

MASTERING THE MASTER CLEANSE

After more than 35 years, it's still among the most popular cleanse programs around. Here's a crash course

// BY TINA RUBIN

Like many concepts that have been around for generations, the Master Cleanse is shrouded in intrigue. Bring it up as a topic of conversation, and reactions range from loathing to gratitude. While the experience will be different for everyone, the key to success is knowledge. Follow the directions precisely, and the joy of radiant health will be yours.

In 1976, Stanley Burroughs put into book form what he considered the finest knowledge in healing: the lemonade diet, or as he termed it, the master cleanser (*The Master Cleanser with Special Needs and Problems*, Burroughs Books, 1976). Based on a fasting and cleansing regimen that Burroughs himself created in 1940, the book gathered 36 years of research into a simple, doable system—one that, in his words, accepts no limitations on the ability of the body to heal itself.

WHAT'S IN THE CLEANSE?

The cleanse consists of 6–12 glasses daily of homemade lemonade, a cup of herbal laxative tea each night before bed, and a quart of salt water first thing in the morning. You can also drink as much purified or spring water as you like, as well as an occasional cup of mint tea. To sustain a 10-day cleanse, you'll need about 80 large lemons, three 32-ounce bottles of grade B organic maple syrup, a half pound of non-iodized sea salt (try light grey Celtic sea salt), cayenne pepper, senna tea (pure or in combination with milder herbs), and at least eight gallons of purified water.

The morning salt water flush comprises 2 level teaspoons of non-iodized salt to one quart of spring or purified water. Start your cleanse with one cup of senna tea the night before and complete each day with it.

The ingredients in the lemonade form a complete balance of nutrients that work together. The lemon juice begins to break down layers of waste in the colon. The maple syrup contains not only the sugar needed for energy but also a wide variety of minerals—sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, manganese, iron, copper, phosphorus, sulfur, and silicon—and vitamins A, B₁, B₂, B₆, C and pantothenic acid (B₅). Cayenne pepper breaks down mucus, contains B and C vitamins, and dilates the blood vessels, which warms the body. As for the other elements, the laxative tea each night prompts the intestines to contract, causing elimination. The quart of salt water first thing in the morning flushes out the waste that's been loosened during the night. Finally, the chlorophyll in that occasional cup of mint tea neutralizes body odors released during the cleansing process.

DEALING WITH CRAVINGS

Peter Glickman, author of *Lose Weight, Have More Energy & Be Happier in 10 Days*, has been researching the Master Cleanse since 2004. In his book, he notes that three out of four people on the cleanse experience no hunger pangs. But many think they do—in the form of cravings. That hankering for pizza? It's just part of the detox process. Make it past the third day, Glickman says, and you'll begin to experience the positive effects. "Finishing the cleanse is not about will power," he adds, "but about knowledge." Glickman presents the lemonade diet exactly as Burroughs created it, but he also addresses detox symptoms. Knowing what to expect is half the battle.

In addition to cravings, detox symptoms include irritability, aches and pains (including caffeine headaches), lethargy, and eliminations that burn. Many of the symptoms disappear the next day. After day three, most people experience no more detox symptoms until day seven or eight, and then it's smooth sailing. Other than on symptom

days, people report having unusual energy, strength, and clarity that continues throughout the cleanse.

IS IT WORTH IT?

Definitely. The Master Cleanse not only rids the body of toxins and enables it to shed pounds, it helps people look and act younger. The benefits cross the entire realm of human experience: physical, mental, and spiritual. "Essentially, the Master Cleanse presses the body's reset button," Glickman says. Jeanette Ryan, DC, a doctor of natural medicine in Santa Monica, California, agrees. "The Master Cleanse resets our insulin receptor sites. It clears all saturated fat on the cellular level." Having the receptor sites open, she explains, takes the level of insulin resistance—a key factor in weight gain—down. And the cleanse promotes absolute detoxification on the cellular level.

As a reducing diet, the cleanse can't be beat. According to Burroughs, "Fat melts away at the rate of about two pounds per day for most people, with no harmful effects." But the Master Cleanse is much more than a reducing diet. It's a master catalyst for healing mucus diseases, from asthma and hay fever to sinus and bronchial problems. Diseases that accompany calcium deposits in joints, muscles, cells, and glands, as well as cholesterol in the veins and arteries, are dissolved and flushed away. Skin disorders disappear. As toxins are eliminated, every type of infection goes with them—and so do cravings for drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. The cleanse brings down blood pressure, reduces the risk of coronary artery disease, and can even improve mental illness.

ENHANCE YOUR CLEANSE

Although the 10-day regimen sounds severe, there are ways to enhance it. Ryan emphasizes the importance of a liver flush a day before, or a month before, to open the detox pathways. Adding food or supplements while on the cleanse defeats the purpose, but she encourages the use of 5-HTP to help

counteract the drop in serotonin that occurs while fasting. Taking 50 milligrams one or two evenings decreases irritability. And if you extend the Master Cleanse beyond two weeks, she recommends whey isolate for protein. The most important factor, Ryan says, is to think of the lemonade as an intravenous drip and sip it—"not gulp it"—every 15 minutes throughout the day to stabilize the blood glucose level.

You can judge for yourself the appropriate duration of the cleanse—just check your tongue. During detoxification, the tongue becomes fuzzy and coated. When it's a healthy, clean pink color, the coast is clear. This usually occurs around the tenth day, but if it doesn't, continue the diet a few more days.

Seeing a pink tongue, of course, doesn't mean your cleanse is over and you can safely gorge on food. Breaking the fast properly is critical; the body must gradually adjust to processing solid food again. Burroughs outlines two methods to ease off the fast, one geared to vegetarians and one to everyone else.

VEGETARIANS:

For two days after the cleanse, sip several 8-oz. glasses of fresh orange or grapefruit juice throughout the day, and extra water. On the third day, have the juice for breakfast, raw fruit for lunch, and a raw vegetable or fruit salad for dinner. Begin eating normally on the fourth day.

PROCESSED-FOOD EATERS:

As with vegetarians, it takes four days to safely return to a normal diet. Sip several glasses of orange or grapefruit juice and extra water for the first two days. For dinner on the second day, enjoy homemade vegetable soup broth, just a few vegetables, and, if you like, rye wafers. On the third day, it's freshly squeezed juice for breakfast, more of the soup for lunch, and vegetables, salads or fruit for dinner. Begin your normal diet the next day, but start with Master Cleanse lemonade or fruit juice for breakfast.

Master Cleanse Lemonade

Serves 1

2 Tbs. lemon or lime juice, freshly squeezed, preferably from organic lemons

2 Tbs. grade B organic maple syrup

A pinch cayenne pepper (or more to taste)

8 oz. spring or purified water, medium hot (or cold)

