

How to Detox – Dr. Mark Hyman

Detox is big these days. Everybody's talking about it and trying it—juicing, fasting, cleansing, odd diets, colonics, and more. There are ancient healing systems that teach about detoxification, including Ayurveda. And each approach has its pros and cons.

But I think that America needs a very different kind of detox, a medical detox from sugar and flour, a super addictive combo that has hijacked our taste buds, our brain chemistry, and our metabolism. A scientifically designed medical detox program is the only way to regain health for millions of suffering and addicted Americans.

We are a nation of food addicts, not metaphorically but literally. Americans eat 146 pounds of sugar and 152 pounds of flour every year. That's almost a pound of sugar and flour for every man, woman, and child in America every single day! It has led to an epidemic of unprecedented obesity and disease.

Nearly 70% of adults and 40% of kids are overweight. One in two Americans has pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes. And 90 percent who have this condition—what I call diabetes—have no clue. Yet, this is the single biggest cause of heart disease, many cancers, dementia, and even depression, infertility, and acne. In fact, sugar and flour (which raises blood sugar more than table sugar) are the biggest causes of liver damage in America—fatty liver disease, which affects 90 million Americans, including little kids who need liver transplants by the time they are teenagers.

And our hyper-processed, hyper-palatable, hyper-addictive factory-made industrial diet not only makes us fat, it makes us sick in hundreds of ways. And most of us need a detox.

There are three easy ways to know if you need to detox.

The first is FLC Syndrome? That is when you Feel Like Crap. The second is if you have “diabetes” and the last is if you are a food addict.

Take these three quizzes to see if you need a detox.

Do You Have FLC Syndrome?

If you have any of these symptoms, you have FLC Syndrome:

- Fatigue
- Bloating and fluid retention
- Constipation, diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome, or reflux
- Congestion, allergies, asthma, sinus issues
- Brain fog
- Depression, anxiety, trouble focusing
- Headaches
- Insomnia
- Weight gain or trouble losing weight
- Bad skin—acne, eczema, psoriasis
- Joint or muscle pain or aching
- Canker sores
- Autoimmune diseases
- Any chronic disease

If you have any of these symptoms, a detox might help.

There are two other short quizzes that can help you know if it's time to detox. First, you may have diabetes—the spectrum of blood sugar imbalances that range from mild to full-blown type 2 diabetes.

Do I Have Diabetes?

If you answer 'yes' to any of these questions, you could be at risk. Answer 'yes' to many and you surely have a problem and would benefit from a sugar detox like the one I created in my new book, *The Blood Sugar Solution 10-Day Detox Diet*.

Do you have a family history of diabetes, heart disease, or obesity?	
Are you of nonwhite ancestry (African, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Indian, Middle Eastern)?	
Are you overweight (body mass index or BMI over 25)? Go to www.10daydetox.com/resources to calculate your BMI based on weight and height.	
Do you have extra belly fat? Is your waist circumference greater than 35 inches for women or greater than 40 inches for men?	
Do you crave sugar and refined carbohydrates?	

Do you have trouble losing weight on a low-fat diet?	
Has your doctor told you that your blood sugar is a little high (greater than 100 mg/dl) or have you actually been diagnosed with insulin resistance, pre-diabetes, or diabetes?	
Do you have high levels of triglycerides (over 100 mg/dl) or low HDL (good) cholesterol (<50 mg/dl)?	
Do you have heart disease?	
Do you have high blood pressure?	
Are you inactive (less than 30 minutes of exercise 4 times a week)?	
Do you suffer from infertility, low sex drive, or sexual dysfunction?	
For women: Have you had gestational diabetes or polycystic ovarian syndrome?	

Are You Addicted to Food (Sugar and Flour)?

My friend and colleague Kelly Brownell, Ph.D., formerly from [Yale’s Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity](#), has created a validated food questionnaire to help you determine if you are a food addict. Here are some clues that you may be addicted to sugar, flour, and processed food. The more intensely or more frequently you experience these feelings and behaviors, the more addicted you are:

1. You consume certain foods even if you are not hungry because of cravings.
2. You worry about cutting down on certain foods.
3. You feel sluggish or fatigued from overeating.
4. You have health or social problems (affecting school or work) because of food issues and yet keep eating the way you do despite negative consequences.
5. You have spent time dealing with negative feelings from overeating certain foods, instead of spending time in important activities, such as time with family, friends, work, or recreation.
6. You have had withdrawal symptoms, such as agitation and anxiety, when you cut down on certain foods (do not include caffeinated drinks like coffee, tea, and energy drinks in this).
7. Your behavior with respect to food and eating causes you significant distress.
8. Issues related to food and eating decrease your availability to function effectively (daily routine, job/school, social or family activities, health difficulties).

9. You need more and more of the foods you crave to experience any pleasure or to reduce negative emotions.

If any of these statements apply to you, don't worry—you're far from alone. Millions of people in every corner of the world have fallen into the food addiction trap. There is a way out!

How Detox Works

The most powerful, simplest, and most delicious detox is available to anyone, anywhere, anytime by eating real, whole, fresh food. The reason I wrote *The Blood Sugar Solution 10-Day Detox Diet* was to create a goof-proof, step-by-step plan to end food addiction, reverse diabetes, and heal FLC Syndrome all at once. The body has extraordinary healing and reparative systems. They just need to be activated by taking out the bad stuff and putting in the good stuff.

This detox works because it removes all Frankenfoods (food-like substances) and all addictive foods, chemicals, and drugs for just 10 days, so the body can reboot and reset. Think of it as turning your body back to its original factory settings. When people have FLC Syndrome or are addicted to processed foods, sugar, and flour, they need a medically designed detox program. This is no deprivation; it is about abundance and pleasure and recognizing that, by giving the body a break from junk, cravings, chronic symptoms, and blood sugar imbalances can be easily overcome for most.

What's "out" is sugar (in any form), gluten, and dairy (inflammatory foods), grains, beans, processed factory-made foods, refined vegetable oils, alcohol, and caffeine.

What's "in" is real, whole, fresh food, including food that boosts liver detox pathways, that reduces inflammation, balances blood sugar, improves gut function, and normalizes gut bacteria (bad bugs in the gut are increasingly linked to weight gain and inflammation). Also "in" are gentle exercise, hydration, journaling, detox supplements (a multivitamin, fish oil, vitamin D, and a special fiber called PGX), deep relaxation, adequate sleep (7-8 hours), and a balanced daily rhythm.

I led a group of 600 people through this detox. They lost over 4000 pounds in 10 days and lost an average of 2 inches from their waist and 1.4 inches from their hips. The average blood sugar dropped 18 points and blood pressure dropped 11 points. But more importantly, it fixed their FLC Syndrome!

In just 10 days, all symptoms from all diseases dropped by 62 percent. That included fatigue, migraines, irritable bowel, reflux, joint and muscle pain, rashes and hives, acne, depression, anxiety, binge eating and cravings, and more—in other words, any symptom of FLC Syndrome. There is no drug on the planet that can produce those results—except food!

Is Detox Safe and Who Should Do it?

This detox—a simple, whole food, anti-inflammatory, healing plan is good for everyone. Is it safe to eat fruit and vegetables, clean protein, nuts and seeds, and good fats? That's like asking if it's safe to drink water or breathe air or take a walk. It's not calorie, fat, protein, or carb restricted. It is simply eating whole, unprocessed, real food. If it has a label, don't eat it. If it was made in a factory, don't eat it. It should have a very short distance from the field to your fork. The reason it is so powerful is that it uses food as medicine. In fact, what you put at the end of your fork is more powerful than anything you will find in a prescription bottle. If you eat the right foods, the body knows what to do, and you can regain your health in a just a few days. You can end FLC Syndrome, food addiction, and sugar and carb craving and be on your way to reversing diabetes in just 10 days.

To download a sneak preview go to www.10daydetox.com, or pre-order the book on [Amazon](#) and follow me on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#).

And if you like this House Call, I encourage you to share it with your friends and family on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), sign up for the newsletter, and [submit your questions](#), so that, next week, I may make a House Call to you.

Wishing you health and happiness,

Mark Hyman, MD



About Mark Hyman, MD

MARK HYMAN, MD is dedicated to identifying and addressing **the root causes of chronic illness** through a groundbreaking whole-systems medicine approach called Functional Medicine. He is a family physician, **an eight-time New York Times bestselling author**, and an **international leader in his field**. Through his private practice, education efforts, writing, research, and advocacy, he empowers others to stop managing symptoms and start treating the underlying causes of illness, thereby tackling our chronic-disease epidemic. More about [Dr. Hyman](#) or on [Functional Medicine](#). Click [here](#) to view all Press and Media Releases [View all posts by Mark Hyman, MD](#) →