

Title:

The 30 Day Total Health Make Over
By Marilu Henner with Laura Morton
Credentials: None

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Rationale/Claim:

The diet is based on an actual change of lifestyle. It isn't a "diet," it is a way of life that is supposed to be sustainable. The book has ten main steps that if followed, the authors claim will improve the mind, body and soul. Step 1 is to be aware and avoid as much as possible, chemicals, additives and preservatives. Step 2 is be aware that caffeine is a drug, and can cause a variety of health problems. The diet does not require you to entirely give up coffee, because for many people that is unrealistic. Step 3 is to cut out all sugar and sugar substitutes. Step 4 is to limit or eliminate red meat in your diet. Step 5 is to give up dairy. Step 6 is about food combining. The authors claim that when certain foods are eaten together that the body has trouble digesting them. The food combining rule is very extensive and has many restrictions such as not mixing proteins, starches, or and kind of vegetable, never eat melon with other foods, not mixing acid fruit, with sub acid fruit and wait times between meals that don't combine. Step 7 is about avoiding saturated fats and sticking with mono and polyunsaturated fats. Step 8 is about incorporating exercise into your daily routine. Step 9 is about making sure that you get enough sleep. Step 10 is about creating gusto in your life.

According to the authors this diet works because with these nutritional changes your body will have more energy, better digestion, weight loss and improved health. The rationale is somewhat based on scientific evidence such as choosing healthier fats, however no scientific sources are cited about how milk is dangerous to our health and about food mixing.

The book offers an overview of the concepts of the diet, a thirty day plan that includes a motivational tip, exercise tip, food tip, organizational tip, beauty tip, spa on a budget tip and a "total health fake over". It also includes a menu for that day and recipes at the back of the book.

Overview of diet:

#kcal = 1,200

composition of kcal (% of kcal from protein, fat, and carbohydrate)

- Protein: 30%
- Fat: 18%
- Carbohydrate: 52%

The meal plan is low on calories, which make all levels of micronutrients and macronutrients relatively low. Especially if the dieter is exercising, this is way too low of a calorie consumption. For a large amount of people this amount of calories is below their Basal Metabolic Rate. Eating a diet this low in calories could end up slowing the metabolism.

Is it well-rounded and sustainable?

This diet is called 'The 30 day diet' and there is not much long-term maintenance advice given once the client will reach his/her goal. To maintain their goal they would need to continue with this diet or the suggestions the author is giving. I would imagine if the dieter gives up after 30 days once they see their results, they will start to gain weight back immediately.

There is a whole section on behavior modification and how it can be achieved. She suggests having a program journal to keep track of your daily progress. She suggests noting any exercise you did that day and everything you ate or drank. She encourages you to look at your body in a positive way and focus on posture. She wants you to have a complete mental preparation before beginning this lifestyle. She doesn't want you to consider it a diet. And she hopes that everything you learn in these thirty days, you will be able to take with you for the rest of your life.

Throughout the book there are exercise tips given for the client. Step 8 of the diet is exercise and she suggests three of her favorite forms of exercise: Pilates, dancing and walking/jogging/treadmill. She believes all workouts should begin with a brief warm up

and she wants you to decide what your main goals are before you being exercising. She gives suggestions for beginners, intermediate levels and advanced exercisers. She also gives music suggestions to help keep the client motivated.

Critical Comments:

- The calorie level is a low. If the dieter would be exercising, they would not be consuming enough. The calorie level is set at 1,200 calories, and every person is different and requires a different amount of calories. There shouldn't be a set amount of calories applied to all people.
- This diet might leave people deprived, because it suggests avoiding many foods and food groups. It suggests avoiding dairy and all sugar products and certain sugar substitutes. This would take a lot of will power for someone to give up sugar completely. It doesn't teach about eating foods in moderations. And research shows that dairy products are good for your body and health, so there is no real reason why this food group should be avoided completely. I would think that it will still leave individuals feeling hungry, unless they can adapt to this way of living. At some point in time, the dieter is going to give into their cravings and when they do they are mostly likely going to overindulge.
- The amount of calories that come from protein and carbohydrate are reasonable for the amount of calories the meal plan allows. But since the calorie level is so low, it may not be enough for the average person.
- The diet suggests avoiding all dairy, which doesn't seem to be a step someone should take when trying to lose weight. It not very well balanced, it emphasizes consuming a lot of fruits and vegetables, but those shouldn't be the only foods a dieter should consume when trying to lose weight. Recipes are given in the back of the book, which can be helpful for the dieter, especially if they have no experience with cooking. A lot of the meals look somewhat decent; it's just a matter of how creative the dieter can be with creating new meals so they don't become bored and give up.
- There are no special formulas to buy or special foods that need to be purchased.

Everything is very fresh and no processed foods are included in the meal plans.
This could cause food prices to be very expensive if the menu is followed exactly.

Overall Conclusion:

This is more of a complete lifestyle change than a diet. The client is going to have to have a lot of willpower to complete thirty days of this diet. This program might be a nice jump start for someone who is trying to lose weight, but it will be hard to live like this the rest of your life unless you are completely devoted and don't give into temptation. By excluding whole food groups and having so many rules and restrictions for someone, it can make it difficult to achieve this 30 day plan.

The dieter may not be getting the right amount of nutrients, since so many foods are avoided and this can be a concern. Over a long period of time of dieting and not eating certain foods, it can lead the dieter to be deficient in certain micronutrients. The dieter also might feel fatigued and tired if they are not getting adequate calories and nutrients.