



Dear detox diary...

W10 health gurus, Raw Fairies, specialise in raw-food detox plans; **Lydia Williams** signs up

As a self-confessed yo-yo dieter, I have regularly detoxed as a way of trying to redress the balance of my rather erratic culinary habits. Never before however, have I detoxed for 12-day or on a specific, raw-food only diet. Post-shingles and with three sets of antibiotics under my belt already this year, I thought it was about time for a drastic overhaul.

6 EVEN THE EPSOM SALTS WERE LOOKING APPETISING

I enlisted the help of Raw Fairies, the UK's first raw-food delivery company. Its botanical body cleanse – 12 days of raw goodness, packed with superfoods like acai berries, bee pollen, aloe vera and blue-green algae, plus an extensive supplement and dry-brushing programme – focuses on your colon, liver and lymphatic system, giving them all a thorough MOT.

DAY 1

Bright and early on D-day I wake up and have a spoonful of fruit and fibre to my lips before I remember my new vows. My daily delivery arrives with my welcome pack, a selection of herbal teas, organic skincare goodies and Epsom salts – all accessories in the detox process. The daily menu talks you through when to eat (or sip) what. I breathe a sigh of relief that the bulging carrier bag looks like it should sustain me throughout the day.

DAY 2

I'm waiting at the door, ready to pounce on the delivery guy; the day's menu includes three smoothies, two salads and a sun burger with tomato and red-pepper relish. I actually don't know how I'm going to fit it all in. I wait for the horrible side-effects and pangs of hunger, but none kick in. I just feel holier than thou.

DAYS 3 & 4

Just as I get complacent (and full), things are taken up a notch on the detox front – two salads and three juices is the daily quota. In a weak moment (literally) I "bulk" up my dinner with an extra carrot. The guilt is too much and I immediately put in an extra 10 minutes' dry-brushing before bed. As I do, my eyes fall on a box of Epsom salts – even they look appetising.

DAY 5

Hummingbird Bakery deliver some fresh cupcakes to the office; the smell is intoxicating and almost draws me in, but I decide not to put any sugar into my new, "clean" body.

DAYS 6 & 7

I reach the pinnacle of the detox marathon, with strictly five juices a day. Yet soon, I reached a euphoric state: when friends had asked earlier, "What do you miss?" My old self rattled off fries, pizza, white bread, pasta, cheese; my new self just shrugs, thinks about her calorie-laden, old lifestyle and says, "Nothing."

DAY 8

My jeans fall down this morning.

DAYS 9, 10 & 11

Solid foods are gradually re-introduced, and the boyfriend accuses me of "wasting money" on a facial, as I'm glowing. I smugly tell him it's the magic effects of my detox. It is almost a novelty to chew again, after my juice-only regime.

DAY 12

I've made it! And it wasn't the gruelling, depriving, miserable experience I feared. I feel spring-cleaned and have a spring in my step. An obvious side effect is a rather dramatic weight loss, but the most rewarding result is a sense of clarity and vitality.

12-day Botanical Cleanse, £695, Unit 21, Grand Union Centre, West Row, W10 5AS 07879 246 501; www.rawfairies.com

YOUR DETOX DIRECTORY

Healthy Holiday

If you want complete escape and expert help, Detox International have retreats in Spain and Portugal, making the whole process far less painful. Seven-day visits include daily yoga, organic meals, colon cleanses, high-tech supplements and stunning surroundings.

From £1,000 for a seven-day retreat, excluding flights; 08451 000 247; www.detox-international.com



Body MOT

The sci-fi sounding Quantum QXCI Machine at The Organic Pharmacy scans the body, taking a quick look at the bigger picture (organs), but also, uniquely, looking at allergens, viruses, toxins, vitamin and mineral deficiencies and hormones; in fact, over 3,500 different items are measured. A very comprehensive once over.



For the month of October, Grove readers can have a health assessment for £100 (RRP: £150). 169 Kensington High Street, W8 6SH; 020 7376 9200; www.theorganicpharmacy.com

DIY Detox

From the queens of detox Amanda Hamilton and Sandy Newbigging, *Life Detox* is still the bible for any home-detoxer.

The seven-day plan is easy to follow with accessible recipes that you can incorporate into family life – a great starting point for any first-timer.

Published by Piatkus, £8.39, *Life Detox: Clear Physical and Emotional Toxins from Your Body and Your Life* is available at all good bookstores

