

Does a sugar detox work? I'm finding out.

Notes & Cues:

Article:

Early one Saturday, I headed to a "sugar detox" seminar at my gym.

I was there on doctor's orders. He had advised a sugar detox for me to lose visceral fat, which Mark Hyman, the medical director of the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Functional Medicine, said "affects a whole range of diseases from cancer to heart disease, diabetes and Alzheimer's."

As I started my detox, Hyman advised me to add "a lot of fat, because fat makes you feel full and speeds your metabolism, " which I didn't know. Then came a second revelation: "Fat actually helps you burn fat, " he explained, destroying many of the myths I'd grown up with.

For the first several days, frankly, my detoxing was hell. Making certain foods forbidden made me want them more. Ice cream. Pasta. Chocolate. Even wine, which contains a fair amount of sugar. My cravings were intense and seemed never-ending, and if I cheated I felt like a loser. I was irritable and moody.

But by day five the cravings had subsided. I started to lose weight. Before the detox I weighed 166 pounds. Twelve weeks later, I hit a new low adult weight: 155. My bloodwork looks much better. And as my belly fat has reduced, I do feel better and more energetic.

I'm now in my fourth month of a modified detox — I don't want to live without wine or some sweets. I know I can't avoid all added sugars, no matter how vigilant I may be.

The big question: How long will I stay on it? Stay tuned.

Summary: