Does Your Body Need A BPA Detox?

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Monday, January 8, 2018 SAFETY

If you search the term “detox” on the internet you’ll find more than a few results. In particular, Google returned about 161,000,000 results this afternoon. Some of these are for detox centers that provide medical rehabilitation from dependence on an intoxicating or addictive substance. And that’s a good thing for those who need it.

You’ll also find quite a few results from snake oil salesmen interested in selling a treatment or supplement to rid your body of any number of things they define as toxins. But before ridding yourself of any money, you should be skeptical and do some further reading on whether you really need any snake oil.

In that regard, a good place to start is a recent Men's Health article titled “Do Detox Diets Work? We Tried the Most Popular Ones So You Don't Have To.” Along with debunking four popular detox diets and supplements, the most important part of the story is right at the beginning:

While many companies claim their detox products offer the latest and greatest ways to flush out your system, you’re about to learn the secret of an all-powerful tool that does it best. It’s called (wait for it) your liver.

“Evolutionarily we’re lucky, because the liver has millions of enzymes and processes to help us detoxify,” says Christopher Hoyte, M.D., medical director of the toxicology clinic at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, “and it works overtime, all the time, to keep us healthy.”

One of the toxins commonly mentioned by the snake oil salesmen is BPA. While it’s true

that we're exposed to trace levels of BPA, primarily through our diet, do we need any kind of treatment to eliminate it from our body?

The simple answer is no, we don't, largely for the reason that Dr. Hoyte provided above. It's well known from many studies on laboratory animals and several on human volunteers that BPA is efficiently converted to a biologically inactive metabolite (i.e., detoxified) after exposure, which is then quickly eliminated from the body in urine.

Metabolism occurs initially by enzymes present in the intestinal wall as BPA is absorbed from the gut. Any BPA that survives metabolism during absorption passes to the liver where the same enzymes are present. The process is so efficient that **no BPA was found** in the blood of human volunteers treated with BPA at levels typically found in the diet.

Based on the way that BPA is processed in the body, it's not likely that BPA could be harmful at the very low levels present in our diet. Do you need to be concerned at all?

Not according to regulatory bodies around the world which have reviewed the science on BPA, including the many studies on metabolism of BPA. Getting right to the point, the experts at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration state: "Is BPA safe? Yes."

Still not convinced? In the near future, FDA scientists will release results from the largest study on BPA ever conducted. The results aren't available yet but you can read about the study now and come back later for the results.