

Caught with **Cake**

BY MIKE A MILLER



**WHY THAT'S
NOT A
BAD OMEN
FOR YOUR
HEALTH**



Deborah Schipper loved food. Growing up, the kitchen was the center of her home. Her diet was reasonable, but would often involve the sneaky addition of chocolate and other high-sugar, highly processed foods.

The unfortunate twist in Schipper's story is that she suffered from eczema, muscular pain, frequent colds, and insomnia. Seeking medical advice, she was given several types of treatment options, but her conditions continued with little to no improvement. Within two years, she'd visited 6 dermatologists, and her only answers came in the form of steroid creams that just inflamed her skin. Finally, she turned to her diet as the last possible catalyst for her ailments.

It is the less obvious, hidden sugars in convenience and packaged foods that have contributed to the global obesity and diabetes epidemic. Some of these products claim to be healthy, so even well-intentioned people are feeling the negative effects of fatigue and growing health concerns, like Schipper was.

New research from the University of Reading, the University of Cambridge, and Arizona State University analyzed the sugar intake of 1700 people for 3 years. The study shows the strongest link yet between sugar and obesity, and demonstrates that most people consume significantly more sugar than they realize.

"After reading the ingredients on processed food labels I knew I needed to take action. I wanted to eat clean, but when I looked at detoxes, juice cleanses, and excluding entire food groups, I felt that these were drastic measures," Schipper said. Deciding that a complete dietary overhaul was too

extreme to be sustainable, she realized that enjoying food while improving her health was the only way she was going to see any results.

Are you ready for the second twist in Schipper's tale? The healthy food she turned to was one of our favorites: cake! She created the Cake Cleanse—a simple, delicious, and nutritious take on healthy eating that will satisfy foodies and fitness enthusiasts alike.

Cakes are transformed from an empty calorie indulgence to a balanced delivery system of nutrients. There is an average of 1200 calories per day in the Cake Cleanse, which will result in weight loss for most people. The main reason calories are low, despite 3 meals and 2 snacks per day, is that refined white sugar has been removed from each recipe. According to the American Heart Association, approximately 350 calories of the average American's daily intake come from added sugars, which is double and triple the recommended daily limit for men and women, respectively. You could eat one packet of candy covered chocolates or a whole day of Cake Cleanse food!

According to Schipper, eating processed foods or an unhealthy diet before the cleanse will result in nutrient depletion so a supplement is recommended to boost vitamin and mineral levels when starting the cleanse. There are complete nutrients in the cleanse, but it often takes time to fully absorb them if bad eating patterns have been exercised previously. Once the digestive system is functioning properly, which is one of the benefits of the cleanse, nutrients from the food are absorbed more rapidly.

With the absence of refined sugar and empty carbs, Cake Cleanse recipes boast essential vitamins and minerals, strengthening protein, energizing carbohydrates, healthy fats, and filling fiber—all packed into easy to make meals. "Every ingredient has health benefits," said Schipper. "For example,

white sugar is replaced with small amounts of dates, coconut, blueberries, and bananas." These natural sweeteners contain anti-inflammatory phytonutrients, vitamins A and C, fiber for digestive health, potassium, and iron for energy.

Rather than trans fats and vegetable oils found in traditional baked goods, Schipper's recipes include skin-soothing healthy fats from coconut and olive oil. Hydroxytyrosol, a rare compound found in olive oil, prevents free radical damage to the skin. The lauric acid in coconut oil can kill bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Besides these powerful medicinal properties, these oils satisfy the appetite longer.

While including a variety of foods, the list of ingredients in the Cake Cleanse is as short as possible. Several stars feature throughout different meals, chosen for their antioxidant and health-supporting qualities. High-quality proteins in nuts help to strengthen skin and are vital for new cell growth. Coconut flour is used in muffins and breads throughout the cleanse, as it is significantly more satiating than other types of flour.

The tidy grocery list also means no food gets wasted. Extra vegetables and herbs, for example, go into the Easy Omelette at the end of the week, and everything is measured in exact amounts to buy.

Remember, this can be the beginning of a lifestyle shift, not just a one-and-done diet. "Cravings for sugary processed foods subside and then healthy treats can be made beyond the 4 week cleanse as a nutritious alternative to packaged sweets," Schipper said.

Here are 4 recipes from the Cake Cleanse, a veritable diet of goodness, wholesome nutrition, and yes—cake! For more information, head to cakecleanse.com.



Banana Bread Bites

MAKES 12

Energizing banana, almond flour, coconut, and dates deliver a healthy serving of high quality nutrients in gluten- and refined sugar-free banana bread bites.

- 1 ripe banana
- 7 tablespoons almond flour
- 5 tablespoons desiccated coconut
- 7 tablespoons dates
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- pinch of salt

Add the almonds, desiccated coconut, and dates to the food processor and pulse until at crumb consistency. Add the banana, vanilla extract, cinnamon, and salt, and blend to combine. Take out a spoonful at a time and use your hands to shape and roll into 12 balls. Place in the freezer to set. Store in the freezer and thaw slightly before serving.

Chocolate Mud Cake Bites

MAKES 12

These no bake energy bites are a healthy makeover of a favorite dessert. Moist and chocolatey, they are made from a secret ingredient—black beans! The combination of magnesium from cacao and protein and fiber from black beans along with other natural ingredients provides an energy-replenishing and nutrient-rich snack.

- ½ cup canned black beans, drained
- 4 tablespoons soft-pitted dates
- 3 tablespoons almonds
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2½ tablespoons cacao powder
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil

In a food processor, blend everything together to make a smooth, thick chocolate batter. Take out a spoonful at a time and use your hands to roll into 12 balls. Place in the freezer to set, about 1 hour. Store in the freezer in an airtight container.





Coco Cupcakes

MAKES 8

These subtly sweet cupcakes are packed with fiber and healthy fats, as well as calcium and folate from the zesty lime.

- 2 tablespoons coconut flour
- 3½ tablespoons desiccated coconut
- 3½ tablespoons granulated stevia
- 3 eggs
- 3½ tablespoons coconut oil, melted
- ½ cup coconut milk
- 1 lime, zest and juice
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

Preheat the oven to 340 degrees. Line an 8-cup muffin tray with cupcake liners. In a bowl, whisk the coconut flour, desiccated coconut, and stevia until combined. In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs. Add the coconut oil, coconut milk, lime zest and juice, and mix well. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and stir until smooth. Spoon batter into the cupcake liners and place in the oven. Bake for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool completely before topping with a frosting of your choice.

Mighty Muffins

MAKES 8

Have one of these strength-building, protein-packed muffins before or after a jaunt to the gym.

- 1 pound minced beef
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 3 tablespoons pine nuts
- 1 large onion, diced finely
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 large zucchini, diced finely
- 1 tablespoon parsley, chopped finely
- 1 egg
- pinch of salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray an 8-cup muffin tray with cooking spray. Heat a frying pan and fry pine nuts over dry heat until golden. Set aside in a small bowl. Add a splash of olive oil to the pan and cook onions and garlic for 4 minutes until soft. Remove from heat, and stir in cinnamon and nutmeg. In a large bowl add mince, quinoa, zucchini, parsley, onion mix, and pine nuts. Crack the egg into the middle and mix with hands. Hand-form 8 meatballs. Place each in a muffin cup. Place tray in the oven and bake for 25 minutes. Remove from the oven and serve with salad.

