



Nutrition Nibbles

Detox Cleanses

by Erika Chan

The New Year brings lofty resolutions, diet talk, and healthy eating plans to start the year off right. Thanks to celebrities, detox and cleanse dieting have hit the media. Read on to learn more!

Detox diets come in a variety of forms with the claim of diverting the body's energy from digestion so it can focus on ridding the body of toxins, boosting health, and losing weight. These short-term cleanses involve consuming only liquids for a few days, restricting certain foods (such as processed sugars, dairy, or meats) or calling for plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, and anti-inflammatory foods.

Although cleansing the body through diet has recently increased in popularity, the idea is not new. Many religions and cultures have fasting and cleansing rituals meant to allow the body to heal, regenerate, and renew the spirit. Nowadays, cleanse diets are based on the principle that the consumption of all-natural foods or the avoidance of solid foods will promote the function of various organs that flush out health-detering "toxins." However, many doctors question the efficacy of these diets since the human body has the natural ability to cleanse

itself. The gastrointestinal tract acts as a physical barrier to prevent bacteria and toxins from entering the body while the liver is extremely proficient at filtering out harmful substances. There is no evidence that these processes are enhanced due to a cleansing diet.

On the flipside, many people report having fewer aches and pains, increased energy, and a feeling of rejuvenation after completing a cleanse. While there is no scientific evidence that cleansing rids the body of chemicals and toxins, these diets are not likely to be harmful to most people when employed for a very short period of time. For anyone who needs adequate calories and protein for growth and development, such as pregnant women, children, older adults and teens, detox diets are not recommended. Furthermore, detox diets can affect the body's ability to maintain blood sugar levels, so cleansing diets should be avoided by those on diabetes medications.

If you do choose to "cleanse" your body this New Year, be aware that you most likely will not feel any radical changes except hunger and moodiness. It is better to choose a clean diet that restricts empty calories or "junk food," rather than

College Corner: Love Your Heart Cafeteria-Style

February is not only the month of love; it is heart health month. How can you eat heart-healthy on-campus? Here are a few ideas:

1. Put produce on your plate at every meal. Grab a piece of fruit at breakfast and lunch, plus a side of veggies at lunch and dinner. The extra vitamins, minerals, fiber and fluids will help keep your ticker and your digestive tract in tip-top shape.

2. Choose whole grains when available. Opt for old-fashioned oats instead of fruity pebbles. Enjoy brown rice with your stir-fry. Select whole wheat noodles with your marinara sauce. Whole grains provide more heart-healthy B vitamins, vitamin E, and fiber than their white, processed counterparts.

3. Look over the menu for healthier-prepared items. Scout out these nutritious tip-offs: baked, broiled, garden fresh, grilled, in its own juice, poached, roasted, and steamed. Chances are these foods have been cooked with nutrition and clean arteries in mind. Skip fried foods, heavy

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limiting yourself to only liquids. As always, the best ways to truly keep your body “clean,” fit, and in tip-top shape in the long-run are adequate hydration, a healthy and balanced diet, physical activity, and regular sleep!

FYI: **Definition Difference**

Clean Diet: A way of eating that focuses on food in its most natural form. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats, water and heart-healthy, plant-based fats are the building blocks of the clean eating diet. A clean diet can be followed long-term without adverse health effects.

Cleanse Diet: A cleanse is a short-term dietary plan that proposes to rid the body of harmful toxins. Cleanses range in restriction from consuming only liquids to allowing small amounts of solid foods. Cleanses can be dangerous if followed long-term or for people suffering from certain health conditions.

Spotlight on the Juice Cleanse

The Juice Cleanse Diet involves only drinking freshly squeezed fruit, veggies and herbs – no soda, coffee, tea, or solid foods are allowed. A typical juice cleanse lasts 1-5 days and includes 4-12 cups of fresh-squeezed juice per day. With juice bars and electric juicers increasing in availability, the juice cleanse is easier than ever to follow.

As a weight loss method, the juice diet is (**and must be**) temporary, so it is not a sustainable way to lose weight. Any weight lost is the result of a drastic decrease in caloric consumption paired with the shedding of water weight. The weight loss is usually temporary. There is no scientific proof touting the benefits of replacing food with juiced fruits and vegetables. Some researchers note that depriving the body of nutrient-rich foods can weaken its ability to fight infections, and that reduced calories can lead to fatigue and dizziness. This dietitian advises against a juice cleanse trial.

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sauces, butter-drenched items, and cream-based soups.

4. Watch out for salty condiments. Go easy on the extras like soy sauce, table salt, ketchup, mustard, and salad dressing. Flavor your food with vinegar, pepper, and other natural herbs and spices. Your blood pressure will thank you.

5. Swim with the fish. Occasionally students can get lucky and find poached salmon or mixed greens topped with tuna on the menu. Opt for these omega-3-rich, heart-healthy selections when possible.

6. Enjoy a little music with your meal...with the musical fruit, beans. Whole black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, and garbanzo beans are an affordable, lean source of protein that is rich in fiber and heart-wholesome vitamins and minerals. Add beans to your salads, burritos, wraps, and rice.

7. Go nuts! Almonds and walnuts are rich in plant-based omega-3 fatty acids and can be a heart-nourishing snack when enjoyed in small amounts (1/4 cup). Sprinkle some on your salad, yogurt, or cereal for a heart-satisfying crunch.

My Favorite Food

Many of my clients wonder (and some even have the courage to ask!) what I eat at home. I usually reply, “Food!” But for those of you who want specifics, here you go... With Valentine’s Day on the horizon, I have been savoring dark chocolate a little more often (not that I really need an excuse to enjoy some chocolate!) Rich in antioxidants, dark chocolate has been linked to lowering

blood pressure, blood sugars, and “bad” LDL cholesterol. It can even boost “good” HDL cholesterol. Despite the health benefits, don’t even think about substituting dark chocolate for other nourishing foods like fruit and vegetables. Instead, give yourself the truffle treatment and replace your usual sugary, fat-laden, calorie-rich dessert with a small square of dark chocolate.