

## Seven days of detox

By Lauren Ferranti-Ballem

I love food. Love it. But for the sake of research, well-being, and curiosity I have embarked on a pre-holiday week-long detox, with the promise of feeling lighter, more energetic, focused and rested, according to Natasha Turner, my naturopath at Toronto's Truestar Clinic, who's guiding me through this process. My forbidden foods include wheat and gluten products (no bread, cereal or pasta); dairy; sugar; red meat (chicken, turkey and fish are allowed); caffeine and alcohol. I am allowed fruit and veg, oats, rice (and rice products like pasta and milk), whole grains (millet and quinoa), good fats (olive and flaxseed oils) and green tea. So here I go...



### Monday

The first thing I craved this morning was a heaping bowl of cereal. Instead I made a delicious whey protein, vanilla rice milk and berry shake. I grilled salmon for dinner and I'm pretty satisfied and not at all overwhelmed by my abridged menu. I'm looking forward to feeling the physical differences this detox will make.

### Tuesday

I was warned about detox malaise. I'm feeling achy and extremely irritable. I'm bored of the food. I'm hungry, bloated, gassy, crabby and tired. All I want is a bowl of cheese-topped regular pasta (not the rice stuff) and a glass of wine. But I won't. I've got a gluten-free wrap and hummus waiting at home. Joy.

### Wednesday

It's a new day! While I'm still slightly bloated, I'm also cheerier. Though I do keep thinking about cheese... To distract myself, I went out with a friend to a veggie place that labels gluten-free items on its menu. I had a hearty chic pea stew, but no cocktail. (sigh)

### Thursday

I keep waiting to feel a lightness of body or greater mental focus – but it hasn't happened yet. My lack of sleep (due to poor scheduling, not detox) isn't helping, and I'm beginning to think it was a mistake to start this program on deadline – I'm slow to work and my energy is low. And I know it shouldn't be my main goal, but I was hoping to lose weight on this plan...

### Friday

Frustration is setting in. I feel good, but I feel this good most days. In the absence of dramatic change, perhaps I was pretty healthy pre detox? So what was the point of abstaining from goat cheese, I ask myself?

### Saturday

I'm headache and cranky. It doesn't help that my husband wants takeout for dinner and pancakes for brunch. Went to the gym for the first time this week and I was surprised by my extreme lack of energy. But the end is in sight...

### Sunday

It's my last detox day and my attitude has softened. It felt good to challenge myself and it has definitely changed parts of my diet for the better: my a.m. shake is a healthier substitute for cereal; I'm eating more protein and veggies in general, and tea with sugar now seems too sweet. This is all good stuff.

### Done!

Pre-detox, I joked that I would celebrate with coffee and candy bars. I was moderate during the day, but celebrated a post-detox dinner at my favourite Italian restaurant (not a noodle was left in my bowl). And I felt great, no guilt. So while I didn't drop a pant size, this was a good exercise in discipline and healthy living and it left me with some great habits I plan to continue. The biggest lesson I learned is that I had a pretty decent diet to begin with (I think the caffeine-, sugar- and cocktail-addicted set might benefit a bit more from the process). Now bring on the goat cheese!

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