



## Dirt

You are wondering why such a zany title? After all you hate dirt. As a matter of fact, so does your family, friends, and the vast majority of North Americans. We are obsessed with dirt, and the unclean. We are fastidious, fussy, and clean obsessed. Let me show you. How many of you take off your shoes when entering the house? Look at a glass before drinking from it? Wash your hands compulsively? Wear a hospital gown to hold your newborn? It has more bacteria on it than your infant! Wash your clothes after wearing them only a few hours? Scrutinize the table wear before eating? Or any of the other million idiosyncrasies we all do.

So why do we do this?

Well... we have been taught that germs are bad. That one can get germs from anything and everything. That germs should be eradicated, wiped out, killed. That no mercy should be shown. Take no prisoners our parents told us.

So we do what we have been taught. This sterile obsession we then pass onto our children and the myth of clean is propagated.

Our obsession with cleanliness is causing our own demise. I am not referring to personal hygiene; rather, I am referring to our "everything-spotless-and clean" mentality. More and more authorities are convinced that everyday dust and even dirt is actually good for you. Our search and reach for sterility is actually harming us and our children. I realize this may sound a bit alarming for many of you, but read on!

Our health is based on a properly functioning nervous system, immune system, and endocrine system. The new science connecting these components is called, psychoneuroimmunology. Many feel that the immune system, the endocrine system, and nervous system are one and the same. This new science investigates the relationships between these systems and how they integrate and interact together for the

health and well being of the individual.

What has this to do with dirt you ask? Bart Classen, MD, of Classen Immunotherapies in Maryland, a vaccine researcher, stated that the immune system of today's child is in serious trouble. He feels that because of our search for cleanliness and sterility, our immune system is no longer being exercised as it has been in the past. These thoughts are echoed by Steve Marini, DC, PhD a chiropractor and immunologist, Philip Incao MD, and countless others.

More and more scientists are realizing that most of the childhood diseases are innocuous and are there in order to exercise a young immature immune system of a child. You probably think that a child having measles, chickenpox, etc, is a terrible thought. Not so. These diseases actually teach the immune system how to deal with the myriad of viruses and bacteria of this world. This is a good thing. In fact, Howard Weiner, a prominent Harvard immunologist, feels that our vaccination program actually "skews" the activity of the immune system making our children more susceptible to more serious complications later in life. In these situations, such an immune system will not be able to deal as effectively with a

bacterial or viral invasion because it has never had to try. I tell my patients that even the common cold and flu has a place; they teach the immune system how to fight! This is good. Just because you feel sick when you have the flu doesn't mean you are. It simply means your body is doing exactly what it has been programmed to do. This is not sickness. This is an expression of health! I am not saying that you have to like it, but ultimately it is for your benefit. To circumvent this system is not in your best interests.

There are a number of supplements I can recommend which increase the function of the immune system; after all that is the name of the game.

- Manganese
  - Vitamin B complex and Pycnogenol
  - Vitamin A plus carotenoids
  - Zinc and copper
  - Bovine colostrums
  - Garlic
  - Amino acids (L-arginine, L-cysteine, L-Lysine)
- Some of these need to be taken in restricted quantities, so be aware.

So... don't be so fastidious. Let some dirt into your life. You'll be a healthier person for it.

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