation within the body. The role of the cortex is of particular interest here as the resolving of inflammation is critical in the cleaning process.

As you can see, keeping the body clean along with the production of urine and stool requires an entire system. Every organ is critical and if one is not performing optimally, the others will be directly affected and must compensate. When this happens, the perfect system loses its effectiveness and its ability to remove waste products is greatly reduced.

## Symptoms to note

An important sign that your elimination is not optimized are symptoms of the body cleaning through alternate exits. These exits are utilized when, over time, the buildup of waste product creates an inflammatory state and the body needs to look for other ways to clean. The most common of these tend to be eyes, nose, ears, lungs, and skin and, in women of menstruating age, the uterus/vagina.

Here are some common symptoms that indicate your body is cleaning through emergency exits:

- Eye(s): discharge
- Ear(s): discharge, drainage, blockage, itchiness,
- Sinus(es): congestion, drainage

- Bronchial/Lungs: cough, croup, bronchial spasms, obstructed breathing
- Skin: acne, eczema, canker sores, cold sores, fever blisters, mouth or gum sores, rashes
- Genital: yeast overgrowth, warts
- Vagina: discharge, yeast, heavy menstrual flow or cramping (if a menstruating female)
- Anus: discharge, mucus, burning, itching, rash

So given this cleaning process, what is optimal bowel elimination?

- Bowels: 2-3 formed movements spread throughout the day;
- Urination: no night time urination and daytime frequency every 2-3 hours;
- Uterus: (for women who are fertile) 27-29 day cycle, bleeding 4-5 days that does not start and stop, pain free or minor discomfort only, no mid cycle spotting.

## **How do I improve mine?**

So what therapies do I use during Stage One to open elimination?

1.I ask clients to begin to increase the raw plant-based items in their diets, starting with an all-fruit cleansing meal for breakfast to jump start lymphatic activity and elimination.

2.I also suggest a Gemmotherapy protocol that is individualized according to one's current elimination, level of vitality, and state of inflammation.