

Your Best Options In **DETOX DIETS**

By The American Institute of Health Care Professionals, Inc.



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What Does Your Daily Diet Look Like?

Do you kick your morning off with a quick cigarette before you hop in the shower? Do you chug coffee as you get dressed before grabbing a quick breakfast to eat in the car?

Okay, your diet might not be quite as bad as that, but it's probably not too far off.

When you eat an unhealthy diet like this, it puts a burden on your body and mind. The purpose of a detox diet is to kiss those unhealthy diets goodbye and embrace your good health. Some people use a detox diet to kick-start a new healthier lifestyle, while others view it as a cure.

There are all different ways to do a detox diet, but typically, their purpose is to reduce or eliminate the use of caffeine (coffee, soda, etc.), cigarettes, alcohol (drugs), sugar and other sweets, white flour, meat, and other foods that are either not good at all or not good in excess.



When it comes to detox diet, these things are not acceptable. Detox diets tend to be fairly short.

There's a reason for this. It's difficult to maintain most of them beyond a few days. The longer you subject yourself to such restrictions, the more likely you are to fail.

If you don't want to follow a specific detox diet, you can formulate your own. While we will cover that in more detail later on, for now here's a rundown of detox diet healthy foods. Plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit, whole meal and grains, legumes, nuts, wheatgrass, etc. So, eliminate what we mentioned above and embrace the rest and you have a recipe for a detox diet that you can live with.

If you are using a detox diet to kick-start a healthier lifestyle, then you can add to your diet as time goes on. For example, a week after you have been sticking to your plan, you can add in dairy or poultry. Just be sure to do so in moderation when you reintroduce foods to your diet.

The point is, a detox diet doesn't need to be the boring drag that so many popular detox diets do seem to be. You also don't need to commit to drinking only juice to detox. You can enjoy delicious food that also happens to purify and detoxify.

Healthy Food Options To Detox Your Body

A detox diet is appealing to a lot of people. One of the reasons for this is that it serves as an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to eating healthily. The assumption being that when you detox you purge your cravings for all the junk your body has been accustomed to enjoying.

The biggest issue with standard detox diets, though, is they leave you sluggish. You're constantly distracted by all the food that you can't eat, and it becomes a struggle to function in your daily life. There are also unwanted side effects that come with certain detox diets, if you're not dealing with bloating, it's constipation (or both).

Let's instead focus on the healthy food options you can turn to in order to detox your body.

- **The Rainbow**

When we suggest you taste the rainbow, we are not instructing you to find the candy aisle. No, this rainbow is the one you will find in the produce section of your local supermarket. Choose greens, reds, purples, and oranges.

You should fit fruit and vegetables into every meal and snack you enjoy throughout the day. An important tip, however, is to shop with the season. Mother Nature knows what you need better than you do. Not only is it cheaper to buy the produce of the season, but it's also what your body needs most.



As for juicing that produce... well, it might seem like a great idea, but it's not something you should rely on too heavily. There's more benefit to chewing and consuming your food than there is in drinking the juice it gives you.

- **No Sweeteners**

Are you ready to have your mind blown? In a perfect world, your daily diet's calories would be made up of just 5% sugar, and the total between sugars and fats should be 15%.

Unfortunately, Americans are exceeding that. According to the University of California, San Francisco, Americans are consuming 17 teaspoons of sugar on a daily basis. That is 16% of your daily calories (<https://sugarscience.ucsf.edu/the-growing-concern-of->

[overconsumption.html#.XRCK4ugzblU](#)). The number of calories the average American consumes in sugar exceeds the recommendation for fat and sugar combined. So, the biggest detox diet favor you can do for yourself is to cut out all of that excess sugar.

There are a lot of things we eat without realizing the hidden sugar content. That granola bar, your favorite fruity yogurt, that morning bowl of cereal... that's extra sugar. You will appreciate fruit much more when you limit hidden sugars. You'll soon realize why blueberries are basically the gummy bears of nature.

- **Gut Health**

This is one of the biggest reasons that people choose to detox. Sometimes you just feel as though your gastrointestinal system needs a flush. Sadly, there is no evidence that a detox or a cleanse really does this. Hear us out! Your liver and kidneys are the body's detox team. They do a really good job at it, provided you look after them well.

You can also ensure your body can detoxify itself by looking after your gut health. Pears, prunes, and pulses are an excellent detox button to give your gut a reboot. Your gut health is important to your sleeping pattern, weight management, and even your mood.

Pears are packed with fiber, pulses like lentils and chickpeas are great for preventing and relieving inflammatory bowel issues, and prunes encourage healthy bacteria and bowel movement habits. So, what this shows is that your gut appreciates a variety of fibrous food options, including whole grains.

- **Bye, Booze**

Okay, so there may be a health benefit or two from enjoying *a* glass of red wine on occasion. That, however, does not mean you can tank a bottle of wine each night. Nor does it mean you should indulge in a pitcher of margaritas and all of the delicious food that comes with it. That's the problem with alcohol. Not only is it bad for your health in excess, but it also tends to lead to bad decisions.

More specifically, bad diet decisions. One margarita might not seem like much, but halfway through that order of rolled tacos smothered in sour cream seems like a great idea. It's not. Alcohol has no place in a detox diet.

- **Foods that Hydrate**

You are made up of mostly water. So, it's important that you hydrate yourself appropriately. Some people really struggle to drink enough water, don't forget you can

get water from other foods like fruits and vegetables. The benefit of getting hydration from other sources is the additional minerals, vitamins, and antioxidants that come along with it.

- **Careful Snacking**

Often, when you start a detox diet there is no room for any snack at all. However, snacks are an important part of maintaining your blood sugar. It's less likely you will experience slips if you don't starve yourself between meals. It's just as important to minimize your snacking, though.



A lot of us are guilty of grazing. We mindlessly snack on whatever, even when we're not hungry. We're especially guilty of this as we sit in front of the

television at night. Plan your snacks, such as carrot sticks, in advance and limit yourself to a small snack between lunch and dinner, and an evening snack as well.

Before we get into specific detox diets, we have one additional detox suggestion for you. It's nothing to do with your diet, at least not specifically, but part of a successful detox is looking after your mental health. Detox from social media.

As beneficial as it *can* be, it can also increase anxiety and a feeling of isolation. The other issue with social media is it can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction with your body. So, if there are specific accounts you follow or watch that makes you feel like this, mute them.

If you find that social media, in general, makes you feel like that, take a break. It might be a single day; it could be a full week or even longer. You will do yourself a massive favor by turning the volume down on the toxic social media noise.

The Body Is Built To Naturally Detox

We've already briefly touched on this point, but it bears repeating. Your body is built to detoxify your system on a daily basis. If you feel as though you need a detox, it's because you are eating the wrong diet. So, while a detox of your system isn't really necessary, it *is* absolutely necessary to eat foods that will *support* your body's ability to naturally detoxify itself.

That's where the disconnect tends to come in with the detoxifying discussion. Your liver, your kidneys, they do the work. However, you have to support them properly so that they can do that job. So, any detox diet that you choose, should be about supporting the health and function of your liver and kidneys.

So, this is how you can do that, according to the University of Michigan Medicine's Rogel Cancer Center (<https://www.rogelcancercenter.org/living-with-cancer/mind-body-side-effects/nutrition/detox-diets-and-cleansing-trends>)!

- **Hydration** – drink half of your body weight in ounces each day. This will aid the digestion process and improve your bowels as well.
- **Aim to include two citrus fruit servings on a weekly basis.**
- **Grapes, apples, and blueberries aren't just delicious and great for your teeth** – they're also helpful when purging toxic metals from your body.
- **Fermented foods are an excellent support for a healthy gut.** Kimchi, yogurt, sauerkraut, etc. are packed with the bacteria your GI tract needs to maintain its health.
- **Spices like hot pepper, ginger, and coriander improve digestion.**
- **Phosphorus foods that are high in fiber support bowel function.** This includes fruit, vegetables, lentils, whole grains, and beans.



Now, let's discuss more specific detox diet options. They vary, of course. However, they typically involve a short fasting period, followed by fruit juices or raw vegetables, and water.

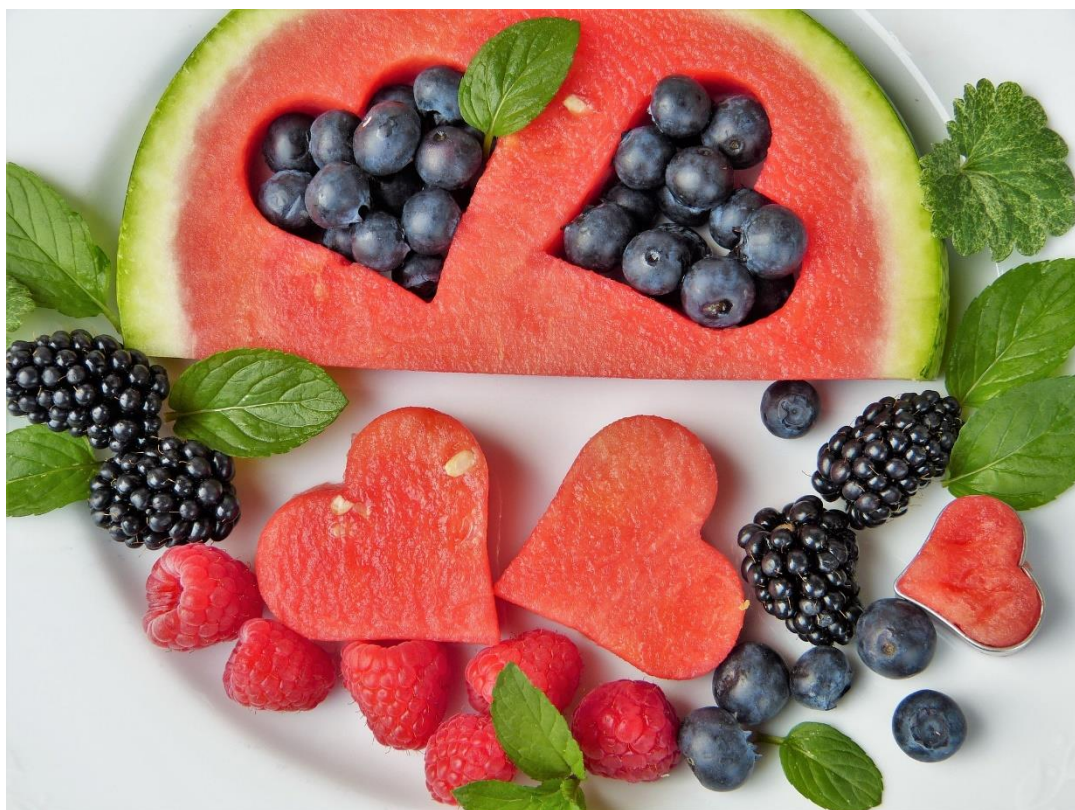
Some detox diets encourage the use of herbs or supplements, as well as enemas or colon cleanses.

A lot of people purport that a detox diet fuels a feeling of energy and focus. It's important to understand what a detox diet is really doing. It isn't purging toxins from your body. Again, that's the job of the liver and kidneys. However, your detox diet can support their health. Additionally, you will likely feel better because you aren't eating foods high in sugar and fat. So, of course, you will feel better!

Before you select a detox diet, you need to consider the side effects. If you have an existing illness or condition, you may want to speak to your doctor. Fasting long-term can cause vitamin deficiencies, while a lack of protein can leave you feeling fatigued.

Dehydration can be an issue from a colon cleanse, as can vomiting, cramping, nausea, and bloating. So, it's important to really understand what you are trying to do with your detox diet and choose an appropriate option for your own health and needs.

Remember, a fad diet is never a long-term solution. However, a detox diet is a great way to kick-start a new, healthier lifestyle.



What Makes A Detox Diet

First of all, what makes a detox diet a detox diet? According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, every detox diet ticks *at least* one of the following boxes (<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/detoxes-cleanses>).

- A fast, for one to three days.
- Using enemas, a colon cleanse or laxatives.
- Drinking fresh smoothies or juices, whether vegetable or fruit, teas, and water.
- Being allowed to drink specific liquids, like lemon water.
- Eliminating food that contains allergens, heavy metals or other contaminants.
- The use of herbs or supplements.
- Eliminating refined sugar, coffee, alcohol or cigarettes entirely.
- Avoiding all foods with allergens and then slowly introducing them back into your diet.
- Regular exercise.



Choices Of Detox Diets

- **The Shred**

This is a two-week cleanse and it's the perfect detox diet to use if you want to adopt a new healthy lifestyle and lose weight and keep it off. Brought to you by Ian K. Smith, Ph.D., it revolves around eating food that is whole, fiber-rich, and nutritious (<http://shredlife.com/about-shred/>). It's all about common sense, exercise, and long-term health. It isn't a weight loss program; however, you will likely lose weight as you embark on it. It's a great way to learn healthy habits that will support a healthier long-term lifestyle change.

- **A Three-Day Detox Diet**

If you can't stomach the idea of a full two-week cleanse and you'd like to start off slowly, then a simple three-day option may be more suitable. Again, much like the Shred, it's all about whole, fiber-rich, nutritious foods. For this, you should rely on the USDA's MyPlate guidelines that offer nutritional advice. This is an excellent way to reset your diet after you've been on an overindulgent vacation or the busy, holiday season.

- **The Alcohol Detox**

You may recall people telling you not to drink your calories. When you go on a diet, you're encouraged to avoid wasting calories on drinks, whether alcoholic or not. One of the easiest ways to detox and lose weight is by cutting out alcohol (coffee and soda, too). Look, you may enjoy a drink of an evening.

You may feel as though you can't unwind without a glass of *something* in your hand. However, there is *no* nutritional benefit to alcohol. It's quite literally a glass of empty calories that is more likely to lead you into eating the wrong food. Just say *no* to alcohol. Start out with a week-long alcohol detox and see how you feel. You may realize an extension is in order.

- **The Five-Day Detox Plan**

This will provide you with a bit more structure, which is often what we lack when we embark on diets like this. Just remember, once you have one day down, that is something you should maintain throughout the rest of the days as well.

- Monday – cut out your intake of foods that contain extra sugar and introduce a short walk after every meal.
- Tuesday – double your intake of vegetables and fruits.

- Wednesday – enjoy your fruit and vegetables in smoothie form as snacks between meals.
- Thursday – make all of your meals meatless.
- Friday – continue your meatless run.

How do you feel? At this point, you can determine whether to continue the detox as is or to simply make dietary changes that will support your long-term health.

With any change in your diet, you will likely experience some physical reactions. It's common to experience headaches, especially when cutting out or cutting back on caffeine and sugar.

It's likely that you will experience a change in your bowel habits, generally, it will involve additional visits to the restroom. This is completely normal as your body has become accustomed to your diet and you're upsetting it by making drastic changes all of a sudden. The symptoms only last a day or two.



Creating Your Own Detox Diet

If you plan to create your own detox diet, then take a look at the list of foods you should avoid and include.

Exclude The Following Foods

- Sugar (including artificial sweeteners, honey, and maple syrup).
- Coffee (black or fruit teas)
- Alcohol

Enjoy The Following Foods

- Fruits and vegetables – fruits and vegetables offer a wide range of benefits, including vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients. They are also high in water and offer both insoluble and soluble fiber.
- Fish
- Protein like lean meat, just twice a week. Protein is important when it comes to the health of your liver. Just choose wild-caught fish and organic meat sources.
- Legumes – lentils and beans are excellent detox diet options because they offer both insoluble and soluble fiber, as well as a host of amino acids.
- Olive oil – olive oil is what we refer to as a healthy fat. It's something that you should enjoy in moderation because it's high in calories, but it's a natural fat which means it supports your health and therefore a detox.
- Eggs – the ultimate food in so many senses, packed with choline, and a host of vitamins, they really are great! Eggs are the planet's most nutritious food item!
- Nuts (unsalted) – nuts are a great snack because they are packed with healthy fats and fiber. The key is to only enjoy a small amount because they can prevent weight loss if that's your intention.
- Herbal teas, such as white or green tea.
- Plenty of water

As you can see, there is a range of options when it comes to detox diets. They aren't all just about drinking juice six times a day and starving the rest of the time. Ultimately, the purpose of a detox is to eliminate processed foods, sugar, bad fat, and alcohol from your diet.

Where possible, choose organic produce. While those items are more expensive, they are worth it. If you want to pick and choose, the best choice is to go organic with soft (or no) skinned fruits and vegetables (<https://www.produceretailer.com/article/news-article/2019-dirty-dozen-and-clean-15-lists-released>). This will allow you to balance your budget and your health.

Remember, the detox choices you make are to support the health of your liver and kidneys. They will handle the detox if you look after them appropriately. So, there you have it.

You can still enjoy food while following a detox diet. It isn't as grim and dark as a lot of people make it, it's really about making smart diet choices and avoiding the food you already know you shouldn't be eating.

