major elimination systems of our body consist of the liver, kidneys, intestines, lymphatics, lungs, skin and the blood. We normally do not think of the skin as an organ, but it has the largest surface area of any organ system. Apart from maintaining body temperature it also acts as a protective barrier for the body.

In the science of homotoxicology, symptoms and diseases are considered to be caused by toxins, whether they are chemicals (including medications), bacterial exotoxins, biological endotoxins, cellular debris or by-products of metabolic processes of the body. Symptoms occur when our body attempts to balance and heal itself and these should not necessarily be suppressed. During detoxification, symptoms may be intensified.

Dr. Hans Heinrich Reckeweg (1877-1944), a German medical doctor and homeopath created the table of homotoxicosis and classified processes of a disease into different phases and some of the symptoms that occur with each phase. Various remedies can be

We grapple daily to stay on top of elements that threaten our health and well-being. The need for equilibrium is dire. In this scenario, detoxification must take on a new dimension.

Even as the term “detoxification” is just about to firm its place in our lexical treasury, vast changes demand that we reinvent our understanding of the concept. Only a few years ago, the term was associated with special rehabilitation clinics where individuals go to withdraw from drugs or alcohol. Recently, many spas offer detoxification programmes in connection with improving one’s health (physiological and spiritual), longevity, memory and beauty.

We usually think of detoxification as an aid to beauty and see it as external, merely skin deep, but could we consider it to be more than that? As we age, we accumulate impurities from a variety of sources: environmental pollution, build-up of metabolic waste products from daily living, compounds with pesticides and other chemicals in our food and water. The
prescribed to support the body during different phases. Let us review the skin. (See chart)

The state of our skin is also reflective of the function of different organ systems. Liver dysfunction can cause jaundice, discoloration, rashes and itching. Pale, sallow skin can be due to anaemia and impaired kidney function. “Dysbiosis” or the “leaky gut” syndrome may cause allergic reactions, bloating and skin rashes. The body’s hormones can influence the moisture, collagen and elasticity of the skin. Lymph stasis can cause swelling and tenderness.

In order to reduce the toxic load in our bodies, we need to purify our work and home environments and eliminate chemicals, dyes, paints, solvents, glues, insecticides or cleaning agents. Also substitute them with natural products including cosmetics which do not compromise the body’s processes and the environment. If the offending materials cannot be removed, an effective air purification system may be needed. Regular replacement of furnace and air conditioning filters may be helpful. Choose fresh organic foods which are free of pesticides and hormones and drink plenty of purified water to assist the kidneys and digestive system. Maintaining proper body weight is important because excess fat is a storage site for toxins and it is very difficult to remove them.

Natural detoxification can be enhanced with nutrients which support important organ systems in eliminating metabolic waste.

**For the intestines:** Useful nutrients are zinc, pantothenic acid, L-glutamine and micro-organism known as acidophilus and bifidus (Probiotics); consume adequate fibre in diet;

**For the liver:** Vitamin A, B3, B6, C, E, betacarotene, L-cysteine and L-glutamine, and glutathione; beets and dark green leafy vegetables; herbs like milk-thistle;

**For the kidneys:** Vitamins A, C, B6, magnesium and potassium.

Other ways to stimulate and maintain proper balance of our body functions are: regular sweating through physical activities and the frequent use of infra-red saunas; regular bowel elimination and colon hydrotherapy for sluggish bowels; massages and body wraps with herbal products and specially chosen muds. The skin can benefit from regular dry skin brushing and contrast baths and showers (alternating hot and cold). Deep breathing in clean air, singing and laughing can increase oxygenation of tissues and cells. The lymphatic circulation is enhanced through massages, compresses, rebounder exercises and dry skin brushing.

Here we could ask ourselves, what are our intentions and desired results of detoxification? Is purification the ultimate goal? In truth purification is an on-going and deepening process that helps us rediscover the true essence of our authentic selves, our relationships and interconnectedness to other people and to nature. That is the natural order of things. The Earth itself goes through periodic cleansing. Storms, earthquakes, floods and forest fires are natural ways by which the Earth seeks rebalance itself, in a manner of speaking, and out of natural destruction new and more vibrant constructions are born. Likewise, sequential detoxification can assist our bodies to rebuild impaired tissues and organs resulting in rejuvenation and increased vitality of the cells.

Detoxification must occur not only in our bodies but also in our minds and spiritual lives. The “pure in heart and spirit” will be blessed with clarity of mind, vision, intuition, body wisdom and radiant health and beauty.