

Draining our Cells - Part 3

Emunctories - What Are They?

by Anna Bunda, N.D.



The Father of modern day drainage is Dr. Antoine Nebel, a French medical doctor and homeopath during the beginning of the 1900's. The theory of drainage is to free the organism from morbid substances. Drainage remedies are developed to act on specific organ systems. Formulations contain a mineral and an organotropic botanical to guide the remedy to the appropriate tissue for its action. This theory of drainage has become an essential therapy in practice.

More simply drainage is a means by which the body is detoxified by opening up the emunctories and allowing the release of toxic accumulations. An emunctory is any tissue with the ability to allow excretions to exit the body. The emunctories must be opened sufficiently so that the pace of detoxification does not exceed their capacity to excrete. We must keep these emunctories open throughout the healing process. When the excretory system is blocked or functioning inadequately the patient will develop a condition, an illness, often called an "itis".

The four primary emunctories are the skin, GI (intestines), lung, kidney and bladder. The liver, stomach and pancreas are secondary emunctories since they perform many essential functions in the proper functioning of the primary emunctories.

All cells produce waste that must be eliminated from the body. When the cell eliminates waste the blood is filled with toxins. This blood is sent to the liver which does its job of filtration and detoxification. These broken down wastes are sent to the primary excretory organs. Solid waste exits via the intestines, liquid via the bladder, gasses through the lungs and sweat through the skin.

In pathology, insufficient elimination causes the number of toxins to increase in the blood. If the primary excretory tissues are insufficient, they are overtaken by the secondary excretory organs which include all the various mucous membranes (urinary, intestinal, bronchial, pulmonary, genital and skin). Cystitis, diarrhea, sputum, genital infections, and eczema are examples of pathology, not normal physiology. If inappropriate care is given and elimination through these secondary emunctories is suppressed repeatedly, toxins will then continue to accumulate in the tissues and lead to more serious disease.

Naturopathic doctor consultations are covered by most work related health insurance plans and are tax deductible.

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For further information regarding the naturopathic profession:

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- Canadian Naturopathic Association: 877-628-7284
- Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM):



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