Conclusions

Detoxes are commonly recommended by naturopathic physicians, chiropractors, yoga teachers, and massage therapists. Additionally, detoxes have been popularized by the media. Although many people may be doing detoxes, there are no reported data on the effects or efficacy of detoxes. This multitier study collected preliminary data on a variety of common detoxes.

Two retrospective studies were conducted to collect participant experience of detoxes. The NCNM survey successfully reported symptoms experienced during and after detoxes. A shortcoming of this survey was that it didn't collect symptoms experienced before a detox. Many research studies seek out student populations for survey data not only for convenience but also for reliance of completion, familiarity with subject, and interest. For example, a study out of McGill University in Montreal, Canada, surveyed 172 undergraduate students to correlate perceived loss with depressive symptoms.[5] Just as many psychology researchers target students for study populations, we initially surveyed naturopathic students for their personal experience. While it is unusual to have such a high response rate for a survey of this nature, we attribute the high rate to several activities. After the survey was e-mailed to all students, tables were set up in the school hallway with computers. Researchers at the tables offered Master Cleanse lemonade, fruit, and vegetables to people who stopped to fill out the survey. In addition, announcements were made in all of the classes to encourage participation.

The retrospective phone survey was used primarily to collect data from a nonmedical student population. While this survey only involved 13 people, it was useful in our analysis of how the general public approaches detox. The results of the phone survey were comparable to those achieved with the NCNM survey. The NCNM and phone surveys required participants to remember one or more past detoxes. Because this data was self-reported, it is not as accurate as might be seen in a controlled trial.

➤

Table 4C: Symptom/Results: Phone Survey

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Weight Loss				X				X		X		X	
Increased Energy	X				X	X		X	X		X		X
Decreased Energy													X
Hunger		X					X						
Increased Food Awareness				X		X					X		X
Mental Clarity	X				X						X		
Skin Changes			X								X		

Table 4B: Participant Responses: Phone Survey

Reasons for doing detox	• Subject 3 "I wanted to clean up my liver a bit because of the anti-inflammatories I take for my injury and because I eat way too much sugar intermittently."
	• Subject 11 "I did the reset cleanse to even my blood sugar and get rid of toxins in my system."
	• Subject 12 "It felt like a good time to clear my body of toxins and I wanted to give my insides a good healing moment…"
	• Subject 13 "My goal was to have increased energy and less intense headaches."
Protocol	• Subject 1 "[I ate only] whole and healthy foods, no refined sugar or chemicals."
	• Subject 2 "I drank "smooth move" tea at night, salt water flush in the morning, and drank spicy lemonade drink [master cleanse] throughout the rest of the day and night."
	• Subject 8 "I did the master cleanse, 64 oz. a day, with no food."
	• Subject 10 "I made that cabbage soup mixture and ate nothing but that for seven days."
Weight Loss	• Subject 8 "I lost twelve pounds."
	• Subject 10 "I lost eleven pounds on cabbage soup diet, and thirteen pounds on the master cleanse diet."
	• Subject 11 "I lost seven to eight pounds in four days."
	• Subject 12 "I lost some weight, which was unexpected and not even a specific goal."
Energy	• Subject 1 "I had short-acting bouts of energy and clarity of thought, but now I feel like crap again."
	• Subject 9 "I feel so energetic. I feel great."
	• Subject 13 "Initially, when I came off of it, I felt like I had more energy, maybe from eating food again. I had low energy and felt detached from the world throughout the detox week."
Increased Food Awareness	• Subject 4 "I discovered a sensitivity to shellfish that I now rediscover over and over."
	• Subject 6 "I have an appreciation for food now."
	• Subject 13 "I really appreciate food and eating now."
Lasting Success/Results	• Subject 2 "I had no real success because I never really completed the detox."
	• Subject 5 "I had a couple of weeks of eating healthier and I haven't had caffeine since. I haven't suffered any caffeine headaches since the detox."
	• Subject 9 "If I continued to eat healthy, which is vegetables, fruit and lean meats, I keep the weight off, but once I add processed foods into my diet, my weight fluctuates quite a bit."
	• Subject 12 "I have kept my weight off more easily ever since and it has been eight months."