

# Why Do I Feel Sick and Tired While Detoxing, and What Can I Do About it?

I'm always looking to improve my health, so I tried a detox. For several days, I was fatigued, irritable, and suffered from constant headaches. After dealing with this for four days, I looked into it.

Why do you feel sick and tired while detoxing, and what should you do about it? **A detox restricts your calorie intake while removing addictive foods from your diet. Lower caloric energy causes fatigue and dehydration as your body seeks to conserve energy and water, and the lack of addictive substances like caffeine and sugar causes withdrawal symptoms.**

While these symptoms are natural reactions from your body, there are several steps you can take to understand and avoid the discomfort and sickness that can come with a detox. Check out the tips below, and you'll be on your way to a healthier, happier you in no time.

## Symptoms & Causes

Symptoms may vary, but there are a few that occur more frequently.

### Headaches

One of the most common symptoms, this can be a double whammy. For one, taking in fewer calories means your body conserves more water in its regular processes, and if you're not staying hydrated, your head will hurt until you get enough to drink.

To add to the ache, not drinking caffeine or eating sugar means your brain isn't getting its usual dose of stimulants. Your hormones have grown dependent on these chemicals, and when they don't get them, they hurt.

### Bowel Disruption

It's not fun to talk about, but your detox could be causing constipation or diarrhea in the most extreme cases. This is because your body isn't getting the fiber or food intake it's used to, and your intestinal tract is panicking.

Your intestines might also cause you to bloat or have gas as they adjust to the lower amount of food.

### Fatigue

A cleanse means you won't be getting the number of calories you're used to. Your body will respond to this change in diet the same way a bear does: hibernation. If you eat less, especially less fat and sugars, your body will slow you down and conserve whatever energy it is getting, resulting in you feeling tired and lethargic.

## Difficulty Sleeping

Ironically considering we just talked about fatigue, but often you'll find you have trouble getting good rest while detoxing. For one, you're going to be hungry. The body gets fatigued but doesn't want to sleep when you're hungry. It wants you to feed it. This is going to keep you up.

On a similar note, your body's cravings for caffeine or sugar will also keep it awake, as it waits for you to feed it the stimulants it's used to relying on.

## Irritability, Anxiety, and Mood Swings

Now that you're ingesting less sugar, your hormones are rebalancing. Your moods will fluctuate while your brain adjusts to the new levels of stimulation.

Also, if your stomach is not getting its usual calorie intake, it will cause all sorts of not-fun moods in your brain. This is its way of telling you to get back on the hunt, although it probably wants you to hunt down the bad foods it's used to, instead of the new, healthy foods you plan on feeding it.

## Cold or Flu-like Symptoms

Your sinuses are congested, you've got a fever, and you've got a cough or sneeze that won't let up. Hardly seems fair when you're just trying to be nice to your body. But less food or less of the food you're used to means your body's working overtime to fight the bad guys of infection and disease, and you're more susceptible to catching a bug.

## Cravings

Not only will your body crave the foods and chemicals you're no longer giving it, like caffeine and sugar, but it will start craving some potentially weirder items, or just foods you've never eaten before. This is because your body is looking for those substances any way it can get them. These cravings can be the most difficult part of your detox, as they can distract you and put you back into bad eating habits.

Now that you understand what's causing your symptoms, we can fight them with proper preparation and self-care.

## How to Prep for Your Detox

There are a few simple ways to start off on the right foot and make this cleansing time happier for your body.

Dr. Hyman recommends not jumping straight into a detox. In his book, [The Blood Sugar Solution](#), he recommends prep days or transition weeks to start easing your body into your new healthier habits.

Other experts recommend not trying a juice cleanse at the same time as detox supplements. The combination can put too much stress on your body, as your liver works overtime to remove toxins but fiber isn't available to help remove it. [Read more about aggressive detoxes here.](#)

Once you're ready to start, do it on the weekend or while taking some time off. This will give you time to deal with any side effects and start recovering before you add the stresses of work on top of it.

To combat cravings, have a plan of attack in advance. When you are looking for that morning cup of joe, replace it with a glass of juice or protein shake to give you a jolt to your morning. Sneak an apple onto your work desk and snack on that instead of going to the office vending machine. Identify your worst food habits and what triggers them, and have replacements ready to go.

## What to Do to About Symptoms Once You've Started

Start by battling dehydration. Water is our natural detoxer. It filters the bad chemicals out from your body through your kidneys, and if you're not aiding this natural process, your other detox efforts are pretty much for nothing. So drink up to help combat headaches, fatigue, and bowel/urinary issues.

8-10 glasses a day should help, especially if it's electrolyte-enhanced kinds of water. Beyond making sure you get enough plain water, you can supplement your fluid intake by having healthy soup with clear broths for dinner.

If you're drinking plenty of water and still having trouble with too many or too few trips to the bathroom, consider helping your stomach out. Add healthy fats to your diet, like nuts, seeds, avocados, and fatty fish. Flax seed is another natural supplement to help your bowel movements.

## What If You're Starving While Detoxing?

Don't think just because you're on a cleanse you should be starving. A plan that incorporates eating protein every 3-4 hours will make you more likely to stick with it and stay healthy throughout your detox. You can sprinkle some activated charcoal into your drinks and meals as well, to help absorb toxins leaving your body during your cleanse.

If changes to your diet aren't an option or you need more help, consider taking Magnesium Citrate or Vitamin C. Both should get your digestive system get back on track.

## Get Some Rest!

Your body also needs sleep. It can be challenging, but making sure to give yourself a full night's sleep and keep to your regular sleeping schedule will do wonders. If you're having difficulty sleeping, make sure you're getting enough exercise during the day. You might not have a lot of energy, but getting through that workout, jog, or even a walk will help you sleep and feel better tomorrow.

## More Self-Care Ideas

Several other self-care techniques can minimize or remove your symptoms:

- Meditation- for fatigue and irritability, anxiety, and mood swings
- Salt baths- removes toxins and also replenishes your skin
- Saunas, massages, sweaty activities- sweat removes toxins from your body naturally
- Exfoliate- clears away bad skin and dirt from your pores so sweat can release toxins more easily

- Bounce on a trampoline- the exercise (and goofiness) will improve your mood, help you sleep, and get your body sweating out those bad chemicals

Whatever your symptoms, they should not last more than five days. If you've had enough and decide to come off your detox, do not return to your old diet. You will increase your feelings of nausea and

If you've tried all of this and you're still feeling awful or worse than ever, seek help from your licensed medical care professional. This is especially necessary if you've been seeing symptoms for more than five days. A doctor can give you specialized dietary advice that will fit your nutritional needs.