

The most common reason people quit a cleanse isn't willpower. It's surprise. Around Day 3, they feel worse instead of better, decide the cleanse "isn't working," and stop right before the good part. So here's the whole arc up front: what you're likely to feel, when you'll feel it, and why. Read it before Day 1.

Days 1–2: The Adjustment

Day 1 is your prep day: juices, broths, and smoothies only. Expect to feel hungry, and expect that discomfort to be more habit than need. Most of us haven't felt true hunger in years. Notice it, and let the day be quiet.

If you drink coffee daily, a headache usually starts today or tomorrow. That's caffeine withdrawal, not the cleanse. It peaks around 24–48 hours after your last cup and fades within a few days. Water, an earlier bedtime, and an Epsom salt bath all help it pass faster.

Days 2–4: The Dip

This is the hardest stretch of the entire 21 days, and it's temporary. Your body is switching fuel sources, pulling stored sugar out of the liver, and starting to mobilize what it has been storing in your tissues. While that's happening, you may feel headachy, tired, foggy, irritable, and cold, and your cravings will be loudest right now. All of it is your body doing exactly what we asked it to do.

What helps: more water than you think you need, real portions at meals (this is not a calorie restriction program; eat), sea salt on your food, gentle movement instead of hard workouts, and sleep. If you feel rough, pick the Epsom salt bath as your modality tonight. In our experience, the people who plan an easy schedule for days 2–4 sail through. The ones who schedule back-to-back meetings and a dinner party do not.

Days 5–7: The Turn

Somewhere in here, it flips. The headache is gone, the fog lifts, and food starts tasting better because your taste buds are recalibrating without sugar drowning them out. Sleep often deepens this week, and some people notice vivid dreams. Cravings quiet down noticeably. You're through the hard part.

Week 2: The Payoff Starts

Steadier energy with no afternoon crash, a clearer head, calmer digestion, less bloating, and often looser waistbands. This is also when skin starts to look better, though a few people get one more round of breakouts first as elimination catches up.

Watch for the Week 2 slump: feeling flat or dragging even though the withdrawal is long over. Nine times out of ten it means you're undereating. Add a serving of the starchy carbohydrates from your shopping list (sweet potato, squash, lentils) to lunch or dinner and it usually resolves in a day or two. If it doesn't, check your water, then call us.

Week 3: Finish Strong

By now the routine runs itself and most people feel better than they have in years. The temptation is to celebrate early with a "small" exception. Don't. The challenge phase after Day 21 only works if your system is fully quiet, and one exposure can muddy three weeks of data. Use this week to repeat your Metabolic Health Assessment, schedule your Exit Consultation, and read the How to Challenge handout.

Normal (Common, and Temporary)

- Headaches in the first 2–4 days, especially if you drank coffee
- Fatigue, brain fog, and irritability during the dip
- Strong cravings that peak early and fade by the end of Week 1
- Feeling colder than usual
- Coated tongue or different breath
- Mild breakouts as elimination ramps up
- A change in bowel habits for a few days, either direction
- Vivid dreams and deeper sleep
- Mild muscle achiness

Call Us First (843.737.5206)

- Dizziness that doesn't resolve with salt, broth, and water
- Heart palpitations, fainting, or near-fainting
- Vomiting or any inability to keep fluids down
- Severe or worsening headache past Day 5
- No bowel movement for more than 3 days
- Any symptom that scares you. That's what we're here for.

One caveat that matters: if you take blood pressure or blood sugar medication, your readings can drop during the cleanse as your body responds. That's a good sign, but your dose may need adjusting. Check your numbers at home and call us with any significant change. Don't adjust medications on your own.

The Fix-It List

- A headache in the first few days is almost always caffeine or sugar leaving. Water, sea salt on your food, and an earlier bedtime beat it faster than toughing it out.
- Hunger between meals means your portions are too small. Eat more vegetables, more of the starchy carbohydrates on your list, and don't skip the smoothie. This program removes reactive foods, not food.
- Lightheaded when you stand? You need salt and fluid. A cup of broth with a pinch of sea salt usually fixes it within the hour.
- Constipation responds to more water, more greens, movement after meals, and an Epsom salt bath in the evening. If three days pass without a bowel movement, call us.
- Cravings are loudest when you're tired or underfed. Eat a real meal, take a walk, and give it 20 minutes. Most cravings die of neglect.
- Trouble sleeping in the first week usually tracks with the adjustment. Keep your evening modality gentle: breathing exercises, journaling, or the bath rather than a late workout.
- Feeling flat in Week 2? Add starchy carbohydrates before you assume anything else. Undereating is the most common self-inflicted problem on this cleanse.

The short version: expect a dip before the lift, keep eating real portions, and use the daily routine as your anchor. The morning drink, the smoothie, the water, and one modality a day carry you through the rough patch, and by Week 2 you'll understand why we run this program the way we do.