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TESTS THE COLON CLEANSE to keep you regular

>> **TESTER:** Rachelle Mackintosh, chief subeditor



I'd be lying if I said the idea of inserting a tube in my bum was at the top of my to-do list. But I've had irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) for ages and I've tried all kinds of remedies (even enemas) to relieve the symptoms, which include a sluggish metabolism, bloating, constipation and cramps. None have given me much relief. So I decided to try colonic irrigation.

Pumping water through your bowels to eliminate backed-up faeces is thought to relieve your body of toxins, regulate your bowel movements, restore the body's natural pH balance and stimulate your immune system. Sceptics say colonics are unnecessary as the body rids itself of faeces naturally, and reckon it can result in infection or damage to the bowel. But I was willing to try (and if it's good enough for Gwyneth, it's good enough for me).

Before the colonic, I had to drink loads of room-temperature water, and lay off booze, caffeine and carbs for at least a day. The colon therapist massaged my belly to stimulate my bowels, and I rolled over as she inserted the tube (which was no larger than an index finger). Warm water (at a temp of 32°C) was pumped through my colon until I felt like I needed to poo. She then reversed the water flow, sucking the yucky stuff out; a process she repeated around 10 times. I had the option of viewing the waste as it came out of the transparent tube, but I chose to forgo that privilege.

Rachelle saw Angela Stapleton at InsidesOut Colon Therapy, 25 Forsyth St, Glebe, Sydney (www.insidesout.net). See also www.naturaltherapypages.com.au. Treatments cost around \$95 each.

COSMO VERDICT

To say I felt "relieved" afterwards would be a massive understatement. IBS makes my stomach rock-hard which prevents me from wearing tight clothes, but the day after my treatment I wriggled into my fave pair of straight-leg jeans without a single groan! Despite its detractors, I liked it and aim to do it couple of times a year from now on. ★★★★★