

# Herbs that help cleanse the lymphatic system

The lymphatic system is a part of our major "garbage-disposal" as well as our immune system. Its function is to filter the blood, produce white blood cells, protect against disease, and return protein to the cardiovascular system. The lymphatic system includes the spleen, thymus, appendix, tonsils, lymph nodes, lymph vessel and fluid. If the lymphatic system becomes congested, it can cause the beginning of many diseases, such as allergies, sinusitis, arthritis, cancer, colitis, lupus, obesity and skin disorders. It can also be the cause of fluid retention, loss of energy, constipation, congested sinuses, low back pain, aches and pains and a general sluggish feeling.

Eating green leafy vegetables, watercress, celery, okra, and apples all contribute to a healthy functioning lymphatic system. Potato peeling broth, celery juice, blue violet tea, parsley juice, carrot juice and apple juice are wonderful to alkalize the lymphatic fluid. Herbs such as blue violet, cleavers, chaparral, burdock, echinacea, blue flag, poke root, red clover, red root, goldenseal, yellowdock, cayenne, mullein, and black walnut, cleanse and support the lymphatic system.

Jumping on a trampoline, saunas, steam baths, Epsom salt baths, lymphatic massages, and skin brushing all help speed up a sluggish lymph circulation. The following herbs and oils may be helpful in promoting a healthy lymphatic system:

## Red Root

Red root is one of the best herbs to stimulate lymph and inter-tissue fluid circulation and has proven to be effective in case of enlarged glands, tonsil inflammation and sore throat. Red root has also been used for overactive mucosa and chronic catarrh. The best way to take red root is in the form of tincture.

## Red Clover

The lymphatic system travels parallel to the cardiovascular system, picks up fluids from tissues, filters it, and the cleansed fluid is returned back to the blood. To lighten the body's work load it is a good idea to cleanse the blood as well as the

## Staying Healthy the Natural Way



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lymphatic fluids. Red clover is one of those herbs that both cleanses the blood and the lymph fluid. People have also used red clover to clear skin blemishes, heal canker sores, treat gout conditions, and to dissolve tumors. Red clover has a calming effect and can be helpful for anyone experiencing nervous energy due to mineral deficiencies and heavy metal toxicity.

## Ocotillo

Ocotillo is helpful in cases of portal congestion resulting from poor fat breakdown and absorption in the small intestine. It is a liver stimulant, thus seems to rid "dirty blood" of its waste products. Ocotillo stimulates better visceral lymph drainage into the body and improves dietary fat absorption. This means there is less stagnation in the pelvis and upper thighs and for the blood to back up (portal hypertension).

## Lymphatic Cleansing Tea

Drinking a warm tea throughout the day can soften and loosen waste from congested areas so that they may be eliminated freely. Mix the following herbs to make a delicious lymphatic cleanser tea:

- 1 teaspoon red clover
- 1 teaspoon cleavers
- 1 teaspoon calendula

Place this combination into a cup, pour boiled water over it and let it steep for about 15 minutes. Strain and enjoy.

## Lymphatic Cleansing Massage Oil

If you suffer from water retention and swollen ankles due to lymphatic congestion, regular lymphatic massages with the following oils may be very helpful:

- 3 drops lovage
- 10 drops lemon
- 5 drops peppermint
- 1 tablespoon grape seed oil or almond oil

## Sea Weeds

Lymphatic congestion may indicate a lazy metabolism accompanied by a low thyroid function and weight gain. In this case, no matter what diet is used it would be very hard to lose weight until the glands are cleansed, fed and nourished. If the lymphatic system cannot keep up with the cleansing process, sea veggies may be helpful.

If you have lymphatic problems, cleansing and boosting the system are very important, but it is also necessary to deal with the mental/emotional elements. The type of person who experiences lymphatic clogging usually lacks the get-up-and-go, is a somewhat overweight, slow thinking, slow-moving individual who does very little physical exercise. Lymphatic congestion can make your body think it is tired. Detoxification of the lymph system can give you an overall feeling of balance, clarity and well-being, allowing the natural flow of energy to circulate throughout your body and your life.

Antiperspirants and deodorants can cause lymphatic clogging, preventing toxins from being eliminated through the skin.

*The herbs discussed in this article can be purchased at The Herb Stop located in Pine, 4004 N. Highway 87. If you have any questions, Leilah can be reached at 928-476-4144 or by e-mail at herbstop@gmail.com*

*The FDA has not approved these statements. The information given is not meant to act as a prescription, medical advice or therapeutic advice. Consult your health-care professional prior to using botanicals discussed in this column.*