

## 5 Cleansing Foods to Optimize Digestion, Boost Metabolism & Shed Weight

To achieve health, radiance, energy, balance, and permanent weight loss, it is helpful to understand some of the underlying causes of disease and obesity. Three main culprits include *toxins, inflammation and poor digestion*. The good news is that we *can* mitigate these causes by choosing to take an **active role** in feeling and looking better.

**What you eat** and **how you set up your environment** are KEY factors. Foods that can cause toxicity include sugar, refined carbohydrates, processed foods, and food additives. In addition, we are exposed to more environmental toxins in one day than our grandparents were in an entire lifetime! These can be found in plastics, makeup, moisturizers, nail polish, hair dyes, and shampoos; pesticides, herbicides, parasites in soil, food, and water, and can even include the toxins released by our bodies when under constant stress.

Nutrition is essentially the chemical components of our food that we feed ourselves, and the digestive system is the highway along which that nutrition travels. What this means is that diet is absolutely fundamental, and our bodies ability to transform our diet into energy (fuel) is absolutely critical.

### **Problems that can result from toxic overload, inflammation, and poor digestion:**

- Bad breath
- Bloating, gas, constipation and diarrhea
- Canker sores
- Difficulty concentrating
- Excess weight or difficulty losing weight
- Fatigue
- Fluid retention
- Food cravings
- Headaches
- Joint pain and muscle aches
- Puffy eyes and dark circles
- Postnasal drip, sinus congestion
- Sinus congestion
- Skin rashes and acne
- Sleep problems



## Top 5 Cleansing Foods . . . Here we go!

A clean diet free of processed foods, pesticides, sugar, refined carbs, and damaged fats can go a long way towards **reducing your toxic load, improving your digestion, and boosting metabolism** (this helps shed weight of course too)! Ready to refresh your body and nourish it the way it deserves? Join us for our upcoming [Refresh Spring Cleanse](#).

Here are five of our cleansing favorites that you can start using today.

**1. LEMONS** - Stimulates stomach acid, packed with vitamin c, alkalizes body  
Though people think of lemons as acidic, inside your body they are an incredibly alkaline food that can help balance your body's pH. This means better health and higher energy levels. Lemon juice has also been shown to improve your digestion (by stimulating stomach acid secretion), acts as a mild diuretic, and is *loaded* with healthy nutrients (*vit C, magnesium, bioflavonoids, pectin*) that helps boost immune function. Fresh lemon water, especially first thing in the morning, can help relieve or prevent digestive problems like bloating, intestinal gas and heartburn and stimulate better digestion in general.

- **Easy tip/recipe:** Every morning, squeeze half a lemon into 8oz of warm water. Drink this up to one hour before eating breakfast.

**2. GINGER** – Powerful anti-inflammatory, benefits digestion, eases nausea  
Ginger is used all over the world to treat indigestion, gas and bloating, nausea, diarrhea, and irritable bowel syndrome. Ginger stimulates digestion by speeding up the movement of food from the stomach into the upper small intestine.

- **Easy tip/recipe:** use in your morning smoothie!  
**REFRESHING GINGER SNAP SMOOTHIE** (*serves: 1*)  
1 cup water  
1 ripe pear (apple works well too)  
3 large leaves Romaine lettuce  
1 tsp fresh ginger, minced (if you have a high powered blender just throw the chunk in whole)  
1/4 avocado  
Blend until creamy.

### 3. FLAX AND CHIA SEEDS - Packed with fiber, healthy fats and protein

Fiber creates a feeling of fullness, promotes beneficial bacteria that encourages better elimination and can also improve cholesterol ratios. Healthy fats are vital for your brain, your hormones and helps support healthy blood sugar. Protein is vital to a healthy body. It helps with tissue repair, gives us energy and breaks down into enzymes that are vital for detoxification.

- **Easy tip/recipe:** add to smoothies, use in breakfast pudding

#### VANILLA CHIA PUDDING

*Serves: 2*

1 ½ cups unsweetened almond milk

1 small ripe banana

¼ cup chia seeds

¼ tsp cinnamon

½ tsp pure vanilla extract

In a large bowl, mash banana till a pulp. Mix in cinnamon and vanilla. Add almond milk, and chia seeds and whisk well. Transfer to refrigerator to set for at least 1 hour.

### 4. SAUERKRAUT – Digestive aid, packed with probiotics

Foods that are fermented, like sauerkraut and kimchi, are rich in beneficial bacteria that aid in digestion. Fermented foods aren't very much a part of the modern diet, but we ate a variety of them in our ancestral past. Some good commercial brands of fermented foods include Bubbies Sauerkraut Bubbies pickles and Sudja's Kimchee.

- **Easy tip/recipe:** drop a few Tbs of sauerkraut into the bottom of a piece of Romaine lettuce, and top with all natural turkey breast

Fermented foods are rich in "good" probiotic bacteria, helping to rebalance your overall gut bacteria ratio. Just know that pasteurized versions, like traditional yogurt don't have the same benefit, as pasteurization will destroy many of the naturally occurring probiotics.



5. CRUCIFEROUS VEGGIES – high fiber, source of glutamine, anti-cancer  
This nutrient-packed family of veggies includes cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, kale, Bok choy and cauliflower. In addition to loads of vitamins and fiber, they contain ample amounts of the amino acid glutamine, which is the preferential fuel source of the cells that line your GI tract. They also contain naturally occurring 3,3'-Diindolylmethane (DIM for short). DIM is strongly anti-estrogenic, so it helps block xenoestrogens (sometimes called obesogens), otherwise known as BAD estrogen that accumulates inside your body from constant exposure to environmental toxins.

- **Easy Tip/recipe:** use roasted and in soups, sautés, salads

### ROASTED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

1 lb. Brussels sprouts

1 onion

2-3 Tbs olive oil

Juice of ½ lemon

Sea salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 425. Cut off ends of sprouts and dice onion. Place Brussels sprouts, onions, olive oil, salt and pepper in bowl and mix to coat. Place sprouts and onions on baking sheet; roast for about 45 minutes, removing from oven at 15 minute intervals to toss and prevent burning. When done, sprinkle with lemon juice and serve.

### BONUS! 3 Easy Ways to Avoid Environmental Toxins

1. **STOP USING PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES** - use reusable bottles such as those made with glass, stainless steel or another ecofriendly option such as Sigg bottles.
2. **USE GLASS STORAGE FOR FOOD** in lieu of plastic storage containers.
3. **CHECK OUT THE DIRTY DOZEN.** This is a report that lists the 12 foods (plus) you should only eat organic due to their high pesticide residue.  
<http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/summary.php>

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