My friends do colon cleansing and coffee enemas. Is this healthy?

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A colon cleanse is much like an enema. A tube is inserted into the rectum, and then a large amount of water is pushed through the tube. The water is then released from the colon like having a bowel movement. Some people believe this cleanses the toxins from the bowel. A coffee enema adds coffee to the water.

Unfortunately, there isn't evidence to either prove or disprove the effectiveness of colon cleansing or coffee enemas. However, there is enough information to make broad statements about the potential harm these can do. Colon cleansing or "colonics" can cause gastrointestinal problems such as cramping, bloating, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting. The rectum can tear, and there is risk of infection and dehydration. At least three people have died from coffee enemas, and the process can burn the rectum.

If you are interested in colon cleansing or coffee enemas, talk to your medical provider first, especially if you take any medications or have any health problems. If you work with a colon-cleansing practitioner, be sure he or she is reputable and uses disposable equipment that hasn't been previously used. Be sure to request a list of the ingredients used in the procedure.

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