

Nutritional Bites - Issue 5



Do you need a
Spring Clean / Detox?

Why Detox?

We are exposed to toxins daily from the food we eat, additives and chemicals in foods, medicines, stress, alcohol and environmental pollutants such as smoke, traffic fumes, household cleaning products etc. When they build up in our bodies this can lead to problems of toxin overload and cause many symptoms in our bodies.

A toxin is thus any substance that is potentially harmful to your body and has to be chemically changed within the body to make it safe. Your liver is the key detoxification organ, and is on the front line and its function or dysfunction has a great impact on how you feel. The liver detoxifies via various pathways to help render toxins harmless to the body. The liver is a multi-tasking organ and as well as detoxifying, it helps balance blood sugar levels, produces bile to break down fats and cholesterol and gets rid of excess hormones.

Spring is a good time to cleanse your body and mind as we can become more positive in the spring have more energy and enthusiasm with increasing light and hopefully warmth

Do You Need an internal Spring clean?

Do you suffer from allergies, headaches, dark circles under your eyes, constipation, frequent infections, itchy ears, excess mucous? Sinus problems, acne, muscle or joint aches / pains, a furry coated tongue, bloating or thrush? Do you feel sluggish and low in energy? Do you find it difficult to lose weight?

All these symptoms can be related to a body in need of a little cleansing!

Detoxing and cleansing can help restore energy and vitality, reduce the frequency of colds and infections, improve the texture of our skin, make our hair shinier,

give us regular bowel movements, a clear head and just make us feel healthier overall.

During the first few days of cleansing you may experience some side effects such as headaches, blemishes, tiredness and diarrhoea as toxins are eliminated.

Detoxing is not all about juice fasts and cutting out food or only eating one type of food. Read on how simple changes to your diet can help cleanse your body and mind. When we lighten up our food intake and eat only whole unprocessed foods which support us, our bodies start to use their energy to cleanse and repair instead of using up valuable energy trying to digest difficult foods and get rid of substances that are harmful and alien to our systems. Wholefoods also provide us with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants which are required by the body to cleanse and repair.

Do not detox if you are pregnant or have a serious health problem or on medication. Always consult your GP.

Foods to Avoid and have a Break from.

Foods to avoid and have a break from include wheat found in bread, biscuits and pasta. Wheat can irritate the gut and cause bloating and is difficult to digest. Cows products including cheese, milk, cream and ice cream—these foods are heavy on the body and many adults are intolerant to cows milk.

Also cut out fried foods such as crisps and chips, margarines, processed foods, ready meals, salt, sugar and artificial sweeteners. Caffeine found in tea, coffee, fizzy drinks and energy drinks. If you drink a lot of tea or coffee cut back slowly to avoid withdrawal symptoms. Also alcohol has to be omitted a period of time—it is a toxin to the liver!

Also avoid red meat as this is hard for the body to digest and we want to help lighten up our livers and digestive systems so they can work better.

Foods to Focus on and Detox Superfoods

Choose wheat free products such as brown rice, oats,

wheat free pasta. Try almond, soya, rice or goats milk products. For drinks try green tea, herb and fruit teas such as ginger, lemon, peppermint and blackberry and nettle. Try to drink plenty fresh water. Warm water with slices of lemon first thing in the morning acts as a mini cleanse and helps stimulate digestion. Eat good fats found in oily fish such as mackerel, sardines, salmon, seeds, nuts and flaxseed oil. Other good proteins are organic chicken and eggs, hummus, beans and lentils.

Some particularly good “detox” foods include onions and garlic including red onions which have sulphur necessary for the detox process. Lots of fruit and veg of course! Including green leafy veg such as parsley, cabbage, broccoli, spinach, watercress and asparagus. These are rich in chlorophyll, Vitamin C and antioxidants. Other good detox veg include beetroot, radishes and carrots. Try lightly cooked or in salads. Berries have many potent antioxidants eg pomegranate, blueberries, blackberries and strawberries. Try in smoothies or natural yogurt.

Other good fruits include melon, apricots, pineapple, papaya and kiwis. Seeds such as sunflower and pumpkin and flaxseeds are rich in minerals that help the detox process and help repair the body. Have as a snack or grind in cereal.

Good herbs include cayenne pepper, ginger, chilli and turmeric. Cook light, steam and stir fry or eat your veg raw!

Other Detox Helpers

Other factors which can have a positive effect on the detox process and supporting our liver to get rid of toxins including taking supplements such as Vitamin C, all round vitamin and mineral complex, milk thistle, artichoke, psyllium husks, ginger, choline, alpha lipoic acid, dandelion, probiotics and antioxidants. It is best to consult a Nutritional Therapist for a tailored programme. Exercise is important so try power walking, swimming, rebounding on a mini trampoline, skipping, yoga or Tai Chi. Try to get some fresh air and natural light. Deep breathing helps to eliminate wastes from the body as can saunas. Try Epsom Salt baths which draw out wastes and are also very relaxing. Soak for 20mins then wrap up warmly and rest. Drink some water afterwards.

When changing your diet it is best to do a little planning ahead and get in the types of foods you will need. Start on a weekend or when you have not too much on in your life!

Be kind to yourself, treat yourself if possible to a massage which can help the detox process

Some Ideas for Menus

Breakfast can include cinnamon porridge with berries and seeds with almond or soya milk. Or try a fruit smoothie. Or soak some wheat free muesli overnight in apple or orange juice and with fresh fruit and nuts.

Lunch can be homemade soup (cream free!) and salad with a good protein such as hummus, fish, or chicken or beans. Make a salad dressing with olive oil or flaxseed oil and lemon juice. Add some sesame seeds to the salad. Choose vegetables with different colours as these different coloured pigments have different nutrient properties.

For dinner have some oily fish or white fish with plenty steamed veg including green veg and some watercress salad. Have a little brown rice too. For snacks you could try rice cakes and avocado or an apple and some walnuts.

Try some fresh juices such as apple, carrot and ginger, or apple, carrot and celery. These good habits can then make you more likely to carry on eating healthily as you should feel more energy and better overall health. Start to listen to your body, slow down your eating and notice what feels good. Enjoy your treats in moderation as none of us are good all of the time!

Dry skin brushing is one of the most powerful ways to cleanse and exfoliate the skin and the lymphatic system. Waste material is carried away from the cells by the blood and lymph and is eliminated via the bowel. Skin brushing opens up the pores, allowing the body to breathe and thus enhance proper functioning of the organs. Try to cover the whole body except the face, when brushing. You only need to pass once over the body in clean sweeps, brushing in long stroking movements, always in the direction of the heart. Do for 5 mins before a bath or shower

