

Why Detox Diets Disappoint.

By Kim Pearson at Equilibria



This time of year I feel like I am hosting a detox advice line! Everyone is dying to know how they can feel 100% as quickly as possible and detox diets are widely advertised as being the answer.

Christmas is a time of indulgence. Food and alcohol consumption increases, exercise tends to go out of the window and by the New Year many of us are feeling the after effects. Along with the rest of the nation we vow that this is the year we are going to get fit/lose weight/tone up.

Detox – a quick fix?

Detox diets are ever increasing in popularity but the sad fact is that, for many of us, they are a waste of time....

I fully believe that cutting down on coffee, alcohol and refined, processed foods would do us all good. In addition, meat and dairy products can be high in saturated fat, acid forming, and inflammatory. However, cutting these foods out for a period of a couple of weeks is unlikely to do much for your long term health, or weight.

Although there are several variations, most detox diets focus on eliminating 'toxic' foods and increasing nutrient dense foods.

An example of your average detox diet is as follows:

Exclude:

All meat, dairy produce and margarines. Any food that contains wheat. Crisps and savoury snacks. Chocolate, sweets, jam and sugar. Processed foods, ready meals, ready-made sauces and takeaways. Sauces, pickles, shop bought salad dressing, mayonnaise and salt. Alcohol, coffee and tea, fizzy drinks and squashes, including diet versions.

Include:

Fresh fruit, fruit juice and vegetables. Beans, lentils, oats, brown rice and rice noodles.
Fresh fish, unsalted nuts, seeds and live natural yoghurt. Extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, garlic, ginger and fresh herbs, ground black pepper.
Water and herbal teas – at least 2 litres a day.



This is fantastic in theory. However the reality is, most of will stick to programmes like this for a matter of days before return to our old habits.

Another topic I regularly get questions about is fasting. From water and juice fasts, to the maple syrup fast beyonce famously used to slim down for a film with. Advocates claim that this is the path to weight loss, renewed vitality some even stating this as the solution to pain, depression, arthritis and serious infections. Done properly, a juice or water fast can be highly beneficial. However, it's not an easy process. Simply stopping what you're doing and switching to drinking water is certainly not a good idea and can even be dangerous to health.

A better idea....

Making a few small changes long term would be far more beneficial to your health, weight loss and well being. Here are my tips for some more practical new years resolutions:

Dunk the Junk:

Don't buy crisps and sweets to have in the house. When your will power dips it's all too easy to reach for these foods. Replace with fresh or dried fruits, nuts and seeds - a tasty and healthy snack.

More H2O:

99% of the chemical reactions in our bodies depend on water. It is essential for flushing out toxins, weight loss, clear skin, producing digestive juices, and a host of other bodily functions - you need 2ltrs per day! Keep a 1 litre bottle with you and refill it so you can keep track of how much you've had. Herbal teas count as your daily intake but tea and coffee do not!

Variety is the spice of life!

So many of us stick to the same meals day in, day out. Variety is important to obtain as wide a range of nutrients as possible. The different colours of fruit and vegetables represent different nutrients, essential to health. Experiment... dig out your cook books and get creating.

Eat au Naturel

When thinking about food ask yourself this – would our ancestors 1000s of years ago have been eating this? If the answer is 'no' then we're not supposed to be eating it either! Fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes, fish and **quality organic** meat should form the basis to our diets.

Chew

Thoroughly chew food to a pulp before swallowing – your stomach does not have teeth! Chewing prepares the rest of the digestive system to absorb nutrients more efficiently. Also - avoid eating when tired, emotionally upset, stressed or when in a hurry – digestion will be impaired.

[DR ACTIVE TOP TIP!](#) If you would like to lose weight and give your body a good spring clean, why not follow our natural Detox Programme? Please [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.