



JUICE DIET COULD YOU consume only Juice FOR AN entire week?

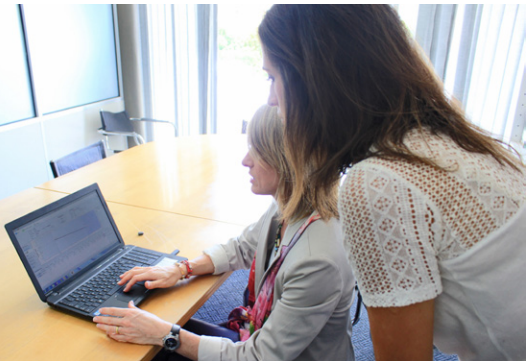
STRESS, LACK OF SLEEP AND ACIDIC FOODS ALL TAKE THEIR TOLL ON THE SKIN. MC'S COPY EDITOR, KATE MASON, TESTS JUICE REVOLUTION'S '7 DAY SUPER JUICE DIET' IN HER QUEST TO COMBAT ADULT ACNE

ON TRIAL



I am standing in front of the bathroom mirror, peering at the sore, red mounds mapped out like Orion's Belt across my left cheek. After a decade of blemish-free skin, I feel too old to buy cleansers targeted at teenagers and too despondent to bother with heavy cover-up. Let's get something straight: I am a beauty obsessive. I routinely cleanse, moisturise, invest in quality creams, serums, masks – you name it, I apply it. I run often to keep the blood and oxygen flowing. Do yoga to de-stress. Eat my five-a-day and take my vitamins. More often than not, I'm that green juice-swiggling hippie in the health food shop extolling the virtues of chia seeds and stocking up on Peruvian superfoods in an attempt to achieve the glowing complexion of Miranda Kerr. So where am I going wrong? Like anyone, I have my vices – coffee, wine and a pasta passion that would rival an insatiable Italian's – but these I consume in moderation. So, after one breakout too many, I take my weary, pimple-ridden face to meet Fiona Stander, founder of Juice Revolution, to learn about her detox programmes designed to offer the benefits of a juice diet while eliminating the obstacles for on-the-go people without the time or the equipment to juice at home.

During the initial consultation, Fiona's digital scale analyses my body's composition – water, muscle, fat, visceral fat, BMI and metabolic rate – and sends the data to her laptop. I raise concerns about not wanting to feel hungry and she explains that the programme isn't designed to deprive the body but to feed it with nutrients and give the colon, intestines and liver a break. She prepares me for possible side effects that include headaches, fatigue and (more) spots then supplies me with 42 juices – blended, bottled, blast-frozen, labelled and packed in a compact box to take home. 'How challenging is it *really* consuming just juice for an entire week?' I ask apprehensively. Fiona smiles, promises I will feel amazing and reminds me she's only a call away.



THE RULES

The '7 Day Super Juice Diet' consists of 35 x 500ml fruit and vegetable juices (five per day), seven 300ml Hot 'n Spicy Teas (one per evening), dietary supplements, including barley grass, acidophilus and spirulina, and Pukka herbal teas. The juices are to be sipped slowly and taken with the supplements as instructed, to preserve natural enzymes in the body and to boost the immune

system. You can drink water and herbal, caffeine-free teas and if you do feel hungry you are permitted to eat one 'SOS food' per day – a banana, an avocado or a handful of grapes or cherries. Intense exercise isn't recommended, but moderate activity, like yoga, swimming and jogging is encouraged to expel toxins and the release of endorphins and oxytocin, which also acts as an appetite suppressant.

DAY

1

The weekend's casual drinking was fun but it's now etched across my face – dehydrated skin, puffy eyes and angry spots; this certainly feels like the ideal day to start this cleanse. Juice Revolution's info pack is bright, cheerful and idiot-proof, thanks to its timetable that details the name, number and drinking time of each juice and its specific supplements. Juice one, with its refreshing lime, apple, pineapple, cucumber and avocado blend, is delicious – so far so good. At work I follow the daily tips and attempt to 'chew' each mouthful of juice two, hoping my colleagues don't notice my cheeks bulging like a chipmunk's with each gulp. Later, I nosedive into an afternoon slump, bombarded by a constant headache. The tips explain that I'm not 'detoxing' (which the body does naturally all the time), but 'withdrawing', mainly from sugar and caffeine. Although the smell of my partner's roast chicken is torturous, I sip my Hot 'n Spicy tea – a warm apple and cinnamon 'soup' – curled up on the sofa, content that I made it through the first day.

2

I peel myself out of bed early, into my trainers and off for a run. Surprisingly, I have the energy to jog for 30 minutes and feel motivated afterwards. This morning's exercise and juices have really increased my natural energy levels and concentration. It's both strange and convenient not to have to organise meals during the day. However, by the afternoon I plunge into irritability and, despite drinking water, juice and tea all day, struggle with another headache. Thankfully, as soon as I begin to feel hungry, it's time for the next juice – each ensuring my blood-sugar levels don't crash. While queueing in the supermarket, I am aware that the checkout temptation aisle is attempting to erode my willpower, but I stay strong. I haven't actually been *physically* hungry for two days – it's my 'mind hunger', as the daily tips inform me. They also explain that I'm feeling lethargic not because I am on the juices, but because I ate the junk. Fiona's words remind me to stop moaning, get on with it, drink the Hot 'n Spicy tea, sleep and let my body repair. Yes, Ma'am!

3

I haul myself out of bed for another 30-minute run during which I feel the endorphins and bask in the morning sunshine. Getting ready for work, I notice my skin is glowing for the first time in weeks and the recent flare-up is significantly fading. Encouraged, I start the day with a more positive mindset and forget my usual desire for a morning caffeine fix. Today, a new banana, pineapple, lime and yoghurt juice is introduced and the thickness of its texture is a welcome change. During the day, I feel calmer and less reactive in stressful situations and by the afternoon my energy slump and headaches aren't as severe. Relinquishing all social obligations due to 'the cleanse', I enjoy another quiet evening in. While sipping my evening juices, I read over my day three tips for inspiration, one of which focuses on developing an 'attitude of gratitude' when considering that we live in 'a world of abundance with an attitude of lack'. I must put my 'stress' into perspective, as Fiona so neatly puts it, and remember that I am 'too blessed to be stressed'.

JUICE REVOLUTION SUPPLEMENT BENEFITS

Barley grass has a tremendous ability to absorb nutrients from the soil and contains all the amino acids, enzymes, vitamins and minerals necessary for the human diet, plus chlorophyll, a natural detoxifier that rids the intestines of stored toxins.

Spirulina is an algae that has naturally grown for thousands of years and has one of the most concentrated amounts of nutrients, phytonutrients, antioxidants and protein of any plant.

Lactobacillus Acidophilus is a beneficial bacterium that aids the gut in digesting food. It also assists the body in rejecting other bacteria, organisms and parasites, boosts the immune system, and aids with intestinal ailments.

DAY

4

I bounce out of bed and actually *want* to go for my morning run. Arriving at work, I don't even think about breakfast and focus on my work with surprising clarity. Today's juices are greener, introducing ingredients like parsley and kale. By 5pm I'm flagging, so I consult my day four tips, which tell me not to put every little thing – like feeling tired or getting a headache – down to the 'detox'. 'How many times have you felt tired in the afternoon?' Fiona asks, so I try not to overanalyse the process. By evening, I stumble at the crucial mid-week hurdle and join friends at a tapas restaurant. The smell of their grilled cheese and meat dishes torments me and for the first time this week I want to throw in the towel. But I don't. I just tell myself to try avoiding these tempting situations.

Within minutes of waking, my stomach is growling and I'm too tired to run, but, to my utter delight, my acne is disappearing with no further signs of the sore, recurring pimples I've come to expect. My skin doesn't even require foundation, so I use a BB cream. Yet, despite the post-cleansing euphoria, I begin what is undoubtedly the hardest day of this cleanse. Physically, my dissatisfied stomach grumbles all day, despite drinking the juices on time. Mentally, I'm so irritable I want to throw my juice bottle at someone and end up lying down on the office sofa, trying my hardest not to whinge, yawn or eat. Later, at a dinner party, I have to SMS Fiona for support, announcing to friends that after five cheat-free days I've proven my point and that tomorrow I am eating again.

Thank god it's the weekend. I am now over the worst and feeling incredibly fresh for a Saturday morning (while my partner deals with a rather brutal hangover). Today's morning juices contain both banana and yoghurt, a more substantial and satisfying texture than yesterday's watery green blends. My energy levels are back to normal, even after a two-hour browse round the shop and, unlike yesterday's near-meltdown, I feel mentally stronger, haven't felt hungry and (thankfully) have been in a great mood – my 'juice high day' as the daily tips describe it. With brighter, blemish-free skin, I manage to leave the house wearing only tinted moisturiser and a coat of mascara – a rare occurrence thanks to my increased confidence – and my partner notices my fresher look.

I'm so thrilled by the clarity and smoothness of my skin, I gawp at both my cheeks, struggling to recall the last time I washed my face without feeling at least one sore pimple. Despite the wind outside, I lace up my trainers and set off on a run to get some fresh air. My body feels light and energised and I feel upbeat and happy all day. Having eliminated artificial stimulants and processed foods from my diet for a week it is amazing how much I appreciate the flavours in each nutrient-rich sip. As the cleanse comes to an end, I am proud of myself for demonstrating impressive willpower despite some challenging moments. I feel a sense of achievement from having made it through the full programme and begin envisaging the foods I'm going to enjoy as I enter a new week.

POST-CLEANSE

The day after completing the cleanse I meet with Fiona for my second body-analysis consultation. The scale informs us that I have lost over a kilogram of fat and muscle, which is usual for someone of my weight and fitness – many of her clients who are overweight and specifically looking for weight-loss results have lost up to four kilograms on this programme. We discuss how best to ease back into eating and Fiona suggests consuming light foods such as fruit, steamed vegetables, salads, soups, rice, tofu and yoghurt for the first few days to increase the metabolism slowly to meet the new demand. She explains that I have been consuming nothing but 'raw' food and so, although my body is probably purer than it's been in years, it will be sensitive to processed food and large portions. Remarkably, all I want to eat in the week that follows is salads, chicken, fruit and vegetables. I replace coffees with juices to give me a boost in the morning and, although I indulge in the odd glass of wine after work, to my surprise, its acidity means I don't want more than a glass.

THE VERDICT

Cleanses can be antisocial, so stick to eateries that serve juices and herbal teas so your willpower isn't continually tested. I was particularly impressed by the acne-clearing effect the juices had on my skin. Fiona's daily e-mails and tips are informative and encouraging and I found the programme wonderfully convenient; I simply had to defrost the juices overnight and drink them on time. This frees up hours to do activities you may not always have time for. While I didn't exercise every day, I did manage four runs with sufficient energy. For those looking to lose weight, this is a great way to slim down all over, especially round the stomach and thighs – wave goodbye to your muffin top! In addition to revived skin, I finished the cleanse feeling more toned and lighter, both physically and mentally – it is a fantastic feeling knowing you have purged your organs of toxins and replenished them with nutrients. Fast-forward a few weeks and I'm much more aware of what I'm putting in my body and how it makes me feel. Juice Revolution has re-educated me to feed my skin with plant-based nutrients, which I continue to do as much as possible, but I still believe in enjoying everything in moderation. If I want that glass of wine or slice of pizza, I'm going to have it, but I'm more protective of my skin and conscious of my choices. Since this is my body, I figure it's worth investing in. **mc**



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