YOU CAN FIX YOUR BRAIN

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Foreword by New York Times Bestselling Author Mark Hyman, MD
THE CONCEPT OF BODY BURDEN

The human body is confronted with toxic exposures every day: Toxins are in the air we breathe and the foods we eat, and they get absorbed into our skin. We deal with these toxic exposures like a glass that is being continuously filled with water. Think of a glass that is already half full. If you continue pouring water into it, eventually the water will overflow. When toxic exposures are limited and the body can process them through its own mechanisms of detoxification and elimination before the glass is full, the toxins aren’t likely to trigger an immune response and cause eventual health problems.

But when the glass is completely full and water is spilling over the sides, it means the body’s detoxification mechanisms are overwhelmed and we have crossed a threshold: the total toxic body burden. When our natural detoxification mechanisms are overwhelmed, we do not get rid of the toxins, so they begin to accumulate in the body. When this happens, these external environmental toxins have now become internal endotoxins.

Your body has a natural defense mechanism toward toxins: If you cannot break the toxins down and eliminate them, you must get them out of circulation to keep them away from the brain. Usually, these toxins become stored. Most often, they are stored in your fat cells. Here comes your spare tire around your midsection. Other toxins, like heavy metals, can get stored in your bones.

When toxins do make their way up to the brain, the effects can be devastating. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network reported in 2014 that approximately 1 in 68 children in the United States has an autism spectrum disorder. When I started my practice in 1980, autism prevalence was reported as about 1 in 10,000. Stephanie Seneff, PhD, from MIT, who researches the connection between autism and glyphosate exposure from this widely used insecticide, has publicly said, “At today's rate, by 2025, one in two children will be autistic.” Might chemical exposures and toxic foods that overtax the body’s detoxification systems be reasons why the incidence of autism today is so incredibly high? Yes, they might be. There are no new tests that identify autism better that make diagnosis more prevalent; rather it’s that more kids are being correctly diagnosed, and their
exposure to toxins may be a cause.

Adult brains can be affected by chemicals as well. No longer does an apple a day keep the doctor away. Apples contain more pesticides than any other fruit or vegetable. For starters, Joseph Pizzorno, ND, states in his book *The Toxin Solution* that 80 percent of apples grown in the United States have a chemical called diphenylamine sprayed on them (a known neurotoxin), which breaks down into cancer-causing nitrosamines. Increased levels of nitrosamines are linked to increased incidence of both Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease.

This does not mean that all apples will affect all of us in the exact same way. Just as each of us is a unique and distinct individual, we each have our own threshold or body burden. Our genetics make some of us better than others at detoxifying. It is possible to deal with toxic chemicals without overwhelming the detoxification capabilities of our bodies. But nowadays, we’re all exposed to a constant onslaught of toxic chemicals, plus daily exposure to foods that our bodies are sensitive to. As a result, we are more likely to fill the glass to overflowing and cross the line.

We need to lower our body burden. There are two ways of doing this: The first is to reduce exposures. The second way is to enhance our liver’s ability to break down toxic chemicals. That detoxification pathway is referred to as Phase II detoxification. One of the best ways to enhance Phase II detoxification is to include cruciferous vegetables in your diet every day. Modifying your diet by eliminating toxic foods that can trigger an immune response will give your body a chance to flush out the deposits of toxins it’s storing. At least one daily serving of cruciferous vegetables will enhance your liver’s ability to breakdown and flush out these toxic chemicals.

What’s more, lowering the body burden means that when we are next faced with an exposure, we’ll be better equipped to deal with it. Then minor toxins such as most food sensitivities won’t become major issues. If your threshold is eliminating 20 toxins per day, but you are bombarded with 100, your body becomes a metabolically toxic pool. Here comes whatever autoimmune disease you are vulnerable to (the weak link in your chain). However, if you can reduce 80 of the toxic exposures, then your body can handle the other 20 much more easily. The goal is to avoid being in a deficit where the level of toxins you are being exposed to is greater than your body’s ability to detoxify. This is a primary benefit of detoxification programs—to clean out the accumulated, not-yet-broken-down toxins like lead, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and more.