

Client: Patrick Holford
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Detox your way to a whole new you!

Most of us will have over-indulged during the festive period, but Patrick Holford's simple 9-day liver detox can help you shape up and recharge your liver function after the booziest few weeks of the year

Your liver should be given the chance to restore itself to full functioning health at least once a year," advises nutritionist and author Patrick Holford. "And the best way to do that is through detoxing, which can rejuvenate energy levels, increase immunity, boost alertness, reduce bloating, eliminate dark under-eye bags, aid weight loss and clear the skin – what more could you want?" In fact, the liver is an amazing, multi-tasking organ, so it's vital to keep it healthy.

What the liver does

- Almost 80 per cent of the liver's function focuses on detoxifying potentially harmful substances, including oxidants.
- The liver also eliminates excess hormones; poor function can result in acne and PMS.
- Blood sugar levels are balanced by the liver and if this function fails the result is chronic fatigue, sugar cravings, weight gain and ultimately diabetes.
- Bile is produced by the liver and without it cholesterol levels rise, causing digestive disorders and stomach bloating, IBS, nausea, food allergies and poor vitamin absorption (particularly A, D, K and E).

The need to detox

Even without festive overload, your body naturally produces large quantities of

toxins simply by processing the food we need for energy. For example, when you eat protein, the body breaks it down and some of it converts into ammonia. If the liver is overworked an ammonia pool is released into the blood, which can ultimately cause damage to your brain, nervous system, kidneys and liver. Another toxin that is released from your cells when the liver is overloaded is lactic acid. This causes chronic fatigue and aching muscles. A large build-up can lead to anxiety, headaches, high blood pressure or even panic attacks.

These are all good reasons to look after your liver. "But as well as producing toxins naturally on a daily basis," says Patrick. "your body also has to deal with additional environmental toxins that we constantly inhale and consume, which adversely affect the function of the liver and digestive tract."

Key toxins

The single greatest toxin the body has to eliminate every second of every day is the product of oxidation, or oxidants. These are produced as a result of energy creation within cells, as fat and glucose are burned.

Other sources of toxins include caffeine and alcohol, salt, processed foods, drugs and medicines – especially painkillers – and environmental pollutants, such as cigarette

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smoke, pesticides and chemicals.

Patrick explains: "Ultimately, we need to detox once a year, or whenever we're feeling sluggish, our skin is breaking out, or when we notice that we're less able to tolerate the effects of alcohol. These are all signs that the liver is no longer working at its best. And this is typically felt after the excesses of the Christmas period."

"My 9-day detox involves replacing bad habits with good ones. This includes giving up food and drink that hinder the liver's ability to detox, such as wheat, milk, caffeine, alcohol and bad fats. When the liver cannot process the flood of toxins in the body, these excess toxins are stored in fat cells, to be dealt with later. This means you put on weight, not only because of unhealthy eating habits, but also because the body is making room for all these unprocessed toxins," says Patrick.

But the good news is that in just nine days this detox should improve your sense of wellbeing and could kick-start a long-term healthier lifestyle. So let's get to it! ▷

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FIVE FOODS TO AVOID

1 Wheat contains a gluten, which can cause constipation, bloating, fatigue and anaemia, as well as coeliac disease.

2 Milk has a protein that can cause an allergic reaction. If you are sensitive to milk protein, your immune system will treat it as a toxic invader and the liver will be tied up detoxifying it – rather than other toxins. Try soya milk instead.

3 Caffeine can sap energy. Cut out coffee for nine days for reduced weight gain, better hydration, lower stress levels and better sleep.

4 Alcohol is an intestinal irritant and has been shown to increase the risk of mouth, throat, intestinal and liver cancers. It also destroys nutrients, including B and C vitamins, magnesium and zinc.

5 Bad fats Trans-fats, found in deep fried foods and some foods containing hydrogenated vegetable oils, can interrupt the brain's thought processes by blocking the conversion of essential fats into vital brain fats, such as GLA and prostaglandins.

THE 9-DAY LIVER DETOX PLAN

< **Each day** 1 fresh juice or dairy-free smoothie, plus unlimited water and herbal teas.

DAY 1

Breakfast Superfood Muesli with Essential Seed Mix (see recipes overleaf).

Snack 2 plums and 6 almonds.

Lunch Salad with 200g chickpeas, 3 pieces of marinated artichoke hearts, ½tbsp sesame seeds, ½tbsp sesame oil, juice of ¼ lemon.

Snack Olives and a fruit smoothie or juice

Dinner 45g rice boiled with ½tsp Marigold Reduced Salt Vegetable Bouillon Powder, 200g canned green lentils, 60g chestnut mushrooms, ½ red onion, ¼ bulb fennel, squeeze lemon juice, parsley, black pepper. Large mixed salad.

DAY 2

Breakfast Combination of at least 4 sliced seasonal fruits with good squeeze lemon juice.

Snack Hummus with handful of carrot and celery crudité's.

Lunch 1 rainbow trout with roasted vegetables. Frozen yoghurt.

Snack Pomegranate or grapefruit.

Dinner Patrick's Primordial Soup (see recipe over page) and stir in a serving of Super Greens Mix (see recipe overleaf).

DAY 3

Breakfast Cinnamon Fruit Porridge, made with 40g oats, ½tsp ground cinnamon, chopped fruit.

Snack Sliced avocado with lemon juice.

Lunch Dip. Whizz ½tsp olive oil, ½ clove crushed garlic, ½ red onion, ¼ aubergine, ½tbsp tomato

purée, 200g borlotti beans, ½tsp Marigold Reduced Salt Vegetable Bouillon Powder. Serve with rocket on pumpnickel-style rye bread.

Snack Corn on the cob. Smoothie or juice.

Dinner Carrot and Lentil Soup (makes 2 portions). ½tbsp olive oil, 1 clove crushed garlic, ½ chopped onion, 1 large celery stick, 2 carrots, 100g red split lentils, 500ml vegetable stock. Simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in Super Greens Mix.

DAY 4

Breakfast Smoothie made with 1 small banana, 1 small punnet blueberries and orange juice.

Snack Hummus with a handful of crudité's.

Lunch Carrot and Lentil Soup (left over from yesterday).

Snack Apple and a handful of walnuts.

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Dinner 75g brown basmati rice with 1tbsp pumpkin seeds, 3tbsp olives, 1tbsp olive oil, 1 clove crushed garlic, handful each basil, rocket and baby spinach, juice ½ lemon, black pepper.

DAY 5

Breakfast Fruit and seed salad including Essential Seed Mix (see overleaf).

Snack Pear with a handful of pecan nuts

Lunch Sandwich with 1 salmon fillet, 1 large slice pumpernickel-style rye bread with salad and Super Greens Mix (see overleaf).

Snack Guacamole with crudités.

Dinner Leek, Cannellini and Potato Soup (makes 2 portions), 1tsp olive oil, 2 cloves crushed garlic, 2 large sliced leeks, 2 medium cubed potatoes, 600ml boiling water, 3tsp Marigold Reduced Salt Vegetable Bouillon Powder, 410g can cannellini beans, black pepper. Simmer for 15 minutes.

Dessert Small bowl rice pudding with spoonful of pure fruit spread, such as St Dalfour.

DAY 6

Breakfast Superfood Muesli with Essential Seed Mix (see overleaf).

Snack Toasted pumpkin and sunflower seeds, plus a piece of fruit if required.

Lunch Leek, Cannellini and Potato Soup (left over from yesterday). Stir in Super Greens Mix.

Snack Hummus with crudités.

Dinner Bean and artichoke salad with 1 clove crushed garlic, ½ chopped red onion, 1tbsp olive oil, 125g cherry tomatoes, 1tbsp tomato purée, 200g mixed pulses, 3 marinated artichoke hearts, 1tbsp black olives, handful basil leaves.

DAY 7

Breakfast Cinnamon Fruit Porridge with Essential Seed Mix (as recipe day 3).

Snack Seasonal fruit and a handful of cashews.

Lunch Chickpea and Sesame Seed Salad, as day 1.

Snack Olives, plus a piece of fruit.

Dinner Patrick's Primordial Soup. Stir in Super Greens Mix (see overleaf).

DAY 8

Breakfast Toast and nut butter.

Snack Apple and a handful of cashews.

Lunch Carrot and Lentil Soup or Leek, Cannellini and Potato Soup.

Snack Raw baby corn with hummus.

Dinner Roasted peppers stuffed with mushrooms and pine nuts. Large salad.

DAY 9

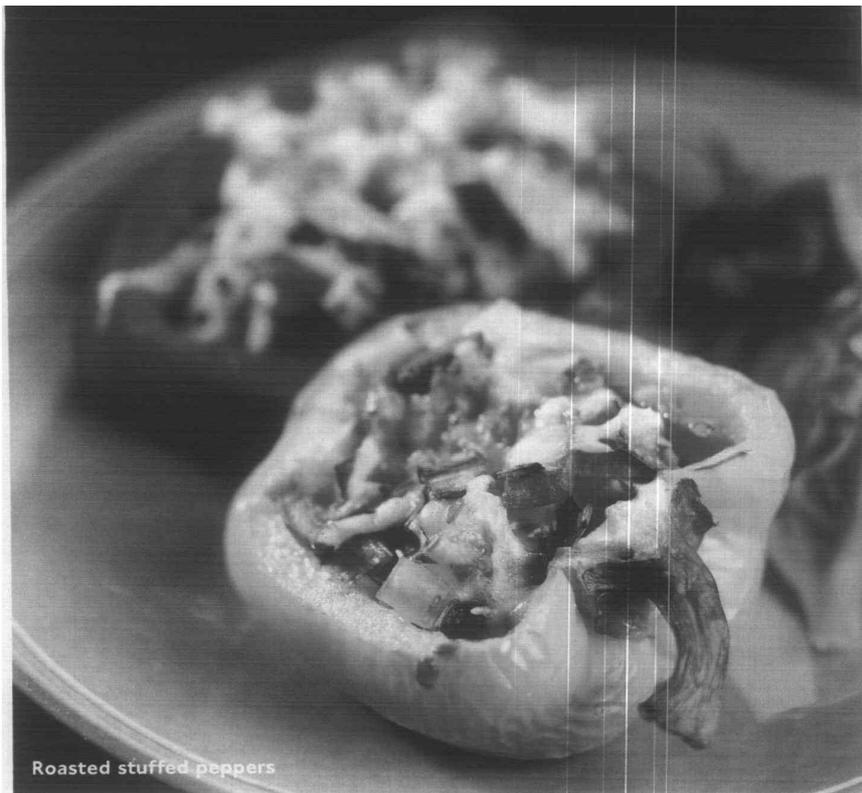
Breakfast Smoothie with Essential Seed Mix.

Snack Roasted pumpkin seeds.

Lunch 1 fillet of salmon with 75g boiled Puy lentils, 1tbsp tomato purée. Large green salad

Snack Olives, plus smoothie or juice.

Dinner 75g quinoa (a gluten-free grain) cooked in boiling water with 1tsp Marigold Reduced Salt Vegetable Bouillon Powder. Serve with a selection of roasted vegetables, including ½ sweet potato, ½ red onion, ½ red pepper, ½ courgette, 1 clove crushed garlic, 100g cherry tomatoes mixed with 1tbsp olive oil and 2tbsp pumpkin seeds and Super Greens Mix. ▷



Roasted stuffed peppers

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Recipes

PATRICK'S PRIMORDIAL SOUP

Serves 2-3

- 1tbsp coconut oil or olive oil
- ½ red onion, roughly chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1 large sweet potato, chopped
- 1 heaped tsp grated fresh root ginger
- ¼tsp turmeric
- 2tsp Marigold Reduced Salt Vegetable Bouillon Powder
- ½ red pepper, diced
- 75ml coconut milk

- 1** Heat the oil in a large pan and gently sauté the onion and garlic for a few minutes until softened.
- 2** Add the carrot, sweet potato, ginger, turmeric and bouillon powder. Just cover with boiling water and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for about 15 minutes or until the veg is soft.
- 3** Add the red pepper and coconut milk, then blend until smooth and thick

ESSENTIAL SEED MIX

- 1** Half-fill a glass jar that has a sealing lid, with flax seeds and half with a mixture of sesame, sunflower and pumpkin seeds.
- 2** Keep the jar sealed and store in the fridge to minimize damage from light, heat and oxygen.
- 3** Grind a handful of the seed mix in a coffee or seed grinder. Use 1 tablespoon in Superfood

Muesli. Store remainder in the fridge. Use over the next few days with salads and smoothies.

SUPERFOOD MUESLI

Serves 1

- 40g whole rolled porridge oats
- 1tbsp ground almonds or desiccated coconut
- 1tbsp Essential Seed Mix
- ½ small apple, grated
- 1tbsp berries, such as raspberries or blueberries, or dried fruit such as sultanas
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon, or to taste (optional)

- 1** Place all the ingredients in a bowl and cover with double the amount of boiling water.
- 2** Stir and leave to thicken for a couple of minutes until the oats have soaked up the water and become soft and plump.

SUPER GREENS MIX

Serves 1

- ¼ bag watercress, rinsed and dried
- ¼ bag baby leaf spinach, rinsed and dried
- A good handful of basil leaves
- A good handful of parsley leaves
- 1tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Squeeze of lemon juice, to taste

Whizz all the ingredients together in a mini blender or food processor. Or, finely chop the herbs and stir in the oil; the mixture should hold together in a similar way to pesto.



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Journalist and presenter Penny Haslam, 33, lives in London with her daughter Daisy, 2. She tried Patrick's 9-Day Detox.

"I've been drinking tea with milk since I was four years old and eliminating this from my diet nearly finished me off! I should have known that I was going to experience some withdrawal symptoms, but the headache that greeted me on the morning of day two was of monumental proportions. I was relieved that it had gone by the time I woke up on the third morning, but it returned with a vengeance on the sixth day. However, I'm not that surprised, considering how much caffeine I'd been forcing my liver to process.

I thought I was in pretty good shape before I embarked on the detox, and it wasn't until after it had finished that I realised just what a dreadful state my body had actually been in.

The detox has opened my eyes to new foods, such as soy and quinoa, that I would never normally have dreamt of trying. If I have one niggle, it's that I would have liked a wider range of main

evening meals. The only time I wobbled was at a family dinner on the seventh night when chicken stew and cheesecake were on the menu. It was impossible to say no, because my family would have thought I was being a misery.

Physically, the detox had a big effect: my skin became softer and my stomach lost its constant bloated feeling – in fact I lost two pounds. And I feel fantastic. I'm more alert and feel calmer – as though I could take on the world. This mental change was unexpected – and dramatic.

Overall it was a very worthwhile experience; it's amazing the difference nine days makes and I will certainly repeat it once, if not twice, a year.

• *The Holford 9-Day Liver Detox*, Patrick Holford and Fiona McDonald Joyce, (Piatkus, £10.99). □