[IMAGE]

Dealing With Toxins

By Ronald E. Partain Sr.

Heavy-metal toxins are everywhere, even in your body. Today’s modern health challenge is how to get rid of them.

On a daily basis, your body comes in contact with harmful toxins that can cause numerous health challenges and a decreased quality of life. Heavy metals are in our environment and nothing can be done to change that. We can limit the amount of new heavy-metal toxins entering our planet (although we haven’t done anything about it yet), but the levels that already exist cannot be removed.

And when heavy-metal toxins are in the environment, they are in your bodies, with a potentially devastating impact on your health.

They’re in your food, in your water, your air, your place of work and in your home - you cannot escape them! Lead, mercury, aluminum, cadmium, arsenic, and nickel are in your food, water and air, which means they also are in your body.

The Culprits

There are 35 metals that concern us because of occupational or residential exposure; 23 of these are the heavy elements or "heavy metals" and include antimony, arsenic, bismuth, cadmium, cerium, chromium, cobalt, copper, gallium, gold, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, nickel, platinum, silver, tellurium, thallium, tin, uranium, vanadium and zinc. Interestingly, small amounts of these elements are common in our environment and diet, and actually are necessary for good health; but large amounts of any of them may cause acute or chronic toxicity (poisoning).

Man wearing gas mask holds the Earth in his hand. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Heavy-metal toxicity can result in damaged or reduced mental and central nervous function, lower energy levels, and damage to blood composition, lungs, kidneys, liver and other vital organs. Long-term exposure might result in slowly progressing physical, muscular and neurological degenerative processes that mimic Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis. Allergies are not uncommon, and

repeated long-term contact with some metals or their compounds might even cause cancer.

For some heavy metals, toxic levels can be just above the background concentrations found in nature. Therefore, it’s important for us to inform ourselves about the heavy metals and to take protective measures against excessive exposure. In most parts of the United States, heavy-metal toxicity is an uncommon medical condition; however, it’s a clinically significant condition when it does occur. If unrecognized or inappropriately treated, toxicity can result in significant illness and reduced quality of life. If you suspect you or someone in your household might have heavy-metal toxicity, testing is absolutely essential.

Symptoms indicative of acute toxicity are not difficult to recognize because they usually are severe, rapid in onset and associated with a known exposure or ingestion: cramping, nausea and vomiting; pain; sweating; headaches; difficulty breathing; impaired cognitive, motor and language skills; mania; and convulsions. The symptoms of toxicity resulting from chronic exposure (impaired cognitive, motor and language skills; learning difficulties; nervousness and emotional instability; and insomnia, nausea, lethargy, and feeling ill) also are easily recognized; however, they are much more difficult to associate with their cause. Symptoms of chronic exposure are very similar to symptoms of other health conditions and often develop slowly over months or even years. Sometimes the symptoms of chronic exposure actually abate from time to time, leading the person to postpone seeking treatment, thinking the symptoms are related to something else.

What Is a Heavy Metal?

"Heavy metals" are chemical elements with a specific gravity that is at least five times the specific gravity of water. Simply stated, specific gravity is a measure of density of a given amount of a solid substance when it’s compared to an equal amount of water. The specific gravity of water is 1 at 4°C (39°F). Some well-known toxic metallic elements with a specific gravity that is five or more times that of water are arsenic (5.7), cadmium (8.65), iron (7.9), lead (11.34) and mercury (13.546).

Where Are They Coming From?

Heavy metals come from everything from auto exhaust, industry emissions and pesticides; to prescription medicines, dental fillings, solvents and household cleaning products; to personal products such as cosmetics, deodorant and toothpaste.

Beneficial Heavy Metals

In small quantities, certain heavy metals are nutritionally essential for a healthy life. Some of these are referred to as the trace elements (e.g., iron, copper, manganese and zinc). These elements, or some form of them, are found naturally in foodstuffs, fruits and vegetables, and a variety of commercially available multivitamin products.

Heavy Metals Are "Free Radical" Factories

Heavy-metal accumulation in humans has been linked to many common health challenges, including cancer, candida, yeast overgrowth, cardiovascular ailments, arthritis, fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue. Many neurological diseases, including depression, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, also have been strongly associated with heavy metals. Heavy-metal poisoning can even accelerate the aging process, because the presence of heavy metals in the body promotes free-radical formation.

In technical terms, a "free radical" is an unbalanced molecule with an odd, unpaired electron. This unbalanced molecule tries to balance itself by bombarding other molecules in your body in an effort to capture that other molecule's electron. When it "steals" the electron from the other molecule, that molecule then becomes a free radical itself and goes into attack mode on other molecules, causing a chain reaction. This chain reaction ultimately results in the degeneration of cells, tissues, organs and systems within the body.

The human body doesn't have an effi-cient metabolic function to eliminate heavy metals; because of this, the body warehouses them in deep-tissue places - bones, ligaments and other places such as the large intestine. Over time, metals migrate to other cells and tissues, initiating the stages of degenerative disease through free-radical formation. The first signs of toxicity might include fatigue, pain in the muscles and extremities, poor circulation and inability to think clearly. The longer heavy metals are retained, the more devastating the health consequences potentially become.

What Is the Solution?

Since the heavy metals already in our environment are not going away, the solution involves one of two things: limiting exposure as much as possible and removing the heavy metals already in your body.

Chelation [pronounce as "kee-lay-shun"] therapy has been in the medical community for years, but typically has required an IV and a half-day stay in the hospital. The concept of chelation is based on the premise that when EDTA (ethylene-diamine-tetra-acetic acid), a synthetic amino acid, comes in contact with certain positively charged metals and other substances, it removes them from the body. EDTA must be introduced directly into the bloodstream for maximum effectiveness. When taken orally, EDTA must pass through the gastrointestinal system, where the acid and enzymes in the stomach and intestine will cause the EDTA to break down and not be properly absorbed. This is why EDTA therapy has been more successful when administered by IV, compared to the oral route of administration.

Suppositories provide the same results as the IV without the needle, since the EDTA is absorbed by the colon wall and placed directly into the bloodstream, just like an IV treatment. Suppositories are given at a lower dose than the IV, which lowers the risk of complications with liver and kidney function; and are safe enough to be given daily, thus increasing the amount of EDTA in the bloodstream at any given moment. This makes the suppository method more effective over time.

Carrots freshly pulled from the ground. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark **The Bottom Line**

There is no place on Earth where you can escape heavy metals; they are in your environment to stay and in your body now. If you want to test for levels of heavy metals in your body, it’s easy and affordable. But you can just assume you probably have too high a concentration of heavy metals in your body. Taking oral products to reduce heavy metals is probably ineffective, since going through the digestive track breaks down the EDTA. But using IV or suppository procedures can reduce heavy metals to a significant degree, and with suppositories, it’s more affordable and there is no need for a half day spent in a hospital or medical office. Talk to your doctor about the dangers of toxins and what you can do to protect yourself.

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