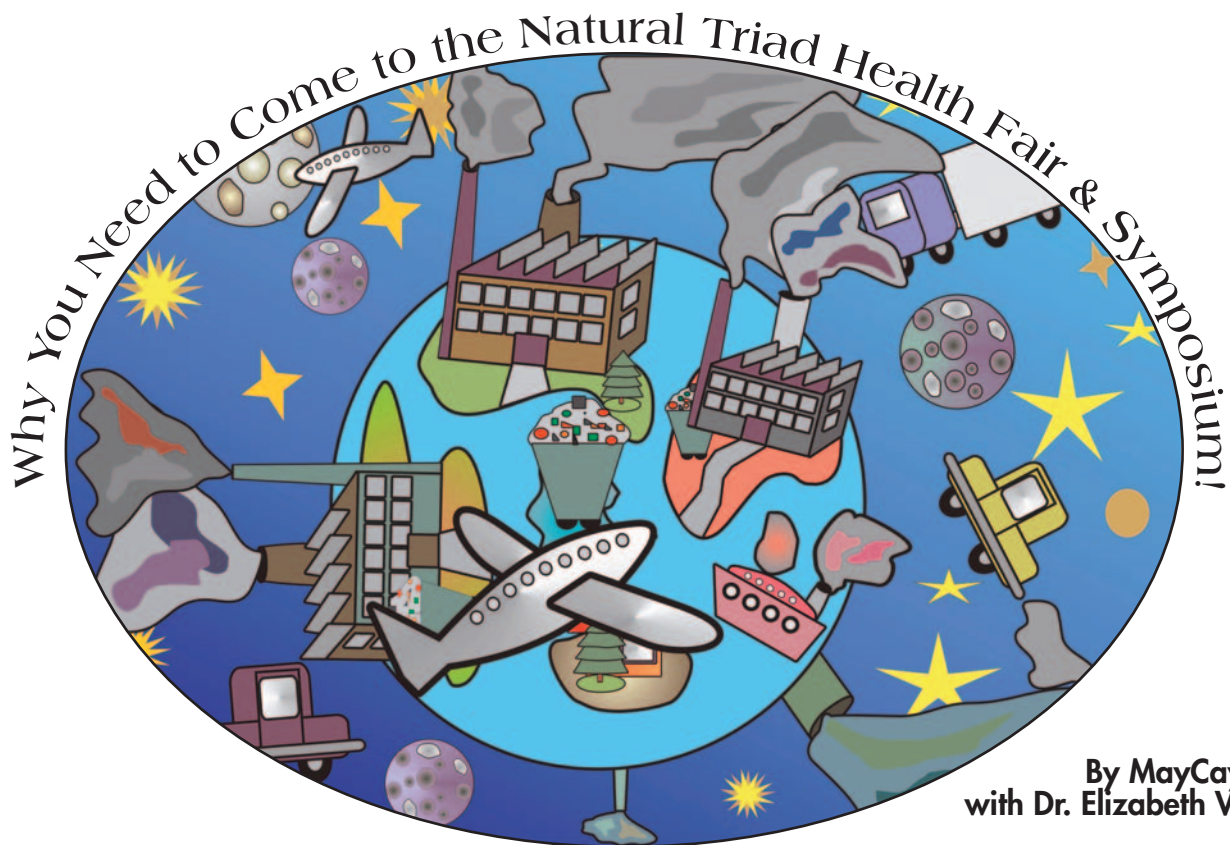


# Who, Me?...Polluted?



By MayCay Beeler  
with Dr. Elizabeth Vaughan

**T**here was a time when the word “polluted” was reserved for dirty air, water, and the drunk at the bar. There was a time when the word “detox” conjured up visions of celebrities in rehab. And there was a time when environmental chemical toxicity was reserved for the neighborhoods around Three Mile Island.

But times have changed.

You may not live in smoggy LA, swim in the Hudson River, overindulge in drugs or alcohol, or live in Pennsylvania. But you do live within breathing distance of the Belews Creek Power Plant and other area businesses that reports say spew toxins into your backyard breathing space. If you drink or shower in city water, you’re consuming chlorine and fluoride—both toxins for the body. Many foods you eat have traces of pesticides or other chemicals in them. And many household products give off formaldehyde, benzene, and other harsh chemicals. And because of this, “polluted” may now describe you and me, which means we may all need some serious “detox”!

“The world around us is in us and our kids,” warn environmental experts and concerned physicians including Dr. Elizabeth Vaughan.

“We live in a polluted world and we are a polluted people,” she warns.

A fourth generation physician, Greensboro Internist Elizabeth Vaughan came face to face with such “pollution” in her own family. “My mother started showing early signs of

Alzheimer’s in her mid-60’s. I couldn’t help but wonder if it was spawned from her exposure to petrochemicals and heavy metals including lead and mercury.”

Dr. Vaughan’s parents had renovated a 50 year old car dealership making it into a bed and breakfast retreat after they retired from practicing medicine. “When you renovate older homes you get exposed to numerous poisonous substances which may not cause any symptoms initially. But these can slowly accumulate and interfere with your immune and nervous systems later in life”.

When Dr. Vaughan, now 54, started experiencing the first signs of memory problems herself, she didn’t just assume it was due to “getting older” or going through menopause. She knew that recent studies confirmed that mercury is damaging to brain cells. She also knew that “silver” fillings are mainly mercury fillings. So in addition to adjusting her hormone replacement therapy, she tested herself for metals and found she was toxic with mercury and lead. That’s when she had the silver fillings removed from her teeth, cut back on her consumption of red snapper and got chelation therapy to remove the toxic metals. Now her memory is better than it was when she was younger.

“Mercury is one of the most common contributors to Alzheimer’s,” she says. It is not the only cause, but it’s a major factor. Now you may not be worried about your fillings, or that tuna fish sandwich you had for lunch, but there’s a list of other toxins out there long enough to scare you silly.

Getting the lowdown on the more common ones, and

finding out how to safeguard your health is what the free talks at this year's Natural Triad Health Fair & Symposium are all about. You can turn a deaf ear and figure you're eventually going to die anyway, or you can pay attention and learn what you can do at home to protect yourself and the kids. The fact that you're reading this favors the likelihood you'll choose the latter. And Dr. Vaughan is hoping you'll do just that.

"I want people in this community to get up to the minute accurate information so that they can make decisions for themselves, and implement a program that will enhance their health and prevent illness in the future," she asserts. This is the reason Vaughan is spearheading the free presentations at this year's Natural Triad Health Fair and Symposium with the detox theme. To help you, your kids, and herself, "because I am chemically polluted, too," she insists.

Not that can you can tell by looking at her. The brilliant magnum cum laude graduate of Duke University is the picture of health, and plans to stay that way. "In some ways I'm getting younger as I get older—and that's what I offer to people in my practice," Vaughan reveals. Now in her 28th year of practice, Vaughan is just now coming into her own as an advocate for living your best life in a chemical world. She insists that while we focus on cleaning up the environment we must not overlook our bodies, which need detoxifying as well. It is at Vaughan Medical Center, her primary care internal medicine practice on Wendover Avenue in Greensboro, where Vaughan dedicates her time to making a positive difference in her patient's lives, and beyond. Vaughan's medical expertise reaches far and wide through her bi-weekly segments on the WGHP FOX 8 Morning News. And now she is reaching out to health fair goers with informative must-hear free talks by select health experts.

### So what can you expect to gain from these free detox-themed seminars?

"First, the realization and knowledge that there is a problem," Vaughan explains. "Second, you'll learn what the symptoms (of toxicity) are. Third, discover how you may still have a problem even though you may feel great. Fourth, we'll tell you how toxins are affecting not only you, but your children and grandchildren. And finally, learn how to treat toxicity through avoidance, supplementation, and cleansing."

If you're discounting this about now, figuring you can't possibly be all that polluted, consider some facts Dr. Vaughan points out as a wake-up call: The CDC has done 3 studies—The Third National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals, <http://www.cdc.gov/exposurereport>, came out in 2005 and found varying levels of 148 toxins in blood and urine of everyone tested. The Environmental Working Group, <http://www.bodyburden.org>, has done 6 studies since 2000 looking at blood, urine, breast milk and newborn's umbilical cord blood all showing unexpectedly high numbers of 455 chemicals. Most of these haven't been tested by industry for safety. Studies

have even shown the breast milk of Eskimos is contaminated with toxic pesticides. Sure, the North Pole may seem light years away from the Triad but check out the stats for your own backyard at [www.scorecard.org](http://www.scorecard.org). This environmental watchdog site ranks Guilford County among the dirtiest ten percent of all counties in the United States in terms of air releases of recognized developmental toxicants.

In other not so good news, Dr. Vaughan refers to Dr. Doris

Rapp, an environmental pediatrician, who predicts men will become sterile in 75 years due to all the toxins out there. Research suggests toxins are contributing to today's increase in the infertility rate, cancer, neurological, autoimmune, and hormonal disorders. And those toxins may be as close as your bedroom lurking in your jammies and mattress. The fire retardants in these products have been linked to thyroid disorders and are found in breast milk and house dust.

If all this bad news has you throwing up your hands in disgust figuring it's all so hopeless, take heart. Dr. Vaughan offers some words of comfort: "People have more choice and control than they realize. Given the right support, the human body can heal itself. We can never get all the toxins out of the environment or our bodies, but we can reduce the amounts and enhance our bodies' ability to clean them out. That way we avoid the damage. But this isn't going to happen if we ignore the problem. We must take action to help our bodies cleanse themselves, and to protect future generations."

So come enhance your body and clean out the crud by considering the wealth of valuable information presented in the free talks at this year's **Natural Triad Health Fair and Symposium**. Decide for yourself just how polluted you really are... and what you can do about it. **Join Dr. Elizabeth Vaughan and her hand-picked crop of health experts Saturday, March 24th in the Pavilion at the Greensboro Coliseum Complex.** Learn about detox, and while it can seem so overwhelming it makes your brain ache, as Dr. Vaughan points out, "Better to let it ache from information overload than from toxicity."



Elizabeth Vaughan, MD

See pages 32 and 33 for the Health Fair talk titles and speaker bios.

Vaughan Medical Center is located at 1301-A West Wendover in Greensboro. Visit [www.VaughanMedical.com](http://www.VaughanMedical.com) or call 336-808-3627. See ads on page 3 & 27.

**Visit Dr. Vaughan's booth at the Natural Triad Health Fair on March 24.**