

FOODSENSE

Spring-cleaning, the body-friendly way

In the first of a new regular column nutritional therapist Beata Rachowiecka looks at the dos and don'ts of dieting and detoxing. Beata has worked in many private clinics in and around London, including Harley Street, written for local publications and lectured to a variety of interest groups and organisations as well as running her private practice Focus Nutrition + based in Berkshire, website: (www.focusnutritionplus.co.uk), tel: 01753 814228.

WITH Spring approaching you may be thinking of tidying up your act on the food and drink front, but few people know how best to do it, let alone what to expect.

There are many myths regarding cleansing or detoxing and they often advocate a juice fast or eating next to nothing while promising weight loss and rejuvenation when you invest long hours in body workouts. What they do not mention is that these effects may not last long and the cravings that result will mean you put the pounds back on in no time.

What's more, the time spent on being active, rather than the type of exercise and the level of its intensity, appears irrelevant.

To cleanse your body properly you need to understand its natural rhythms and biochemical needs. This means eating the right foods but not starving the body of

nutrients that support the detoxification process. It is working with, as opposed to against, the body's hormones that modulate hunger and fat storing: lectin and ghrelin.

Such a process can leave you feeling physically energised and more mentally alert than before. Given a chance to eliminate stored toxins and self-repair, the body follows effortlessly.

The best place to start is sourcing organic produce whenever possible. Whether you believe in the additional nutritional benefits of these or not, the bottom line is that the fewer pesticide and insecticide residues you consume, the less of a toxic burden you will need to shed.

The second is providing enough quality substrates for the enzymes that help us detoxify as well as enough fuel to meet the energy needs it requires. For the process to run smoothly this means drinking plenty

of good water, eating some quality protein, some fats (yes, to lose it you must first use it!), and plenty of non-irritating fibre with phytonutrients (i.e. your vegetables and some fruit). A good probiotic and a multivitamin/mineral plus are a bonus, too.

It goes without saying that unless all possible elimination channels (i.e. your bowels, bladder and lungs) are working well, the risk of embarking on such a programme may not be worth undertaking. If this is the case, it is best to work with a qualified professional to achieve your goals.

Lastly, any cleanse should not be rushed as this may be stressing the body too much and result in the stored toxins being deposited in a different part of the body rather than eliminated for good. Happy cleansing!

Yoga class

Gail Willis continues her series of simple hatha yoga moves

YOGA INSTRUCTOR Gail Willis has recruited her mother Janet Rogers to help demonstrate yoga exercises in *Choice* every month.

In each picture Janet, who is 78, illustrates the basic position for each exercise – the easiest one for the beginner. Gail illustrates the maximum position for each exercise.

You should start following Janet's position and try to increase gradually towards Gail's advanced level.

"Only build up to a level that you are comfortable with," says Gail, who is a full-time yoga instructor in Kettering. "With some exercises you will be able to do the maximum level

of stretch, but with others you will achieve only the basic move. It doesn't matter – even the easiest will be good for you and make you feel good."

Find out more

- To contact Gail, tel: 01536 515311, mobile: 07762 575118
- To find a yoga class where you live, ask at your local library, county council offices, tourist information centre, sports centre, a local school or anywhere that runs evening classes.

Yoga to help varicose veins

Alternating step:

Janet puts both feet half off a step, then pushes one heel down alternating the heel push as if walking on one step. Repeat slowly for up to 60 seconds or until uncomfortable. Also when walking up stairs try and do so on tip toes.

Squats:

Make sure both knees are over your toes; you can lean slightly forward if more comfortable for your lower back and squat holding for five to 30 seconds. Repeat three times. Do not let your knees collapse into each other and do not lift your heels off the floor. Hold on to a solid side if your balance is not particularly good.

Next month: **Yoga for digestive difficulties**

