



Jackie FitzGerald Health Writer

This week's Health Store buy is a trial pack of detox patches that you apply to the sole of your feet and leave on overnight, draining toxins from the body while you sleep. Since it sounded painless and easy, I thought I'd look into it a bit further.

The philosophy behind the patches is based on the ancient art of reflexology – the belief that various reflex points on the feet correspond to another part of the body and that by applying pressure (in this case heat from the patches) onto certain points of the feet, sweating (the natural process of expulsion of toxins) is aided and accelerated.

The result should be that you wake up feeling refreshed, which in turn promotes greater equilibrium within the body. But why should a normal healthy person need to detox? The answer lies in our lifestyles. No matter how saintly our routines, there are times when our bodies can become laden with toxins from overwork, lack of sleep, poor diet or too much partying.

This is where the patches come in. Problems such as poor digestion, constipation, lack of concentration, fatigue and headaches are exactly the type of symptoms that the detox process can relieve.

Homeopath **Jean FitzGerald** has a long history in the field, even working with health advisors to Prince Charles in the UK. Jean advises her patients on diet, often putting them on relevant herbs / tinctures and special diets to detox. Together with her husband, acupuncturist and biochemist, Felipe Reitz, Jean runs the Irish Centre of Integrated Medicine

“In our clinic we try to identify the underlying factors because everybody is so very different,” says Jean. “If people are experiencing these types of symptoms, we can do intensive detoxification to help identify what could be obstructing their road to good health – some underlying problem can be discovered.”

Are home detoxes effective? Jean is encouraging: *“Certainly as a supportive and a maintenance role, products like the detoxify patches can have good benefits as a preventative method in someone who is already healthy and for maintaining good health.”*

She advises using them in a complementary fashion, without relying solely on them to solve any more serious health problems.

Why the foot? What about other areas in the body where there are sweat glands? The answer lies in the complexity of your little footsies. With around seven thousand nerve endings in the foot, as well as some 60 acupuncture points, it is an ideal location for detox.