



TIME RUNNING OUT TO ENTER



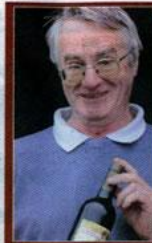
taste
Eat right and you'll feel right

The best medicine is the food in your kitchen

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Friday, January 15, 2010

Eat right and you'll feel right

STAY on track with healthy eating resolutions and enjoy hearty soups and zingy smoothies. **KATHARINE CAPOCCI** chats to nutritionist **Rumana Zahn**.

BY MID-January it's fair to say most new year resolutions for overhauling diets are falling by the wayside.

Many of us are still Hoovering up choccies and biscuits left over from the festivities when, in reality, our bodies are crying out for hearty soups, cleansing juices and nutritious smoothies.

And there's probably never been a better time to give the over-worked liver a break too.

Nutritionist and naturopath **Rumana Zahn** says detox days, or 'light days' as she calls them, can work wonders - helping you re-energise and feel a lot brighter.

Rumana is a naturopath and medical herbalist who runs clinics in health centres in Newcastle and Yarm. She is a leader within the field of natural medicine and writes and speaks extensively on the subject.

"The best medicine is the food in your kitchen," says Rumana, who lives in Newcastle.

"Call them light days, detox, diet or rest days, they function to give you balance from having eaten too much.

"You may naturally want to do this after the winter feast and aim to support your body with light, nutrient-rich foods. Soups and juices are great on the digestion.

"You may also want to consider eating foods that are in season, such as root vegetables, not just because they're available, but because nature provides us with the nutrition in these foods."

Rumana adds: "The end of the year and the beginning of the next is a natural punctuation mark in our lives, a time to reflect on what's passed and what we want to create for ourselves in the coming year.

"The new year is a good time to detoxify and cleanse and re-balance the body after the excesses of

Christmas.

"The food you eat affects you in so many ways - the choices you make can raise or lower your energy, give you digestive problems or keep you healthy for days to come.

"I call it conscious eating and being aware of foods that create health and those that don't, and eating accordingly. The fresher the food and higher the quality, all the better."

Rumana says the body's delicate balance can be toppled over Christmas by eating too many sweets and chocolates and drinking too much alcohol. This gives rise to uncomfortable symptoms such as bloatedness, wind, indigestion, thrush, weight gain and more.

The good thing is though you can change the balance again.

"This doesn't mean going on a boring diet and eating bland, tasteless foods" says Rumana. "As a nutritionist and someone who really enjoys eating, food has to delight the palate."

Rumana says the benefits of having 'light days' include a clearer mind and sharper concentration.

"Light days are great to add any time in your week. It's a break from heavy foods and makes an excellent rest or detox day. Try, for example, a refreshing smoothie for breakfast, a light, warm vegetable salad for lunch and a light noodle broth for dinner."

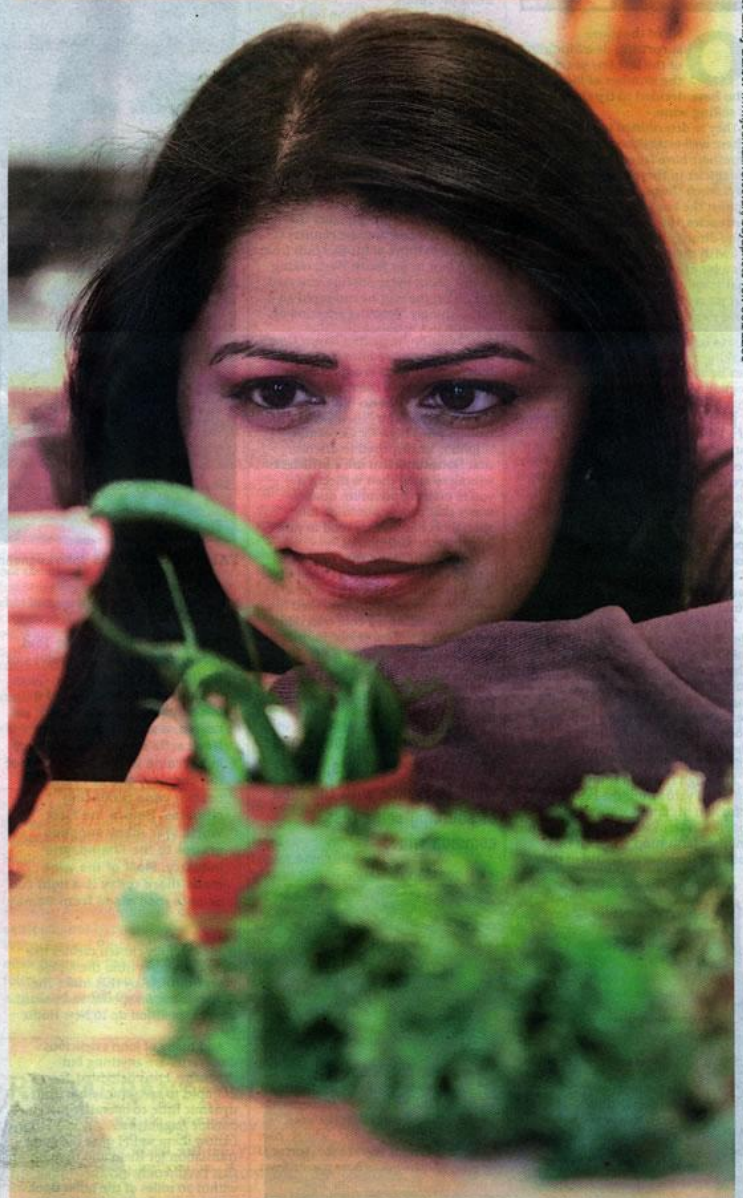
Rumana does add that if you have a particular health condition then make sure you consult a doctor or a health practitioner before embarking on any cleansing programmes and do not attempt them if you are pregnant or breast feeding.

Rumana is running a number of workshops and retreats during 2010. For more information visit www.rumanahealth.com

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FOOD MATTERS

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HEALTHY EATING Nutritionist and naturopath Rumana Zahn.

Perfect time for a detox

FOOD MATTERS

From RUMANA'S TOP TIPS: <<21 How long to cleanse

Set yourself a time period - one day, a weekend, seven or 28 days - and stick to it. If you find your body is reacting quite strongly to cleansing, you will be better suited to doing small regular cleanses, such as one day a week or one weekend per month.

Keep it simple

Making adjustments to your diet and nutrition is the first step. Increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables that are in season will give you the nutrition and balance your body needs at this time of year. Your organic farmers' market will be full of wholesome, locally-grown produce at reasonable prices.

Getting an extra boost of vitamins and minerals doesn't always have to come from a vitamin and mineral tablet. Juicing is an excellent way of getting more food-based nutrition and it's definitely worth investing in a juicer if you haven't got one. There's just no comparison between fresh juice, free of additives, and commercially-bought varieties.

Use herbs

Another easy way to increase your natural source of vitamins and minerals is to use herbs in your cooking. Not only will you get nutritional benefits, but there are also therapeutic advantages to be gained from using herbs regularly. Rosemary, for instance, is great for the nervous system and parsley is excellent for supporting the kidneys.

Eliminate stimulants

For your cleansing days you will need a rest from wheat and dairy products, which aggravate a lot of people, causing mucus in the body. You will notice it as catarrh or continually having to clear your throat.

You will also need to cut out all red meats - pork, beef and lamb. The cleanse will still work if you eat white meats such as chicken and fish

once or twice a week, but if you want a deeper cleanse then cut out the meats completely.

No detox is complete without eliminating stimulants such as tea, coffee, alcohol and sugar. Do this gradually over a few days before starting the cleanse as you can get detoxification symptoms such as headaches, emotional releases like anger or general fatigue by coming off these suddenly. Drink plenty of water, at least eight glasses per day, and herbal teas to help flush the toxins away.

Vital organs

If you want to go a step further and deeply cleanse the body, consider cleansing your vital organs - the colon, liver and kidneys. These eliminative organs work continuously for us without a single break and often come under pressure through eating processed foods and living stressful lifestyles. Just think of these as filters which become clogged and needing regular de-gunking! There are some products on the market that help you do this and if you decide to buy a kit ensure that it is of high quality so you will need to shop around. I find herbal companies such as Specialist Herbal Supplies and Herbs Hands Healing produce some very good kits.

Once you've completed the cleanse, pat yourself on the back and start planning for the next. It may all sound like hard work initially, but when you see the weight loss, your skin glow, feel more energy and

FRESH OR DRIED?

YOU'LL get most of the ingredients from a supermarket but for extra special taste look for them fresh from an Asian supermarket. I think using fresh ingredients makes a big difference to the flavour of a dish and I will always go the extra mile to get them.

Tip: If you don't use up all of the fresh herbs in one go a great trick is to freeze them. Ingredients such as lemon grass, galangal and lime leaves can all be frozen and you can use as much as you need when you need to.



DETOXIFY The new year is always a good time to detoxify and cleanse and re-balance the body.

general improvements in health you'll believe it was really worth it.

Coconut Berry Smoothie

- 5 blackberries
- 5 raspberries
- 10 blueberries
- 1 tablespoon coconut yoghurt
- 2 freshly squeezed oranges

Blend together for a minute or so until you have smooth mixture. Pour into a glass and enjoy.

Tip: If you're too rushed, make the smoothie and pour into a bottle to take with you to work or have later.

If you buy fresh berries you can freeze them if you don't use them all straight away. I find this particularly useful with blueberries.

Warm Mint Vegetable Salad

- Green beans
- 2-5 florets of broccoli
- ¼ cup of peas
- Handful of spinach
- 1 carrot
- 1 parsnip
- Any other vegetables of your choice.
- Dressing
- 1 squeezed lemon or lime
- Few leaves of fresh mint, chopped

Chop the vegetables into small chunks. Steam the parsnip, carrot,

broccoli and green beans for five minutes. Then steam the spinach and peas for about two minutes. All the vegetables should be crunchy and colourful. Squeeze a lemon or lime over the vegetables and add the chopped fresh mint. Serve warm.

Thai Noodle Soup

This is one of my favourite recipes as it's a wonderful winter warmer but I also use it to help 'clear up' from excess eating, assist poor digestion or to move a cold or flu. It's a meal in a bowl and one of my favourite healing food recipes. It is highly adaptable for all types of diets - meat eaters, vegetarians or non-wheat eaters.

Serves 2

- Stock
- 5 mugs of water
- 2 slices dried or fresh galangal
- 2 tablespoons dried or 1 stick fresh lemon grass
- 4 dried or fresh lime leaves
- Base
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 tablespoon tamari
- 1 tablespoon Thai fish sauce
- 3 cloves chopped garlic
- 1cm piece chopped ginger
- 4 squashed small red chillies
- Vegetables - you can use a selection of vegetables. Here is a mixture:
- Broccoli

- Mushrooms
- Spring onions
- Sliced carrots
- A little red cabbage or chopped Chinese leaf
- Chinese noodles (rice/wheat/buckwheat)
- Optional - chicken or prawns
- 1 cup chopped fresh coriander

Use a deep pan and make the stock. Place the water in the pan and add in the stock ingredients simmering for 10 minutes.

You can use a muslin or sieve to hold the dried herbs so that they can be removed after simmering.

Cook the rice/wheat/buckwheat noodles in boiling water. Check timing so that they coincide with the vegetables cooking.

Add the base ingredients and vegetables into the stock and simmer for about five minutes. Just before serving add in the coriander.

Serve the noodles in a deep noodle bowl. Then add the vegetables and liquid on top of the noodles.

OPTIONAL: If using chicken then add the chicken and base ingredients to the stock and simmer for 15 minutes or until cooked. Then add in the vegetables and simmer for a further five minutes. If using prawns cook as above, adding in prawns two minutes before serving.

HERBS AND SPICES - WHAT THEY DO

● LEMON grass - commonly used in Oriental dishes. It has a zesty, lemony flavour but it is not bitter. It has a bulbous stem and grass-like leaves at the top (similar to the shape of a spring onion).

It promotes good digestion so is helpful when the system is sensitive and needs a bit of extra help.

● Ginger - is a wonderful winter warmer. The fresh fibrous, nodular root can be found in most supermarkets. It helps digestion, stomach upsets, nausea, indigestion and is now being researched for its wonderful anti-inflammatory actions.

● Galangal - sometimes called blue ginger, it looks similar to ginger but is a bit paler and tastes

different. It has an earthy taste. It is used as a tonic and in some parts of south east Asia it is believed to be an aphrodisiac due to its stimulant properties. Galangal is from the same plant family as ginger and therefore has very similar healing properties assisting digestion, particularly in traditional medicine to aid the stomach problems and reduce

excessive gas.

● Chill - having been brought up on spicy food, chilli is one of the most stimulating foods I know.

Have you ever seen someone's face go red after eating a chilli? Chilli is actually the fruit of a plant.

The hottest part is near the stem, which is where most of the chilli's active ingredient, capsaicin, is produced.

Chillies have many therapeutic benefits but some of the most common are its circulatory stimulant properties,

cardiovascular support, symptomatic relief from rhinitis (therefore excellent with colds and flu), it is a safe and effective analgesic in some types of pain and may even help in diabetes.

