

Cleansing, Fasting + Gut Care

Some basics

General

Things to consider

- Take your time and plan out your diet
- If you're new to cleansing, using a cleanse kit can make it easier
- See if you can find a few friends to do it with
- Take 2-4 weeks to plan out how to make the experience successful
- Give yourself an additional 2-4 weeks to transition before and after the cleanse
- Consider doing it on the shoulder seasons (spring/fall)

Cleanse Kits

- Clean (easy, powerful, effective but a little pricey). They offer a 7 and 21 day cleanse
- Wild Rose (also easy, great diet plan, very affordable). They offer a 12 day cleanse

Preparation

2-4 weeks

- Give yourself loads of time to plan the diet shift
- Slowly eat up, store or give away any foods you won't be eating
- Think about how you would shop for groceries, eat out, or have dinner with friends so you've got good strategies for each situation
- Do research into fun/interesting replacements for your favourite dishes, snacks and drinks
- Start reading ingredients on any prepared foods you eat and take note of things with added sugar, processed oils, preservatives, stabilizers (google it if you don't know what it is)
- Where possible, start planning to ease your stress load of daily routine life during the cleanse. This is time for you to restore/refresh yourself. So whatever you can do to take extra good care of yourself is worth it.

Transition

2 weeks

- Begin eliminating drinks such as caffeine (switch to decaf or green tea), any drinks with sugar (fruit juice, soda, etc.). If you're a coffee drinker there are also healthy non-caffeinated coffee replacements that taste amazing. Check your local health food store.
- Begin eliminating foods such as dairy, anything with sugar except local fruits and berries, highly processed foods, plus anything else that isn't recommended on your diet plan of choice.
- Take time to notice your emotional attachment to certain foods and be kind to yourself. Find healthy alternatives for those in particular.

Transition - Elimination

2 weeks - These are suggestions, so do as many as you can without overwhelming yourself. Practice, not perfection.

- Start increasing hydration - water helps flush the liver and kidneys
- Drink cleansing herbal teas (non-caffeinated)
- Figure out a sustainable exercise plan that allows you to bring your heart rate up for 20-30 mins per day if possible, or at least 2-3 times per week
- Start taking magnesium citrate and/or a gentle laxative tea to help promote bowel movements. If you get any cramping reduce the magnesium or tea amounts until you find the comfort zone. 2-3 moments per day is ideal. 1 minimum.
- Practice Wim Hof breathing
- Buy a dry skin brush and start brushing your skin before a shower
- Take a timed cold shower - start at 1 min and add 15 seconds per day until you get up to 5 minutes. Do Wim Hof breathing before and during the cold shower.
- After the cold shower, rub unrefined sesame oil onto your skin
- Practice meditation for 5 minutes and increase 1 minute a day until you get up to 20-30 minutes.
- Use Insight Timer app if you struggle with your meditation practice, and check out the Tara Brach free guided meditations on that app + any other teachers that seem interesting to you.
- Find out if there are saunas (dry or steam) in your area you can go sweat in - see if you can do that once a week
- Other supportive activities are acupuncture, massage, yoga, tai chi, ecstatic dance
- Once a week take some coconut oil and massage your belly + liver for 15-20 minutes.

Cleanse

1-4 weeks

- Follow your diet plan - again if it's a first time, use a kit which has all the foods to avoid, what to eat and what herbs/supplements to take to support cleansing
- If focused on the liver, you can ask your local natural health food store, or naturopathic doctor to recommend some gentle liver cleansing teas and herbs (both cleanse kits I recommended have these already as a part of the kit)
- Journal, reflect, share with your cleanse buddies, reach out for emotional support.
- Consider pairing the cleanse with the 'Presence Process'
- Do as many of the things on the Elimination page as you can, most of all be kind to yourself. Cleansing takes practice to do well :)
- Make time to do things that bring you joy

Intermittent Fasting

During Cleanse

- After the first week of your cleanse it's a good time to try a day of juice fasting or water fasting for a day, once a week. If juice, make sure it's fresh, organic, no/low sugar juice.
 - Detox juice idea: Cucumber, celery, lemon, parsley, 1/2 green apple, ginger, turmeric, etc.
 - If water, consider some broth (bone or vegetarian) and a gentle cleanse tea as part of your water fast
 - On fasting days be prepared to rest a lot, meditate, do breathwork, go easy. Do it on a day when you can be free to go inward, connect with nature, pray...

Reintroducing Foods

1-4 weeks

- Make a food journal and reintroduce 1 food type every 2-3 days. Notice/take notes on any adverse reactions to dairy, nuts, cheese, nightshades, caffeine, sugar
- Go slow. Be mindful about how you bring certain foods back into your diet. Don't over do sugars, simple carbs and especially desserts the first time you bring them back in.
- Give yourself lots of time to transition back to a 'normal' diet and take notice of any shifts, foods you'd rather not return to or permanent changes in your cravings.

Gut Care Throughout

- Cleansing in general helps reset and rebalance the gut. Consider taking a broad spectrum probiotic during the entirety of preparation/cleansing and food reintroduction.
- If you like fermented foods like kimchi, sauerkraut, kefir, etc. then eat lots of that during and after the cleanse as long as agrees with your body and suits your meal plan.
- If you want to amplify your gut care, consider using a system like Viome or working with a local naturopath who is familiar with gut microbiology, lab testing procedures and dietary recommendations to help restore balance.
- If you can't find a local naturopath consider working with <https://www.drbonnienedrow.com> - She's amazing and works remotely with clients to help restore gut balance + address almost any health issue through restorative practices. She's also a liver cleanse expert.

In Closing

- We store a lot of psycho-emotional material in our organs. Be prepared to work through extra feelings, sensitivities, memories, relationship issues, and generally doing the ‘work’ of sobriety at an increased level a certain, usually unexpected times during the cleanse. When organs (and humans) feel safe enough they will start to release long held toxins that can deeply influence our state of mind, body and spirit. So it’s important to have a support group that can help hold you and help you reflect, process and ultimately eliminate toxic stories held in your body that no longer serve you.
- Be kind to yourself, practice not perfection. Sometimes it takes a few seasonal cleanses to get the hang of how to do it in a way that works for you and your lifestyle.
- If you don’t have access to a naturopath, or can’t afford one, I’ve found the staff at a good natural food store can be a wealth of information. They tend to know what works well for different kinds of supplements, teas, cleanse kits and other such stuff.