

Bridal blog: Combating wedding stress

Taylor heads to the Food Doctor Clinic for a pre-wedding MOT

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by [Taylor Anderson](#)



The Food Doctor



The Food Doctor range of tasty, healthy foods



I'm ready for my close up. The ear points that reduce stress.

Wedding planning is stressful. Even if you're the most chilled out bride (I'm not) there comes a day when it all feels a bit overwhelming. Family politics, money worries, and beauty disasters stack up and no matter how hard you try to thwart them, freak outs happen.

Despite being a natural worrier, I've tried to adopt a laissez faire attitude . the focus is not the flowers or my hairstyle, but planning a really fun party for our loved ones. So far, so successful until I was knocked back with a high blood pressure reading at my local GP.

My doctor couldn't tell me for sure why it had suddenly risen (I'm active, a healthy weight and eat well) but suspected it was stress-related. I couldn't help but agree. Planning my own wedding plus brides-maiding for two others this year combined with a recent trip to Thailand (I'm no good on planes) and a finger injury that required surgery (I hate hospitals) all within weeks had taken their toll and my efforts to stay light and breezy had crashed and burned. So when an invite to visit the Food Doctor Clinic for a health MOT landed in my inbox, I agreed without hesitation.

Already well known for a line of good-for-you-yet-tasty-too snacks, the Food Doctor has expanded their Harley Street nutritional clinic to offer a 360-degree approach to health and wellness. The clinic has long provided nutritional therapy to those looking to lose weight or get pregnant. But now an acupuncturist and psychologist have joined the team to offer an even more inclusive method of improving health. Whatever your woe, be it acne, insomnia or infertility, their team can help you tackle it with their multi-faceted approach. If they can't help me reduce my stress levels and BP, I don't know who can.

My session started with acupuncturist Kate Winstanley. I'd never had it but know many friends who have seen an improvement in mood, pain reduction and fertility, so was hopeful my session would be successful too. I explained how I've been feeling (anxious and moody) and she suggested we start with a few points on the ear that stimulate the endocrine system to reduce cortisol and stress.

While the needles worked their magic we chatted about all things acupuncture and I was surprised to hear how many ailments it's scientifically proven to help, from depression to IBS, and how quickly too. Kate said most of her clients see an improvement after just one session, and don't need more than a few a year to help chronic issues. The acupuncture combined with Kate's positive and peaceful demeanour made me feel calmer immediately.

Once she took the needles out, I headed over to see Psychologist Annika Lindberg. She recently joined the clinic from the NHS where she worked with those battling drug and gambling addiction. We discussed everything from wedding worries to my fear of flying and just letting it all out in a safe environment felt great. Her biggest piece of advice? Keep exercising regularly. The feel-good endorphins are great for quashing stress. She revealed exercise tends to be her number one suggestion for tackling a variety of issues, from depression to food addiction. Seeing as I love running and yoga, I think I can handle that.

Finally, I sat down with nutritionist Pauline Gage. She asked me to keep a food diary for three days prior to our consultation and I was pleased to hear she was happy with my diet (lots of fruit and veg, lean protein and whole grains with some dark chocolate thrown in here and there). She gave me a few suggestions for variations I hadn't thought of (rye bread instead of wholegrain, almond butter instead of peanut, mango and pineapple before a meal to help with trapped wind and bloating) but I was most relieved when she said she didn't think my high blood pressure was diet-related. She gave me deep breathing techniques to try and supplement suggestions to help reduce it naturally and but said not to take them until I have my doctor read my BP manually. She doesn't trust the electronic machines as far as she can throw them.

I left the clinic feeling calmer and more relaxed than I have in months. The combination of the acupuncture and the expert mental and dietary advice revealed I'm on the right track when it comes to my health. It seems this blood pressure fiasco is just a blip on an otherwise smooth journey. That's all the confirmation I needed. I've booked in with my GP for a second reading and I suspect everything will be back on track soon. Bring on the wedding planning!

If you're hoping to lose weight, deal with stress or just make sure everything is in working order (whether you're a bride to be or not), I would definitely recommend booking in at the Food Doctor Clinic. What's there to lose?