

# Know your Detox

Choosing a detox that's right for you.

By Elizabeth Montgomery

**T**he term 'detox' has rapidly gained in popularity in recent years. Mainstream newspapers and magazines frequently mention the importance of detoxification and promise a myriad of health benefits for those willing to give it a try. With literally hundreds of bespoke detoxes offered by practitioners and health spas, it can be difficult to know which one to choose. But understanding which type of detox will suit your body, lifestyle and circumstances is paramount, otherwise the results may not be long-lasting.

It's also important to be realistic about the level of commitment required before embarking on a detox programme, as it requires a fair amount of time and effort. The removal of the internal build-up of toxins can range anywhere from a few days, weeks, to even months or years. There are no quick fix solutions. In today's polluted environment, periodic detoxification must be viewed as an integral part of a healthy lifestyle.

From a traditional Chinese medical perspective, it is known that working with the seasonal rhythms will greatly enhance the body's ability to release its internal toxic load. There are pivotal times of the year to seize the opportunity to thoroughly detoxify. For example, starting from the Vernal Equinox, it is the expansive energy of early spring that is the ideal time to work on detoxification via the liver and gallbladder. Six months later, around the Autumn Equinox, it is the contractive energy of early autumn that best enables the lungs, colon and skin (the body's largest organ of elimination) to release any stored toxicity to prepare for the long cold winter months ahead.

One of the main benefits of embarking on a holistic detox is to give the body/mind/spirit complex a break from the daily stresses and addictive habits which block the body's

ability to release internal toxicity. However, it is not always possible to guess which diet, supplements and lifestyle adjustments are needed for the successful elimination of deep seated toxins. This often requires practitioner assessment along with various testing (blood, saliva, stools) to ascertain what type of programme is needed to bring about beneficial results. Alternatively, carefully researching different approaches prior to a period of detoxification will ensure a degree of success, rather than assuming that the detox will be productive.

Here are some of the most popular types of detoxification:

## ORGAN DETOX

This one is important since the first step in detoxification is to prepare the body for the internal release of toxicity. The main routes of toxic elimination are: the liver, colon, kidneys, lungs and skin. Supportive diet, supplements and techniques (such as colonics and infrared saunas) are required to ensure the body is able to release toxins from these important organs both during and after the detox period.

## JUICE 'FEAST' DETOX

This is a general 'light' detox and a great one for beginners. It's also increasingly popular for those living a high octane lifestyle. It may be embarked upon for anywhere from one to seven days with several juices given throughout the day. The juices are usually accompanied by supplements and the inclusion of some raw foods. This enables the body to release toxins while comfortably stabilising the blood sugar to help curb any uncomfortable detox symptoms.

## HEAVY METAL DETOX

It is important for everyone to periodically embark on this one since toxic metals are found in our food chain, in the land, sea



and wider environment. Some of these include: mercury, lead, cadmium, arsenic and aluminum. A focus on a cleansing dietary protocol and key supplements which aid in the removal of accumulated heavy metals is required.

## LIFESTYLE DETOX

This is where the focus may be less on diet and more on rest and rejuvenation. A period of rest from work, stresses of life, along with adequate sleep is prescribed. Acupuncture, life coaching, meditation techniques, exercise such as yoga or Tai Chi, and spa techniques such as massage and therapeutic baths may also be incorporated.

**WHY DETOXIFY?**

Symptoms which point towards internal toxicity may include:

- skin rashes
- headaches
- mood swings
- lack of mental clarity
- excess weight
- frequent colds

**DETOX BENEFITS**

Detoxification creates a greater sense of wellbeing:

- greater mental clarity
- weight loss
- more vitality
- positive emotional states
- clearer skin
- healthier eating habits

**EMF DETOX**

Electromagnetic stress (electro-smog) created by using computers, mobile phones, wifi, is almost impossible to completely avoid. The dangers of too much exposure to EMF's is now scientifically proven, however. Many people benefit from a period of abstinence or even complete removal from EMF fields and notice a reduction in numerous health complaints. This detox is combined with other supportive dietary and physical aids to help the natural electric magnetic frequency of the body to come back into balance.

**CANDIDA DETOX**

Candida Albicans overgrowth is an increasingly common condition which leads to numerous health issues including thrush, headaches and fatigue. This is a restricted detox diet which requires a very low glycemic (low sugar) protocol, supplements and herbs, and usually lasts for several months.

With so many different types of detoxes available, and all of them beneficial so long as the programme is correctly planned and adhered to, it's important to make the right choice. Remember: the general aim of a detox is to enable the release of the internal build-up of toxins along with toxic lifestyle patterns. They should not be viewed as conclusive

**“In today’s polluted environment, periodic detoxification must be viewed as an integral part of a healthy lifestyle.”**

treatments but, rather, as periodic stepping stones towards greater health and wellbeing.

*Elizabeth Montgomery is a London-based holistic nutritional therapist (holisticnutrition.co.uk)*