

Clean up *your* act

Need a shot of health and vitality? Now is the perfect time to rejuvenate your system by giving your colon a cleanse says top detox expert Fiona Robertson

“Most of our aches, pains and sickness can be traced back to the health of the colon”

Feeling sluggish and overloaded after all those New Year festivities?

It's not surprising when most of us who lead busy, stressful lives tend to rely on processed foods, sugary snacks and caffeinated drinks to get us through the day.

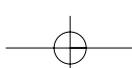
But the danger is that years of toxic eating in this way causes a massive accumulation of waste to be stored in the body's tissues. This can lead to health problems such as low energy, fatigue, excess weight, poor digestion and aches and pains.



Most of our aches and pains, sicknesses and infections can be traced back to the health of our colon, which is in effect our body's 'waste disposal unit'.

The colon health expert Dr Bernard Jensen identified and mapped the colon into 72 different reflex areas, each corresponding to specific organs and body parts such as the kidneys, liver and spleen and the neck, arms and legs.

Dr Jensen theorised that old waste matter that has become toxic in the colon will affect the tissue of the corresponding organ or body part. As a result, symptoms can include headaches, backache, mental fog, depression, swelling and inflammation.



Body | DETOX



Drink up! Three top detox teas to sip on

Qi Organic Fairtrade Detox Tea

This is a delicious cleansing blend of dandelion root, milk thistle, liquorice and fennel to help purify the body and regulate digestion. Costs £1.99 from qi-teas.com and healthfood stores.

Pukka Detox Tea

Certified organic by the Soil Association, this cleansing tea contains aniseed and fennel for digestion, cardamom seeds for cleansing, coriander and celery seed for detoxifying and calming liquorice root. Costs £2.09 from pukkaherbs.com



Triple Leaf Tea Detox Tea

Twenty-two different Chinese purification herbs go into this formula to help support the healthy function of the body's detoxification organs. This tea is said to promote a healthy body, clear skin and give a healthy, energetic feeling. It costs £5.09 and is available from victoriahealth.com

strips. Juice fasting can eventually remove some of this, but a more effective approach is to perform a week-long colon cleanse twice a year, preferably in the spring and autumn, when you will ideally be changing your diet to the new foods that grow in your locality.

Feeling flushed

A week-long colon cleanse begins with a three-day fast in which no solid foods are consumed. Regular high fibre drinks are taken throughout the day, along with digestive enzymes and probiotics, with a vegetable broth in the evening. A daily enema helps to flush out the system. Foods are then gradually reintroduced over the four days following the fast.

The three fasting days should be 'total rest days' when the body can relax and release any tension and stress. By resting your digestive system in this way you allow your body to go into a state of detoxification. This is when the energy and enzymes usually used for digestion can be diverted to the job of eliminating old waste and carrying out repair work at a cellular level.

Over the following pages we will take a look at how to perform a week-long colon cleanse. However, before you begin, it is strongly recommended that you seek

guidance from a registered health practitioner. If you are not used to fasting or detoxing, it is advisable that you consider attending a supervised retreat initially or following a supervised detoxing programme.

Preparation

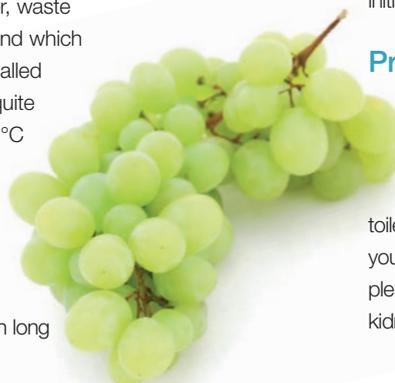
During the week before your detox and colon cleanse you should aim to reduce and eventually eliminate your intake of caffeinated drinks, alcohol, sugar and processed foods.

It is also a good idea to avoid toxins such as cosmetics, toiletries and cleaning products containing chemicals. Increase your consumption of water to keep the body hydrated and eat plenty of green leafy vegetables to support your liver and kidneys and keep your body in an alkaline state.

Matter of fact

Any waste matter that has remained in the colon for up to five days is known as normal waste matter. However, waste that has not been eliminated for a month or more, and which will have begun to embed itself in the intestines, is called putrefactive matter. This is still moist and it is really quite stinky stuff, as you can imagine! Slow cooking at 37°C for weeks on end will do that.

Then there is the even older waste, which has been polluting the insides of the body for years. This is known as post-putrefactive matter. It is completely dry and tends to be black, dark brown, grey or white, hard like plastic or rubber, and it normally comes out in long





“Water is essential to flush out the system and remove old waste matter”

What you'll need:

Pure water

Over the course of your seven-day colon cleanse you should be drinking two litres of pure water a day. Preferably your water should have a mineral TDR (total dry residue) reading of below 100mg per litre. Water is essential to flush out the system and remove old waste matter. A good quality spring water will be less taxing on your kidneys and other organs and so allow more toxins to be released.

High fibre drink

For the first three days of the colon cleanse you will be abstaining from solid food completely. Throughout these three days you should consume a high fibre drink

made from psyllium husk and bentonite clay powder at regular intervals to keep hunger pangs at bay and help the detox process along. Psyllium husk comes from the crushed seeds of the plantago ovata plant. It is very high in insoluble fibre and is said to absorb 10 times its weight in water. As it expands in the digestive system it acts like a brush, sweeping through the digestive tract, removing old waste and toxins.



Bentonite clay can also absorb several times its own weight and is particularly good for removing heavy metal toxins such as mercury,

aluminium and lead. To make up this drink, place one tablespoon/15ml of the psyllium husk and one teaspoon of Bentonite clay powder into a mixing container. Add 300ml/10 fl oz of water and 100ml/3 fl oz of organic fruit or vegetable juice. Blend these together until all the ingredients are thoroughly mixed and drink immediately. The mixture will start to swell up very quickly into a gel-like consistency and be difficult to drink. This should be drunk every three hours throughout the three fasting days.

Digestive enzymes

These loosen and break down proteins, fats, carbohydrates and fibre in the digestive system and help to remove more waste matter. They should be taken at three-hourly intervals during your three-day fast. Try to take them an hour after the high fibre drink. Recommended

3 top detox retreats

Give your mind and body a spring clean with these residential detox retreats

Health Etcetera

Weekend and week-long residential courses are offered at this Hampshire-based detox retreat. The programme is almost identical to that of the Hippocrates Health Institute in Florida, and includes a combination of nutritional therapy with emotional guidance, exercise, meditation and education plus juice fasting, colonic hydrotherapy and yoga. Call 01962 883 821 or visit healthetcetera.com

Simply Healing

This Sussex-based holistic retreat specialises in detox, weight loss and fertility-boosting programmes. The detox programmes include a menu of juices and broths plus colonic hydrotherapy and complementary therapies. Treatments range from reflexology and Indian head massage to detoxifying body wraps and holistic massage. Call 01403 822 117 or visit simplyhealingcentre.com

Vital Detox

Vital Detox retreats, based in the Welsh countryside, give guests the chance to detox both physically and emotionally. The retreats provide emotional journey processes, coaching, astrology, NLP, nutritional workshops, yoga, meditation, massage and a complete cleanse with daily colonics. Call 01373 467 668 or go to VitalDetox.com



digestive enzymes include cellulase, betaine HCL, bromelain and papain, ideally from plant sources.

Vegetable broth

During the evening of your three-day fast you should consume a fresh vegetable broth which contains electrolytes and enzymes which purify the blood, strengthen the eliminatory organs and speed up the cleanse.

To make this, fill a saucepan with a litre of water. Add in a selection of fresh vegetables such as carrots, broccoli, celery, spinach and leeks. Bring the water to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes, letting the steam cook the vegetables and release the nutrients into the water. Strain the water into a serving bowl and add in some herbs for flavouring, such as turmeric, garlic, paprika or fennel.

Daily enemas

One way to really boost the elimination of old waste matter and toxins is to take a daily enema during your colon cleanse. This is an ancient healing method in which a flow of warm water is passed through the colon to soften and release old waste matter. Enemas help the colon to become soft and flexible again and relieves

Probiotics

Take a good multi-strain probiotic in the evening

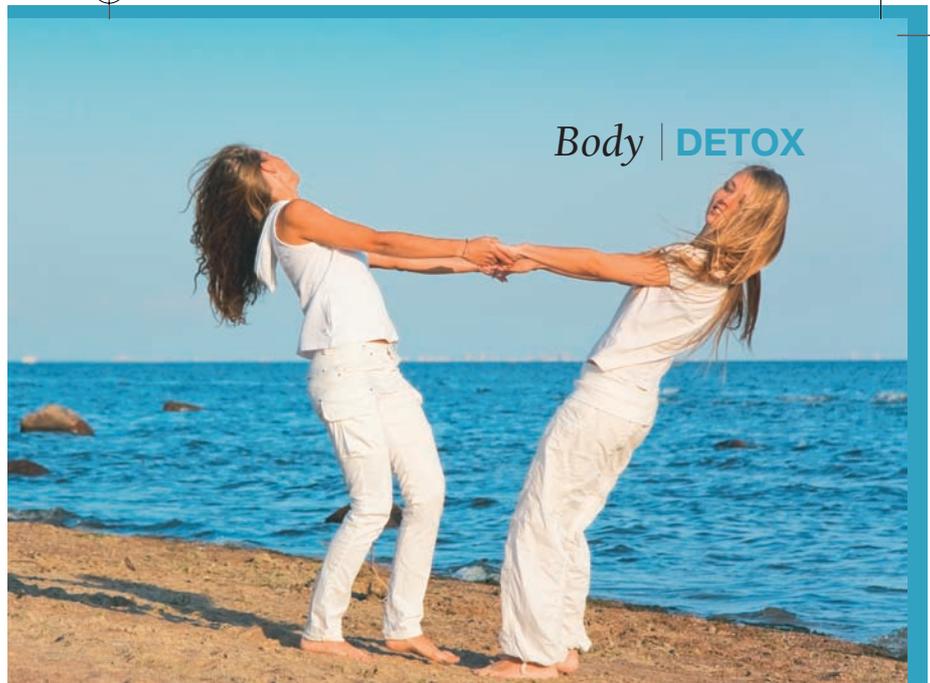
to replace all the bacteria that has been flushed out from your system. Choose one that has a minimum of eight probiotic strains and a potency of four billion. Probiotics will create a fresh environment in which healthy bacteria can flourish – this is essential for optimum digestion and a healthy immune system.

detox symptoms such as headaches. Again, it is advisable to consult a registered health practitioner before doing this yourself.

Breaking the fast

Solid food can be slowly reintroduced on the fourth day, after you have completed the fast.

Start off eating just fruit on the fourth day, then on day five eat just fresh salads. On day six you can introduce cooked vegetables and on day seven you can introduce simple carbohydrates such as rice and light proteins such as fish.



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Support your system

Try these health-boosting supplements during your detox

Nature's Plus Whole Food Total Body Cleanse contains acai berry, rice, oat, prune and beet fibre, psyllium, ayurvedic triphala, cascara and pectins. Costs £23.95 from nutricentre.com



Pure Synergy Powder contains vital phytonutrients including grass juices, algae, sea vegetables, kale and berries in their natural, synergistic food form to provide cleansing and regenerative benefits. Costs £42 from glowgetter.co.uk



Renew Life Cleanse Smart is a natural formula of herbs, vitamins, minerals and amino acids to support cleansing of the liver, kidneys and colon. Costs £29.99. For details call 0845 0725 825.



Klamath Organic Blue Green Algae provides a range of bioavailable nutrients to support the body while detoxing. They are dried at ambient temperatures to protect nutrient and enzyme activity. Costs £16.90 from healthy.co.uk



Natural cleansers

Certain foods, herbs and spices can help to cleanse the colon and maintain a healthy digestive system. Make sure you stock up on the following:

Apples

This fruit is great for detoxification. It contains high levels of pectin, a natural gelling agent, which helps to eliminate toxins, soften old waste matter and clean the colon.



Carrots

Carrots aid the digestive process as they help the bowels to function more efficiently. They are a good source of insoluble fibre, which adds bulk to the stools as well as softening them, helping waste matter to move through the intestinal tract.

Grapes

Grapes are considered to be a great natural cleanser as they help to ease constipation and keep the bowels working efficiently. They contain plenty of vitamins, minerals, fibre and manganese. Try eating them in the morning to kickstart the body's natural cleansing process.

Lemons

Lemon juice is excellent for cleansing the body. It is both antiseptic and antibacterial and helps to eliminate bacteria in the digestive tract. A glass of warm water with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice in, drunk first thing in the morning, is a great way to boost your digestive system.



Green vegetables

Green leafy vegetables such as watercress, lettuce, spinach and broccoli are a good source of chlorophyll which is a vital ingredient for strengthening the cell walls of the small intestine and colon. An excellent way of getting chlorophyll into your diet is to make up a fresh vegetable juice consisting of green organic vegetables like spinach, celery and cucumber, with some added fennel.

Garlic

Garlic is one of the best healing foods we can eat as it boosts the circulation and strengthens the immune system. Garlic and onions are both good sources of sulphur, which helps to eliminate metallic toxins from the body.

Green tea

This is a potent detoxifier and an aid to digestion. It is rich in vitamin C and antioxidants which help to fight free radical damage, slow down ageing and combat disease.

Ginger

A tonic that can be used to strengthen the digestive tract. Try drinking a bit of grated ginger together with a drop of lemon juice and honey in warm water before dinner.

Parsley

This herb has diuretic qualities and helps to clean the kidneys. It also facilitates oxygen metabolism.

Cayenne pepper

This spice helps to get rid of waste through sweat and acts as a blood purifier.

Turmeric

Turmeric has antibacterial, antiseptic and antifungal qualities. It also acts as a blood purifier.

Fennel

Fennel acts as a natural laxative and is mostly used in the form of tea. Not only does it relieve flatulence and colic, but it helps to sterilise the gastrointestinal tract.

Fiona Robertson runs a detox retreat in Biarritz, South West France, where she guides clients through a week of purification and relaxation. Fiona is also the brains behind the Home Detox Box, a seven-day total body detox you can do in the comfort of your own home. For more information see retreatbiarritz.com and homedetoxbox.com



DIY detox

We take a look at some of the top home detox kits around

The Home Detox Box

This contains a detailed and user-friendly guide to help you through a seven-day detox, plus an assortment of products from psyllium and bentonite shakes to enzymes, probiotics and an enema kit. Costs £74 from homedetoxbox.com



Raw & Juicy pH Perfect

This week-long personalised programme combats acidity and brings your body back to the correct alkaline balance, to restore health and vitality. Includes daily deliveries of raw and alkaline foods with five meals and green powders. Costs £350 from raw-and-juicy.com

Fushi Detox Kit

Contains a Milk Thistle and Dandelion Herbal Drink to help flush out the body; Detoxipure capsules, with rhubarb root, garlic, plantain, ginger and vitamins to cleanse the system and i Detox Patches. Costs £45 from fushi.co.uk

Nosh Total Detox

A six-day programme with freshly prepared fruit and vegetable juices delivered to your door. You



also receive a supporting Detox Box – a luxurious cleansing kit with herbal teas and detoxifying Dead Sea bath salts. Costs £255 from noshdetoxdelivery.com

The Organic Pharmacy Home Detox

This focuses on fresh, healthy and organic food with detoxing capsules and supplements to support your system plus a skin brush and detoxifying oil. Costs £140 from theorganicpharmacy.com

