

Get The Facts: Juice Cleanse

Myth:

A juice cleanse diet will detoxify my liver and clear out chemicals from my body.

Fact:

This myth relates to a previous Wellness Weekly on processed and organics foods. Hundreds if not thousands take up a "juice cleanse" diet with reports that it "renews your body" and "clears evidence of junk food." Well the evidence of junk food, or any food, technically is cleared in a natural way by everyone up to 3 times daily. The basis for wanting to do a cleanse is the negative, almost fearful connotation of the words toxins, and chemicals.

First, in healthy adults, there are no metabolites or "toxins" that are unable to be excreted or properly metabolized by the liver and kidneys. Any substance that is building up which requires a medication or supplement to chelate out of the body will cause some sort of pathology (i.e. lead poisoning). Also, there is little to no evidence that any of the products in these cleanses actually have any effects in vivo. Of the miniscule evidence, results seen are not able to be extrapolated to any applicable purpose. For example; in a review of studies looking into chelating effects of supplements, Klein cited an article where coriander was able to reduce lead in lead POISONED mice after 10 days of supplementation by 20%. I sure hope that if someone is suffering from lead poisoning, they aren't running to the pantry for coriander. Studies like this are where a lot of these myths began and unfortunately, most data has been misinterpreted.

Second, a juice cleanse can cause some significant harm to those who use them for long periods of time. Many experience GI upset with nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. I have heard some simply say "these are the toxins leaving my body." Admittedly this is correct but it will occur in a more pleasant nature without the cleanse. Also, with only consuming fruit juices, there is a significant lack of vital macronutrients. This can result in muscle loss and malnutrition of the fat soluble vitamins (ADEK).

Conclusion:

Trust that your liver and kidneys are more than capable enough to eliminate any substances that are not needed for growth and function. Anything that cannot be eliminated will cause some sort of medical problems and require consultation with a physician. There is nothing to cleanse from a juice diet and the only evidence of eating junk food that can be removed is on your love handles and this is not going to disappear with a lemon, cayenne pepper, vinegar shot. Proper exercise and limiting calorie consumption is the way to trim or clean up your excess junk food use. Here are a few scrumptious examples of a quick [Google search of juice cleanse](#).

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