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Are Juice Cleanses Actually Good for You? Experts Weigh in



Let's face it – juice cleanses sound promising. You load up on green juice for a few days, and it's supposed to rid your body of toxins and maybe even help you shed a few pounds.

Although juice cleanses have become increasingly popular over the years, it's not exactly the magic health fix that marketing ploys make it out to be. "The issue with juice cleanses is that its purported benefits are scientifically unreliable," says **Dr. Niket**

Sonpal, an internist and gastroenterologist. “[There’s] very little research available to validate the anecdotal evidence.”

While many people turn to juice cleanses after an indulgent weekend or vacation, turns out, your body actually doesn’t need any help to detox. “In fact, [your body] has a wonderful detoxification system present in the form of lungs, kidneys, a digestive system, skin, and your liver, which doesn’t need any cleansing or detoxing,” says Monica Auslander Moreno, founder of Essence Nutrition and nutrition consultant for RSP Nutrition.

If your main reason for trying a juice cleanse is the weight loss benefit, Megan Casper, a registered dietitian nutritionist says, “Although this can lead to a temporary weight loss of a few pounds, reducing lean muscle tissues lowers metabolism and the weight tends to come back once you return to a normal diet.” Additionally, “Juice cleanses don’t offer any fiber, fat, or protein,” says registered dietitian Carrie Walder. “Juices are essentially just sugar and vitamins. Your body can’t function properly with this little nutrition.” Because of this, it’s common to feel lethargic, hungry, confused, or lightheaded when you’re on a cleanse.

All that being said, there’s no harm in adding juice into a well-rounded diet. “A primarily vegetable-based green juice does provide antioxidants and micronutrients, but it should be had in addition to a balanced diet to ensure that your body is getting all the nutrients that it needs,” says Walder.

If you do feel like “resetting,” there are a number of options for going about it. Juice lovers can switch to blending fruits and vegetables instead. “Blending gives all the antioxidants, minerals, and vitamins of fruit juice. Plus, it contains fiber to reduce blood sugar spikes,” says Casper. You can also support the natural detoxification functions of your liver and kidney through a healthy, balanced diet full of whole foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, and proteins. “These foods will provide your organs with the nutrients it needs to function optimally,” says Walder.

There’s nothing wrong with adding some juice to your diet – just make sure it’s not the only thing you’re consuming!

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