

HOW TO SURVIVE THIS SUMMER HEALTHILY!!

Summers are here and soon the magazines will be flooded with “summer detox” and similar articles. But then most things we read will either be a rehash of what we read last year or stuff that just doesn't apply to our climate, temperament and palate. So here's re-introducing grandma's wisdom or you could call it just common sense. It's the stuff that looks after the environment both outside and inside our system; it doesn't call for Kiwis from New Zealand or Quinoa from South- America. It's about patronising our local farmers, relishing our home-grown recipes and yes eating food that makes you look as yummy as its taste.

Here goes a top 10 list –

1. **Matka water** - Bring back the matka, the malmal cloth and khus-khus grass, make it a centre piece, in fact. Add the khus-khus grass to the bottom of the matka, pour water on top and wrap a malmal cloth around it. How does it help you? Well Khus-khus is India's ancient secret of keeping everything cool, yes our people knew how to make water cold even before the advent of refrigerators. The porous matka adds a unique taste and keeps water free of any pathogens – let's call it pure and mineral enriched. Let's call the khus-khus an herb and there you have it – pure, mineral rich and herbed water for a complete detox of the system. Well, if you had a business brain, you would be selling this water – anything in the name of detox works Khus-khus is also called as Vetiver and you will find it in all high – end soaps and perfumes, not just for its distinct aroma but for its ability to reduce emotional anxiety and bring about a calming effect.

2. **Dahi** – For all those who suffer from constipation, gas and acidity in the summers, this one is an absolute must have on a daily basis. The thing though is that you must set the curd at home and with whole milk. This allows the essential fats, the Vit D and the Vit B along with the B12 to be retained. The process of turning milk into dahi naturally enhances the dahi with the “good bacteria”. The growth of this essential bacteria is curtailed in the “probiotic” products available in the market, that's exactly why they don't go bad for days together and have a long shelf life. Dahi will help make your intestines strong, reduce acidity attacks and keep the bloating down. For best results have dahi-rice as a meal.

3. **Gulkand** – another super food made with rose petals and sugar along with some traditional herbs and spices. Prevents breakouts on the face and keeps skin fresh and glowing all through the summer. It's another hidden gem from the Indian kitchen, rich in phyto-nutrients, polyphenols and probiotics. So tasty that you will have trouble thinking of it as a therapeutic product. Start your day with a teaspoon or have half a tea-spoon with lunch and dinner.

4. **Kokum sherbet** – Or Garcinia Indica if you prefer exotic and non-local names. Native to the Western Ghats of India, Kokum has been traditionally used as a fruit, as a part of curry and very popularly as a sherbet. Other than ensuring that no ulcer grows in your mouth or stomach during summers, it also works as an anti-obesity agent and most importantly has properties to prevent cancer. Little wonder then that it is bestowed with the status of ‘amrut’ or nectar in the native regions along the Konkan coast.

5. **Sabja seeds** – move over chia seeds. Before the age of internet and the flood of weight loss ads about chia, sabja seeds floated on every falooda, chaas and kheer in Indian homes. Not just a quick detox but an instant cooler and bloating reliever. Even a glass of water with soaked sabja seeds can help you get thinner – try it before you wear your favourite dress or before you step out in style for that party.

6. **Mango** - before you want to strike it off your list, you must know that to look like a queen, you will need to keep good company of this king of fruits. Mango is great to taste, it's a quick and effective cleanser of the entire system and an under-utilised (infact most times is understood) weight loss aid. Do soak it in water for about 20-30 minutes before consumption.

7. **Nariyal pani** – The divine nectar from the most divine fruit that India has to offer is not just a thirst quencher but has the perfect balance of sodium and potassium required to give your skin a baby fresh look. Yes, it prevents dehydration too and is a well known cramp & migraine reliever during PMS trouble

8. **Jeera** – you may not have thought much of this humble Indian spice but it can detox your system, calm your nerves and aid your fat burning efforts this summer. Roast it a bit and turn it into a powder – add it to your chaas with a pinch of kala namak and you feel and look cooler than ever.

9. **Cashew apple** – It's the conical fruit out of which the cashew nut sprouts. Five times richer in Vit C than an orange, this one makes for a perfect tangy drink with just a single bite. That's exactly why even the global food giants are interested in this. Brazilians love this fruit and eat it not just for its detoxing properties but also for its ability to zing up your sex life and burn tubborn fat. Last word – don't ignore this local but exotic fruit.

10. **Jowar** – Jowar is one of India's ancient grain and naturally cooling in nature. So if you really want to overcome that weight loss plateau this summer, then bring Jowar rotis or bhakris back on your plate. You want it to work as a weight loss aid, then be generous with the ghee you add to the Jowar roti. Rich in Vit B1, Iron and fibre it can help you pick up the rate at which the body is burning fat. It's also popular in India as a brain food. You want to look sleek and smart, go get Jowar.

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