

TOP 10 REASONS TO UNSUBSCRIBE FROM HYPED DIET CULTURES

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Are you trying to lose an unrealistic amount of weight which might require you to chop off a limb to achieve?

Are you trying to adhere to a problematic standard of beauty through means of injecting non-biodegradable acrylic beads in your body?

Are you trying to bulk up in ways that can possibly result in you going blind?

Well then, you're in luck! Because I'm about to prevent you from putting your body through irreversible damage by undoing all the brainwashing carried out by the media frenzy surrounding "the perfect body" which somehow only revolves around one specific ideal of beauty.

First things first, you need to understand that the "diet secrets" shared by celebrities in fashion magazines and personal interviews will probably never work for you in reality. There are multiple reasons behind that, which is the real secret no one likes to address.

Starting with our physical health, we were all born with different body types, different health conditions. There's a very slim chance that the celebrity diet you're rooting for will actually be compatible with your body. Runway models have discussed the extreme diets they often resort to during events such as Paris Fashion Week, where they try everything from surviving on 20 pieces of edamame to eating tissue.

Lifestyle is also another major issue, considering how celebrities have an entire team of professionals assisting them in achieving that seemingly-Photoshopped appearance. There are personal chefs involved, as well as fitness trainers, and diet coaches. Take pop culture icon Beyoncé's "22 Day Diet" for instance, it requires you to completely cut out dairy, carbohydrates, fish, and poultry, coupled with hours of strenuous training routines, as seen to be carried out by Beyoncé. Popular reality TV stars, the Kardashians, are often seen advocating for detox teas and shakes, which do not appear to be approved by relevant authorities due to their dangerous side effects involving dehydration, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, and eating disorders such as bulimia. The only purpose that celebrity-endorsed diet teas serve is that of laxatives.

A regular adult is likely to spend the bulk of their day working from morning till evening outside in an office space. The regular adult has neither the time nor the energy nor the access to necessary health-

care services required to cope with diets that are extremely restrictive and physically taxing, for empty promises of a "fit body".

I'm sure you've come across the word "fit" or "in shape" a lot. I imagine you associate these words with images of a human body that either fits the mould of "36-26-36", or comes with "six-pack" abs. In reality, being fit has little to do with how your body looks or how many conventional standards of beauty it meets. The true meaning of being fit tends to easily get lost in the overflow of fad diets in popular culture, as people forget that while beauty standards change by the decade, the factors responsible for our health do not. Our physical fitness depends on how strong our vitals are, and how comfortable we are in our own skin.

If you live in South Asia, chances are you've been exposed to an extremely hyped diet culture that is Bollywood-centric. There are countless videos and interviews of members of the Hindi film industry speaking in favour of toxic beauty standards defined by a slim physique. It has now begun to weigh on the Bangladeshi film industry where actors

are more likely to be pressured to lose weight instead of being asked to work on their craft, because filmmakers think regular people in our country always look like they go to the gym for 4 to 5 hours each day of the week. There have been earlier reports of Bengali actors collapsing on the set in the middle of shooting, due to restrictive diets required for a "pencil-thin" physique. These actors, in turn, perpetuate the toxicity even further by equating their craft of acting to solely being thin, a phenomenon illustrated by BBC's short film *Leading Lady Parts* (2018), where actor Florence Pugh is asked by the casting directors to be "thin and curvy", "like a twiglet", and without "baby-bearing hips", in order to land the role of a leading lady.

At this point you've probably noticed that I haven't really given you 10 reasons to dismiss diet culture. I mean, do you really need a list of 10 reasons on why you must unlearn toxic practices and prioritise your physical and psychological well-being?

Hey, why strive for uniformity in body types when you can take a leaf out of Lizzo's book on physical fitness?

The author meticulously plans out her 13 daily meals on a regular basis. Drop a 'good luck' note for her overworked digestive system at rasha.jameel@outlook.com

