

# Get fresh for the weekend

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Naturopath **Rumana Ramzan**, who will be writing a monthly column for Exclusive from February, presents the key to your January detox programme

**T**HE end of one year and the beginning of the next is a natural punctuation mark in our lives, a time to reflect on what's passed and what we want to create for ourselves in the coming year. But how often do we include our health in these aspirations?

In my practice as a naturopath, I always get clients to visualise their goals and achieving good health is usually at the top of the list. Defining what this means is essential. Does it mean losing three stone in weight? Getting rid of a persistent skin condition? Perhaps it's about getting over depression. Whatever the issue, deciding to do something about it is the first step.

How you go about making it happen will define how successful you are in achieving your goal. Simply increasing your frequency at the gym will of course improve general fitness, but it is by no means a complete health-giving programme.

To take full control of your health and well-being, I believe in putting together an integrated health plan. This includes making some adjustments to your diet and lifestyle combined with professional help from your doctor and/or health practitioner which might include working through a particular health ailment. In my experience, including a good detoxification programme is one of the most effective methods for an overall improvement in health.

Putting together your own cleansing programme doesn't have to be an ordeal. In fact, it can be quite straightforward and enjoyable. Cleansing slowly and gently can effectively bring about deep health changes, but this does rely on careful preparation and methodical, steady progress. Trying to rush

things can lead to severe detoxification symptoms and what is often referred to as a "healing crisis" where certain health issues seem to get worse before getting better.

## Preparation

A cleansing programme takes time, so planning is essential. Your three levels of planning need to include:

### 1. Psychological

Make a commitment to yourself and set your goals. Write down what it is you want to achieve with the cleanse and focus clearly on embarking on it. Visualise this in your mind and do this every morning before getting out of bed.

### 2. Physical

- Organise kitchen cupboards. Clear out tempting foods such as biscuits, cakes, crisps, etc on the red list (see the box) and replace with healthy foods.

- Shop for the green list foods (see box).

- Give yourself some extra time to experiment and learn to cook healthy meals.

- Source and read some good books on detoxification - visit the library or buy some recipe books to help you along.

### 3. Emotional

As well as cleansing the body physically, the process may also release repressed emotions. You may feel particularly angry, frustrated or tearful around the time of your cleanse. Talking over the issue with a good friend can help, but long-seated problems may require you to seek professional help. There are many therapists available who can assist so, if you need additional help, find a therapist with whom you feel a rapport. You may also want to tell family members and close friends that you are embarking on a cleansing regime in order to enlist their support.

## How Long to Cleanse?

Set yourself a time period - a day, a weekend, seven or 28 days - and stick to it. If you find your body is reacting strongly to cleansing, you will be better suited to doing small regular cleanses, such as one day a week or one weekend per month. I usually recommend women start a cleanse at the beginning of their monthly cycle when the body is more able to cope with the release of toxins.

## It's Simple, Really

Making adjustments to your diet and nutrition is the first step. Increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables that are in season will give you the nutrition and balance your body needs at this time of year. Your organic farmers' market will be full of wholesome locally grown produce at reasonable prices.

Getting an extra boost of vitamins and minerals doesn't always have to come from a vitamin and mineral tablet. Juicing is an excellent way of getting more food-based nutrition and it's definitely worth investing in a juicer if you haven't got one. There's just no comparison between real, fresh juice which is free of additives and the commercially bought varieties at the supermarket.

Another easy way to increase your natural source of vitamins and minerals is to use herbs in your cooking. Not only will you get nutritional benefits, but there are also therapeutic advantages to be gained from using herbs regularly. Rosemary, for instance, is great for the nervous system and parsley is excellent for supporting the kidneys.

For your cleansing days, you will need a rest from wheat and dairy products, which I usually find aggravate a lot of people, causing mucus in the body. You will notice it as catarrh or

continually having to clear your throat. You will also benefit by cutting out all red meats; pork, beef and lamb. The cleanse will still work if you eat white meats such as chicken and fish once or twice a week, but if you want a deeper cleanse then cut out the meats completely.

No detox is complete without eliminating stimulants such as tea, coffee, alcohol and sugar. Do this gradually over a few days before starting the cleanse as you can get detoxification symptoms such as headaches, emotional releases like anger, or general fatigue by coming off these suddenly. Drink plenty of water, at least eight glasses per day, and herbal teas to help flush the toxins away.

If you want to go a step further and deeply cleanse the body, consider cleansing your vital organs - the colon, liver and kidneys. These eliminative organs work continuously for us without a single break and often come under pressure through eating processed foods and living stressful lifestyles. Just think of these as filters which become clogged and needing regular de-gunking.

There are some products on the market that help you do this, but if you decide to buy a kit you will have to shop around to ensure that it is of high quality. I find herbal companies such as Specialist Herbal Supplies and Herbs Hands

Healing produce some very good kits.

Once you've completed the cleanse, pat yourself on the back and start planning for the next. It may all sound like hard work initially, but when you see the weight loss, skin glow, feel more energy and improvements in health you'll feel it was really worth it.

## Foods to Eat

### GRAINS

Breads, crisp breads, pasta, noodles or cereals made of the following grains: rice, millet, rye, quinoa, buckwheat and corn.

### NON DAIRY

Rice, almond, oat milks, cold pressed oils, e.g. olive oil, nut butters

### VEGETABLES

Salads, raw and lightly steamed vegetables

### FRUITS

Fresh fruits, dried fruits - dates, apricots, figs

### DRINKS

Water, herbal teas, vegetable and fruit juices, concentrates - natural herbal

### BEANS & PULSES

Lentils, chickpeas, butterbeans, kidney beans, etc

### OTHER

Nuts - almonds, hazelnuts, brazil, etc, seeds - pumpkin, sesame, sunflower, herbs

## Foods to Avoid

### GRAINS

Any wheat-based breads, pasta, noodles and cereals, cakes, biscuits, all wheat products.

### DAIRY

Milk, cheese, cream, yoghurt, eggs, margarine.

### MEAT

Pork, beef, lamb, chicken (optional), fish (optional).

### DRINKS

Tea, coffee, all decaffeinated drinks, soft, fizzy, concentrates (squash and cordials).

### OTHER

Artificial sweeteners, food additives and preservatives, packaged meals, sugar, chocolate, peanuts.

● If you have a particular health condition then make sure you consult your doctor or a health practitioner before embarking on any cleansing programmes and do not attempt them if you are pregnant or breast feeding.

● *How to Revitalise Health through Detoxification and Organ Cleansing* is at Seaham Hall Hotel on Monday January 24 at 7pm. Cost is £10. Booking essential, tel 0191 516 1574.

● *Revitalise Your Health* - a complete course for natural health improvement and maintenance, weight loss, and much more. Includes in-depth detoxification and organ cleansing programme, organic herbal kits, and clinic support. The course is run for six sessions, two hours per month, starting February 2005. Cost, £350, half price when you bring a friend. For further details, tel 01325 722 803 or see [www.rumanahealth.com](http://www.rumanahealth.com)

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