



DETOX... WITH SIMPLY HEALING

For the first time, we meet Mita and Pardeep, who were chosen to work with Vivien Kay and the other detox experts at Simply Healing. The West Sussex-based retreat has a great reputation for getting couples to optimum internal health in preparation for natural or assisted conception, and in May they kicked off a programme with our selected couple.

In this issue, Mita details how her and her partner made it to this stage, and what has happened so far in their time with Simply Healing.



The story so far

Following a miscarriage and complications my sister had in 2012, I thought I should get myself checked out before my husband and I started trying for a baby. I was so grateful that the doctor was happy to test us both without telling us to go away and try for a year, but that did nothing to lessen the disappointment of discovering that, while I was okay, my husband Pardeep came back with zero sperm count.

In January 2013, we were referred to the specialist at the hospital for blood tests which confirmed azoospermia. The second consultant we saw advised us to consider using a sperm donor if we wanted to have a baby of our own, but in the early months of 2013 we explored adoption. Soon though, we found ourselves on the same path – we'd decided to go ahead using donor sperm.

This was a huge decision to make and we knew from the start that we would want to tell the child, and therefore we had to inform our family, more for support than anything else. We have been together for eight years and married for six, so the 'baby question' comes up frequently. Pardeep quickly accepted his infertility and was happy to openly speak to family and friends about it, yet being part of the Asian community (where sex is a taboo subject, let alone IVF, and especially using donor sperm) it was a huge thing and we had two very different reactions from each side of the family.

Joining the Donor Conception Network has helped us immensely, not only in enabling us to gain a wealth of information but, better than that, a place where we have found others who

understand exactly what we are going through.

So as all of my test results came back clear and age was not of concern, we were eligible on the NHS for six rounds of IUI and one round of IVF. We started IUI in May 2013 and did six back-to-back treatments without any success. In December 2013 I began taking my injections for IVF and had egg collection in January 2014. I had 11 eggs, seven fertilised with ICSI, one embryo was frozen and one embryo was transferred on day three. Unfortunately, this did not work and there was no set reason given but egg quality may have been a factor.

At our follow up consultation in February 2014, we were advised to use our frozen embryo, but I felt that because of the unexplained egg quality and low embryo number, I wanted to try another fresh cycle even if that meant paying for the treatment this time. After all, if age was on my side, I wanted to maximise our chances to have baby number two one day instead of using the frozen embryo.

We were due to start IVF next month which has now been pushed back two months because of the opportunity to work with Simply Healing through *Fertility Road* magazine. We opted to have an 'endometrial scratch' this time - which takes place usually between days 16-20 - before commencing the injections and next cycle leading up to egg collection.

Being selected to work with Simply Healing - May 2014

I patiently waited to be called in for my scan. Whilst there, I picked up the lone copy of

Fertility Road magazine from the table in the waiting room and flicked straight to the Fertility Journeys 2014 section wondering who the lucky couples were who got selected.

There was nothing yet revealed on the detox side - I had entered late, but thought I had put a good case forward. Was there still hope? Probably not, as I had never won anything, apart from maybe the odd £10 on the lottery! What were our chances? Curiosity got the better of me and I emailed Simply Healing for their price list. But with the cost of IVF eating into our savings already, there was no way we could afford the fertility detox plan.

The feature in the magazine highlighted the IVF egg donation couple only - I guessed the next edition would feature the other couples.

Later that night I happened to be looking in my email junk folder and spotted a message. To my amazement, it was from the editor of the magazine asking if we were still interested. Yes! It looked like we still had a chance. Pardeep told me to go to sleep and reply in the morning – how could I sleep though?!

A few days later I received good and bad news. Simply Healing wanted to work with us, but we would have to delay our treatment for at least two months. It was a bittersweet moment but there wasn't actually anything to think about, we already knew what we were going to do... delay treatment. It was more important than ever before that we should embrace everything given to us and we felt that finally someone was on our side. Fate did want us to have a baby after all!

A week later Vivien at Simply Healing gave me a call. We were on the phone for about half an hour and there was something about her voice and outlook that I instantly fell in love with. I finally let myself feel excited that something good was going to happen to us after all the pain and suffering we had endured over the previous few months.

Preparing for our visit to Simply Healing

As keen as we were to get started with the detox and visit Simply Healing, it was important to plan in dates that fitted with my cycle and ovulation times.

Simply Healing suggest you cut out meat (I'm vegetarian), dairy and alcohol (I don't drink) and junk food (which I hardly eat) in the run-up to the stay, to help you prepare for the detox.

We had done a couple of home juicing programmes before so had an idea of what to expect, but also knew it was going to be a shock to the system, so we introduced a few juices instead of lunch and snacks during the day from the Monday (three days before going).

Simply Healing recommended that I eat steamed rice and vegetables the night before and had some fresh fruit in the morning before arriving. It was all happening!

Day 1

9.30am

I walked through the door to be greeted and shown around by Carolyn who works primarily in the office. She knew who I was straight away and there was something special about her welcome. We walked through the impressive warm house and I was shown to the 'cream bedroom' with my detailed plan for the next few days in my hand.

My first item was a one-to-one consultation with Kate, a former nurse. Kate emphasised the point that the detox was about me and the next few days were my time and only my time. She took my blood sugar levels and blood pressure which were all fine. I weighed in at 9st 13lbs (almost two stone more than when I started my fertility journey two years ago!)

11am

Next was the first juice of the day in the 'juicing room'. The juices somehow magically appeared in the room looking perfect and fresh - a small shot glass size of what looked like green vegetables: power juice, consisting of cucumber, spinach, celery, broccoli, green pepper. I was told it was really good for my liver, and that there are five freshly made juices per day.

My breakfast of strawberries and mango seemed so long ago that I was disappointed I was only going to get a shot. Was this what the week entailed? Five shots of juice a day? After tasting the first sip, I was secretly glad it was

only a shot. The celery was overpowering and it wasn't a pleasant introduction to what was to come, but I reminded myself I was here to embrace it all, green shots and everything!

1pm

I was then treated to the main dining room but there was going to be no dining, just juicing, and this time a glassful! But thankfully, it was apple, carrot, yellow pepper and ginger, and absolutely delicious. I think I can do this!

2.30pm

Next was the psyllium husk with a touch of apple juice in which you add some bentonite clay, mix together and drink. It looked off, like a very thick paste, but surprisingly tasted okay. I had four tablets of cleansing herbs, all helping to clean my insides in preparation for my colonic. A glass of apple, pear and red pepper juice followed.

2.30pm

Then the treatments began. I met Nicky who has featured in *Fertility Road* before. Again, there was this instant connection and I was drawn to her. She made me feel so relaxed and comfortable and I had only just entered the treatment room. Nicky first did links reflexology and was able to tell me exactly what was going on before I'd even revealed anything. My right foot gave away the fact I was guarded and protective about the disappointment of previous failed treatments, while my left foot was open to treatment working with donor sperm.

4.30pm

The abdominal sacral massage was an odd treatment but Nicky worked her magic and made me feel at ease again. Having a massage without actual muscles being massaged felt strange but it was all about getting energy and blood to my vital reproductive organs.



Sacral massage expert Nicky



5.30pm

Juice of spinach, fennel, courgette, cucumber and green grape - these green juices are definitely not for me!

5.30pm

Full body salt scrub to brush away all the toxins on my skin.

7pm

Meditation.

7.30pm

Detox soup of pea, lettuce and mint.

That was my first day complete. No headache, hunger or nausea. I loved the Simply Healing touch of different sizes and styles of glasses throughout the day, and the tall mug for evening soup. With only seven others there, the house didn't feel overcrowded and everyone knew their detox was about them, so never any obligation to do anything. At Simply Healing clients (men and women) lounge around in their dressing gowns, nap in their rooms, watch something in the TV room, sit in the main living room with the fire going, relax in the conservatory or outside and look out onto the countryside and refresh! It's absolute bliss!

Day 2

Day two was to follow a similar regular process of juices, though I started the morning with a pleasant walk through the countryside.

I had hypnotherapy in the morning. Initially it sounded scary as I didn't know what to expect, but by the end of the session I felt it was more like meditation - a chance to really focus on me and give myself both positive phrases and mind pictures that worked. Instead of worrying about future things, Karen helped me to focus on key points, offering me perspective I had somehow lost over the past few months.

In the afternoon I had my first one-to-one session with Vivien, and of course, I was nervous. I have read about her healing powers but was unsure how much I believed. After all, the process of IVF and the constant negative result makes you feel very protective and leads to you questioning everything - you don't want to believe in something because of the fear of disappointment and getting hurt. But Vivien made this thought disappear very quickly and I could feel her heat and energy during my session with her.

I felt very blessed to have this one-to-one time with her and she explained her reasons for choosing us for this amazing opportunity.

She could do her special bit for us but it was important for me to make some changes too.

Later that afternoon I had my nutritional consultation with Florence based on the



questionnaire I'd filled out prior to my arrival. There were some interesting revelations, namely that fresh orange juice is not good as its acidity inhibits digestion. Furthermore, I was unaware I had been eating strong proteins with strong carbohydrates - this is what was making me feel bloated and making me go to the toilet!

Flo also explained that strong protein foods go with low starch/carbs, and low proteins with strong carbohydrates are more favourable food combinations for when we get back home. Small changes like brown rice rather than white, and rye bread and spelt instead of wheat will really make the difference.

We went through supplements to help complement IVF treatment, but also addressed the stress factor and having important 'me' time. Flo promised to email me the following week, and again with a follow-up email a few weeks after that in order to really support me in making the changes I needed to make.

Pardeep arrived that evening, just in time for the last juice of the day and soup. Lucky him!

Day 3

We began day three with a three-mile walk through muddy woods - it was great to have my husband by my side. At 10am I had a colon massage with Florence, who of course understood my eating and toilet habits from the previous day. This was intense and slightly painful, but bearable. I could feel her move the stuff from my right side through to the exit! It was strange but she really worked her magic. This was all in preparation for the dreaded colonic irrigation in the afternoon, but I left feeling calm that I was one step closer to being very clean indeed!

I had a detox massage after that then the

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colonic hydrotherapy in the afternoon. Anything alien usually keeps me up at night - I couldn't sleep for days ahead of going in for IVF because I was worried about the anaesthetic - and having the colonic on the itinerary should have been high on my list to keep me awake at night, but maybe it was because of the resounding calmness at Simply Healing that I found myself approaching the treatment with little apprehension.

Carolyn was yet another therapist who had this warm energy about her and instantly I felt at ease. She explained the process and showed me all the bits and what they did. It felt uncomfortable but as soon as I relaxed everything started working as it should. Carolyn did the essential bowel reflexology points and then proceeded with massaging my colon to get things moving more! What a result! I felt so empty and so hungry. I remember thinking 'now I'm clean, I don't want to put any toxins in my body again!'

I had a one-to-one with Vivien who could already see the change in me, some more juice, a walk in the woods, meditation, a Potassium Broth soup, then bed.

Day 4

Day four included toning, Pilates and another abdominal sacral massage. This time Nicky said she could get right in as my stomach was much softer. She worked her magic and did the uterus lift too! This means now that my uterus is getting a good flow of blood and circulation as it's not leaning on or squashing any other organs.

I had an Indian head massage at lunchtime, more juice combinations, then a real treat...



I was expecting another green juice but was pleasantly surprised with a bowl of red cherries, pomegranate, raspberries, blueberries, strawberries with a little bit of agave syrup!

I concluded the day watching *The Green Mile* in the TV room - an apt movie about healing. Perfect.

Day 5

I weighed in to find I'd lost nearly half a stone! How good was that feeling... I couldn't remember the last time I felt so good about myself. Vivien accompanied us for a fresh fruit breakfast, reminding us that the bowl of fruit was the size of our stomachs, and to think before we eat! She also recommended chewing food 20-30 times to help you digest it!

We went through juices we could make at home and I promised to stay off the dairy, wheat and carbs for the rest of the week. We talked through the different food options - soup mainly and salads, and the idea of snacking on nuts and fruit if we get peckish. A few more days of juicing before 'real' food!

I know I have a little bit more weight to lose which should come off if I stick to the plan, especially over the next few days, but we are definitely on the path to success. Vivien told

me she knows my secret about the picture I have in my mind when I close my eyes and imagine my baby! How does she know this?

We departed that afternoon, so happy and optimistic.

Thank you!

Reading the Simply Healing website, reviews and articles online simply did not prepare me enough for the five-day fertility detox I was going to experience. It really is a place of healing, something I did believe but did not fully appreciate until I felt it. We have both come away more conscious than ever before about the food we put into our bodies and the effect it has. More importantly, I feel so different, like a weight that I didn't even know existed has been lifted. I'm very grateful and very appreciative of what I do have going for me and extremely at peace and relaxed.

We are so grateful to Vivien for choosing us to take part in this journey. She believes in us more than we do ourselves and I believe she is going to do everything she can to 'make it happen'. I have to play my part and make some tweaks in my lifestyle, but am looking forward to coming back in a few weeks for my next session with Vivien and Nicky. And beyond that, who knows...

