

# HEALTHY DETOX DIGEST

## WEEK 1 – THE BIG CLEAN



The New Year is here and it's time to get yourself on track for a prosperous and healthy 2013. What better way than to take some steps to ensure your body is functioning optimally well! More and more people, especially the overstressed, time-strapped, and nutrition-starved, are turning to detoxification to improve their diets and cleanse their systems. But what is detoxing really all about?



### What is detoxing?

**Detox** is a naturally occurring physiological process wherein the body rids itself of toxic substances through sweat, urine, and feces. But sometimes, toxins don't leave our body - they hang around in our lymph and digestive systems.

**Detoxing** provides your body with a nutritional break so that it can become a better waste dumper and nutrient absorber. A proper detox lasts about a week and involves eating a nutritious, well-balanced diet that's high in essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants, drinking plenty of water and clear fruit juices, and getting enough rest.

### What is detoxing *not* about?

The main misperception about detoxing is that you need to go to a dietary extreme to achieve results. **Detox plans people should steer clear of water fasts, juice fasts, and combination water-juice fasts - or fasting altogether.** Detoxing is also not about using laxatives to clean out your digestive system.

### Do we really need to detox?

The liver, the body's key detoxifying organ, actually does a terrific job of cleansing the body all on its own. A healthy liver processes most of the things we throw at it, sending unwanted stuff to our intestines to expel as stool, or to our kidneys to excrete as urine. *There is no scientific research showing that any detox regimen (fad diets or herb kits included) delivers on its promises, which is why you should always ask a doctor first.*



However, the basic premises of any detox regimen – increasing fluid intake and eliminating bad habits such as processed foods, cigarettes and alcohol, are positive measures to help our bodies. If you're considering a detox diet, get the OK from your doctor first and remember, the best diet is a healthy diet based on fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean sources of protein.

### To detox or not to detox?

Detoxing is a possibility for people with diets consistently low in one or more essential nutrients, such as certain vitamins or minerals, fibre, probiotics or antioxidants. A dietitian can help you analyze what you're missing and what you need more of. *Prior to any change in your diet, consultation with a doctor is recommended.*

Do not detox if ...

- are under 18
- are pregnant or lactating
- have a gastrointestinal disorder such as Crohn's disease or gastritis
- have an autoimmune disease such as lupus or arthritis
- are training for an endurance event
- have any other serious health condition not listed here

