



ILLUSTRATION: SOPHIE BLACKHALL-CAIN

# Come clean

*Whether it's your body, relationships, home, wardrobe, or even your car, a detox program will pave the way to better health, fortune, and happiness. Charmaine Yabsley reports.*

## 1. Know the dos and don'ts

"The primary goal of detoxing is to eliminate toxins," says naturopath Karina Francois. "This improves energy, gives your liver and digestive system a break, clears your skin, and helps you to lose weight. A detox can last as little as three days, but 10 to 14 days is a good length. If you are new to detoxing, start with a one-day cleanse.

My top tips are: plan ahead and create a menu based on fresh fruit, salads, vegetables, activated nuts and seeds, hormone-free, free range, organic protein sources (e.g. chicken), and cold-pressed oils (e.g. extra-virgin olive or coconut or flaxseed oils); and eat foods in their most natural state, avoiding anything processed or containing refined flour or sugar, artificial sweeteners, flavourings, colourings or preservatives. Avoid alcohol, tea, coffee and dairy to give your system the best possible break. Drink at least two litres of filtered water daily, adding lime or lemon slices or blueberries for flavour; you can also drink organic herbal teas, e.g. hibiscus, peppermint, dandelion, and fennel. Start the day with a glass of hot water with the juice of half a lemon, and take a teaspoonful of apple cider vinegar in warm water before meals to stimulate digestion."

## 2. Cut energetic ties

"Our subtle energy body needs a good clean out, too," says Sacred Union mentor Jo Brown. "The chakric system has approximately 121 centres above, through, below, and around the physical body. The seven primary centres are attached through our endocrine glands to our physical being, and also connect us to other layers of energy. Cutting old energetic ties can release past relationships and blocked energy, particularly in the emotional causal body which sits a few centimetres beyond our skin.

"Settle and centre yourself in meditation before energy clearing. Give yourself a good five to 15 minutes to slow your mind and arrive into your body - pay particular attention to your pelvis, spine, and breath. Now, in your mind's eye, draw a circle of light around your body. When you feel ready, imagine the person you want to release from your life is in front of you. Feel, see, or hear them, and notice where you feel the connection between you: it may be in the sexual centre or perhaps the heart. Take the etheric cord that binds you together and cut it with an imaginary blade. Then ask for a light to shine down through you to clear away any remaining fragments. If the bonds are resistant, then ask for help from a practitioner."

## 3. Detox from detoxes

"I propose a detox from detoxes!" says Michael Cunico of Fitness First. "We live in a time where unfortunately people demand a magic bullet solution to health, and some companies may take advantage of this. A detox that recommends the removal of healthy wholefoods may be the exact opposite of what is required - so be cautious of detox programs that call for the removal of entire food groups or sources."

## 4. Ditch perfumes

"A single squirt of conventional perfume can contain over 300 chemicals," says naturopath Katherine Maslen. "The term 'fragrance' describes a chemical cocktail that makes up a scent. Perfume can contain synthetic musk which has been shown to increase the risk of oestrogen-dependent cancers, including some breast cancers. Use natural essential oils instead; if you must use perfume, spray it on your clothes rather than your skin so you don't absorb as much."

**Meet the experts**



Naturopath **Karina Francois** is the owner of Infinite Health. [www.infinitehealthpractice.com.au](http://www.infinitehealthpractice.com.au)



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**Fiona Tuck** is a skin and nutrition expert. [www.fionatuck.com](http://www.fionatuck.com)

Perfume is one of the most toxic things you can put on your body, and can contain synthetic musk which increases the risk of oestrogen-dependent cancers.



**5. Sweat it out**

“Your skin is an essential detoxification organ,” adds Maslen. “Sweating at least three times a week through intensive exercise moves toxins out through the pores. Shower afterwards rather than letting them dry on your skin, where they could be re-absorbed.”

**6. See (infra)red**

“Saunas have been used to detoxify the body for centuries,” says Maslen. “The heat increases blood flow through the body, making your kidneys and sweat glands work harder to expel toxins. Infrared saunas are best because they produce deep, penetrating heat, but a regular steam room works well, too.”

**7. Check labels**

“Anything with synthetic fragrance – not just personal care products, but also household cleaners and detergents - will contain phthalates, hormone-disrupting chemicals that are associated with infertility, breast cancer, diabetes, and obesity,” says Maslen. “Bin anything in your cupboards that has the word ‘fragrance’ on the label.”

**8. Switch off**

“Studies prove that electromagnetic fields (EMFs) affect our bodies,” says Maslen. “With wifi, bluetooth and mobile phones everywhere we can’t escape EMFs fully, - but you can reduce exposure by switching your phone to flight mode while you sleep, switching off your modem at night, and using a wired hands-free device to increase the distance between you and your phone when making a call.”

**9. Eat Brazil nuts**

“Brazil nuts are nature’s richest source of selenium, a potent antioxidant mineral,” says Maslen. “Selenium is an integral mineral for detoxification, in particular the removal of heavy metals. Eat four Brazil nuts daily for a therapeutic dose of selenium.”

**10. Filter your water**

“Water can contain heavy metals, chlorine, fluoride and even parasites and bacteria that can make you sick,” explains Maslen. “A good quality water filter should be able to at least remove some fluoride, as well as a layer that helps to remineralise and alkalise your water.”

**11. Forgo coffee pods**

“Plastic coffee pods contain BPA and other endocrine-disrupting chemicals; studies show that when plastic is heated, up to 55 times more BPA is leached from it – so when that hot water is blasted through a coffee pod, you could be getting toxins along with your espresso,” says Maslen. “If they’re aluminium, they can be lined with plastic or even leach aluminium through the holes in the pod. Use a plunger, stainless steel percolator, or espresso machine instead.”

**12. Snuff out scented candles**

“Innocuous as they seem, these can be a big source of toxins,” warns Maslen. “They are often made with paraffin wax, which is petroleum-based. When you burn a candle you release ultra-fine soot particles that get inhaled and absorbed into the body. Soy candles are better, but may use synthetic fragrances which contain hormone-disrupting phthalates. Use natural essential oils instead.”

**13. Go green**

“Green tea is a fabulous way to support healthy liver function,” says naturopath Lisa Guy. “This antioxidant-rich beverage contains high levels of catechins, polyphenols which protect the liver from alcohol and other toxins, as well as preventing liver inflammation and fat accumulation.”

**14. Add the super spice**

“Turmeric contains very high levels of curcumin, a compound with potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties,” adds Guy. “Curcumin enhances liver health and offers protection against liver cancer and disease, according to a study published in the Journal of the Medical Association of Thailand. It also repairs and regenerates damaged liver cells. Enjoy it as a tea - it’s delicious with ginger and lemon.”

**15. Move – but gently**

“The best activities to support a detox program are yoga, Pilates, yoga nidra, pranayama (breathing practices), gentle stretching, water stretching, mild swimming, or simply contemplative walks in nature,” says Master of Chinese Medicine Karina Stewart. “These activities reset the nervous system from ‘stress’ mode to ‘healing’ mode.”

## 16. Cleanse your space

Monica Meldrum, founder of organic food company Whole Kids, says: "I recommend eating organic food, growing a home veggie garden, and being conscious of what is in all of your household products, such as nappies and laundry detergents. Plus, I have a zero-phone policy at home - your children copy everything you do, so what values are you teaching if you are always on your phone?"

## 17. Use natural cosmetics

"Read ingredients lists - and if you don't recognise something, look it up," advises Eve Michaels of Eve Organics. "The Environmental Working Group (EWG) SkinDeep cosmetics database lets you check ingredients' safety scores. Look for 'Certified Organic' or '100% natural ingredients', and if you're unsure, ask: a genuine company will answer."

## 18. Turn in

"Sleep is essential for the maintenance and repair of your immune, neurological, endocrine, digestive, and musculoskeletal systems," says naturopath Casey-Lee Lyons. "Detox your sleep space of electronics and artificial light (both interfere with your body's circadian rhythm), clear clutter, keep noise to a minimum, avoid stimulating food and drink (e.g. coffee and sugar), and don't eat late at night. When you wake, open the windows and shades to let in natural light and fresh air. Keep your sleep space sacred for restful sleep, lovemaking, and relaxation."

## 18. Try a power plate

"Enlist the help of a Power Plate machine," says founder of Into-you Training, Clare Hozack. "This is a vibrating platform that induces muscle contractions and increases blood flow to stimulate lymphatic reflux and remove excess fluid and toxins. Research shows that using this whole-body vibration technology increases circulation and lymphatic drainage naturally. Lymphatic drainage improves cellulite, too. Just ensure you stay well hydrated when doing any lymphatic drainage activity - the water will flush toxins from your system and keep your body in tip-top condition."

## 20. Boost your digestion

"If you're constipated, your body will begin to reabsorb nutrients as well as waste products from the faeces held in your colon, waiting to be expelled," says Danielle Archer. "Adequate fibre intake, lots of fluids to keep your stools soft, and probiotics to replenish and

restore healthy gut bacteria will all improve bowel regularity and enable your body to eliminate toxins more efficiently."

## 21. Brush your body

"The lymphatic system often gets overlooked," says skin and nutrition expert Fiona Tuck. "It works like a waste disposal system, removing toxins from cells and also transporting fat and fat-soluble nutrients to the bloodstream via lymphatic vessels. If your lymphatic system is sluggish, this compromises toxin removal and immunity. A simple way to kick-start it is to practise dry body brushing each morning before you shower. Start at your ankles and work your way up your legs, using gentle sweeping movements until you reach the upper thighs. Spend extra time on stubborn areas of cellulite. Then brush from the fingertips, up the arms to the shoulders, and then across the upper chest and towards the lymph nodes in the armpits. Finish by brushing your back and then your abdomen in a circular motion. Avoid brushing over sensitive areas, like sunburn or abrasions, and always avoid the face." ✨

