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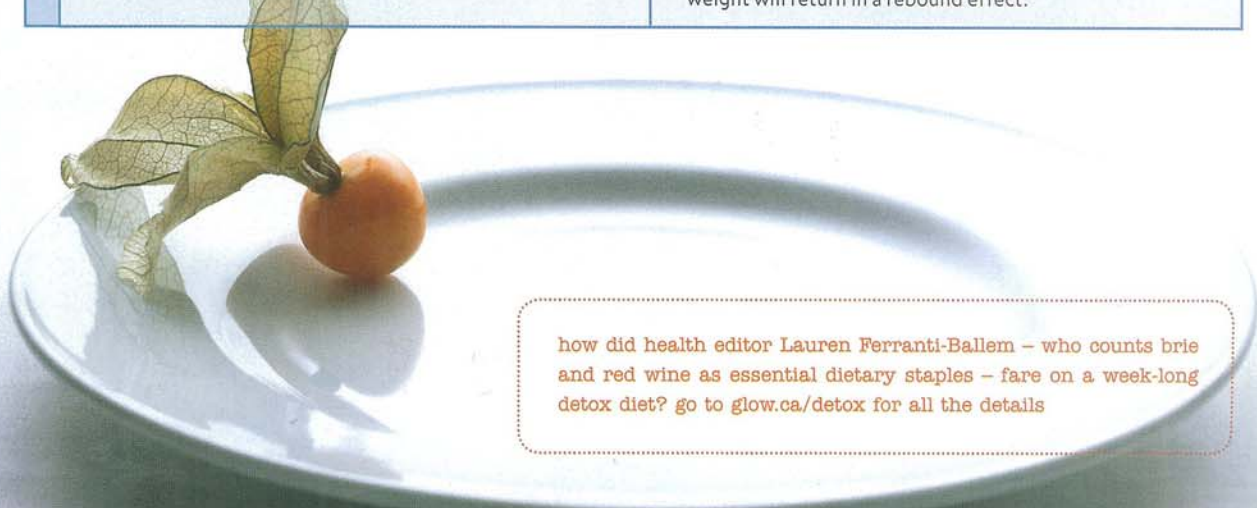


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detox faceoff

Before you begin juicing everything in sight, *glow's* experts dish on the good, the bad and the basics of detoxification

	FOR	AGAINST
WHO	<i>Dr. Natasha Turner, naturopathic doctor Truestar Clinic, Toronto</i>	<i>Kinga Balogh, registered dietitian Women's College Hospital, Toronto</i>
WHY	In theory, a body that's functioning at 100 percent can eliminate toxins on its own, but no body is perfect. Most people are deficient in certain vitamins, minerals and proteins – three major players in detoxification. We're also overloaded by toxins from the environment, food and drink and the products we use. Because of this burden, our bodies get sluggish and need help catching up.	The body is a detoxification powerhouse that's perfectly well equipped to eliminate harmful waste. I don't believe in drastic detox measures, such as the use of herbal supplements or laxatives to remove environmental and dietary toxins. Those who follow a fairly sensible diet and aren't exposed to dangerous levels of contaminants (in the workplace, for example) don't need a detox diet.
MAIN CONCERNS	If you're planning to lose weight, it's important to start with a detox. Most toxins are stored in fat cells, so as soon as you change your diet, your waste is freed up into your system, where it can interfere with weight loss. The first few days of detox can be a bit rough – headaches, body aches and irritability are common – but after that, there's a marked improvement.	The more restrictive the diet, the higher your risk of developing nutritional deficiencies. Also, the use of herbal supplements, laxatives and enemas can lead to dehydration, mineral imbalances and a loss of healthy bacteria in the colon and possibly damage the digestive system. Detoxification is considered unsafe for children, teens, pregnant and lactating women, athletes and the elderly.
WHAT I RECOMMEND	I suggest a one- to two-week program that involves eating within reason and replacing certain foods (refined sugar and flour, red meat, dairy, caffeine and alcohol) with healthier ones (such as good fats, organic chicken and fish, whole oats, rice, quinoa and fresh produce). I wouldn't recommend detox for children or pregnant or breastfeeding women, but it's great to do preconception.	A well-balanced diet is the key to keeping the body's systems in peak shape. A good variety of fruit, vegetables and antioxidant superfoods (such as broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, mixed berries and pomegranates) helps your body eliminate free radicals, while high-fibre grain products help move waste through the digestive system – this is all the detoxification we need.
BOTTOM LINE	I find that people who follow a detox program wake up brighter, feel lighter and have more consistent energy throughout the day. Detox helps them sleep better and lose weight, makes their skin glow, sharpens concentration and improves digestion.	I don't consider detox a good opportunity for weight loss. When you severely restrict calories, your body starves itself and your metabolic rate drops, which can result in unsafe weight loss – too much weight is shed in too short a time (one or two pounds a week is considered healthy). Also, once the detox is done, it's very likely that the weight will return in a rebound effect.



how did health editor Lauren Ferranti-Ballem – who counts brie and red wine as essential dietary staples – fare on a week-long detox diet? go to glow.ca/detox for all the details

TEXT: LAUREN FERRANTI-BALLEM; PHOTO: VEER