

Peak Fasting: Intermittent Fasting Duration



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An Ayurveda practitioner (I am not the one!) may add following to the useful article. 1. For a stress driven person, ('vata' type according to Ayurveda) fasting is contraindicated. For a person with strong digestive fire, (pitta type) moderate fasting is advisable. For 'kapha' person having weak digestive power, fasting produces maximum benefits. There are number of good quality sites to help us find out which type we are just by typing 'find my dosha according to Ayurveda'.)

2. What to eat also can not be universalized. As an example, high quality saturated fats are good only for vata and is contraindicated for kapha. Heavy grains are highly recommended for both vata and pitta. (of course there was no GMO when Ayurveda was conceptualized!).

3. Most amazing part may be regarding sugar. Vata and pitta types are recommended to consume plenty of sugars in their natural forms. Rock white sugar is also OK for therapeutic use. Sugar restriction is for kapha type. (if we read Ray Peat, it may look like he is describing a combination of vata- pitta person!)

4. By the same logic, practice of accepting universal figures for various measurements can be challenged. For example how 120 can be a universal threshold for high BP? (Mahatma Gandhi is said to have very high reading sometimes of 200 and he enjoyed a robust health). Same for many other things like b12, vit D etc. A pitta person for example will surely burn herself under midday Sun. And there is no need as well because body functions well with the so called low level of vit D which can be produced just by receiving reflected UVB while sitting under a shade! It is our commonsense experience that there is nothing like universal advise as different persons get well by contradictory therapies. And this has to be so because unity (nonduality) exists only at the level of infinite consciousness. When it manifests in the form of subject - object multiplicity, every manifestation is unique and therefore different.

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Thanks for this information. I never could get to a normal weight, so if I tried fasting I probably would be way to skinny, 6 feet and 135 pounds.

It seems an awful lot easier to loose weight than to gain it. I am a vatta as I have been anxious almost from infancy and kapha because I digest poorly. At 3 am I still feel my dinner in my stomach.

I guess all in all the end result is not to suffer to much from anything, as we are all imperfect in one way or another.

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[Krofter](#) Joined On 06/02/2015

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In 1992 I had a friend who worked for the leading Ayurvedic doctor at that time, Dr Vasant Ladd in Albuquerque (author of several books on Ayurveda). She put me on a diet protocol for my vata constitution and I saw some improvement with IBS for a few years - and that was it. I didn't improve further until I cut sugar and "heavy grains" out of my diet (I'm gluten sensitive) - just the opposite of what you recommend.

To say "What to eat can not be universalized" and then say "saturated fats are good only for vata and contraindicated for Kapha" seems kinda contradictory. Besides, we now know that eating excess carbs is what makes kaphas fat, not eating fat.

Not saying Ayurveda is hogwash, just that we have tools today that the ayurvedic practitioners of yore never had access to. Nor do we have everything figured out today, but then neither does Ayurveda. Health is a really complex topic.

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I agree with "Krofter", a lot of what you are saying flies in the face of, or compromises what we read about here on the Mercola forum. Since Ayurveda is of Indian origins, I can possibly see where the consumption of sugar was less of a problem for that vegan culture, since they didn't get much/any saturated fats from animals and consumed it with sugar, a bad mix.

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Thanks to Dr. Mercola's info, & a book written by Paul Bragg, I have fasted for years. I only eat one meal a day, around noon. I started out, fasting one day a week, per the book written by Mr. Bragg. This was not easy, but I did it for awhile until it was. I then started eating my one meal a day. My weight has been the same for about 10 years. Weight was not an issue for me, as I was already slim. BMI is 20, & I am very healthy for my age. (81 +) Good health to all.

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[TerriNew](#) Joined On 05/08/2009

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Can't say enough about intermittent fasting. I'm 45 and started intermittent fasting just after Christmas when I hit a new high of 81kg. I'm doing 5:2 fast pattern, lowish carb, high fat. Even on non-fast days, I generally don't have breakfast (Other than an organic coffee with cream and a dash of milk). I also haven't changed what I eat that much, just when, and gone slightly lower carb. I average 60% calories from fat, 20/20 carbs/protein. We have a family history of metabolic issues, my twin has diabetes (autoimmune) etc.

I had borderline gestational diabetes with my 4th baby (controlled with a low carb diet - and I passed the mandatory glucose tolerance test). I don't exercise as such, but generally clock up an average of 15000 steps

per day without doing anything extra (courtesy of kids, animals and living on acreage). Anyway, after 4 months, I've lost 6kg, 4 inches off my waist and 2 1/2 inches off my hips. Still 6 kg to go to goal but this feels like a permanent lifestyle change. I've never had such diet success before.

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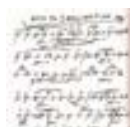
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The people I work with start their day with 1 liter cups of soda and either fried or junk food. after 3 -5 hours they are starving for more soda and processed food. They can't understand why I am not hungry. I tell them that my day starts off with cod liver oil, kelp or Spirulina several days a week. Some days I eat sauteed vegetables, eggs, rice, oatmeal, honey (not all the same day) and a cup of coffee or black tea. Other days I only have a cup of coffee or tea and last up to 10 hours of physical work in and out of a box truck setting up tents, stages, dance floors, tables, chairs etc. from the beach to inland. I am 54 years old and have been telling my customers that you are paying me to exercise. My body tells me if it needs energy so I usually bring an banana, apple, orange or other fruit to eat if needed. Plenty of water is also a must. 3 gallons or more on blistering hot and humid days. Fasting is good, but trying to teach those I work and live with is difficult.

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[Acroyali](#) Joined On 01/15/2015

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I've been a fan of IF'ing for quite awhile, simply because now I naturally do it, and I did it before I even knew it had a name. Rarely am I hungry in the morning, but if I am, I eat. Most of those days I find myself eating a later lunch (around 3ish, usually) and a snack sized dinner, calling it good for the day.

I don't know why, but I don't do well with a once-a-day meal. Some people I know do. If I can eat a small lunch around 1 or 2, and a nice, normal dinner (ideally around 6 or so), I feel pretty good.

For a time I relied on small amounts of food every 2-3 hours; any food (real food or non-food). Not only was it a pain in the butt, but I found myself a slave to preparing food or finding food or buying food on the go, or thinking about where my next "meal" would come from.

I don't measure my glucose, though maybe I should. I don't know my HDL, LDL, or triglycerides (though maybe I should.) I don't count the hours down between meals. I don't tell myself "go 18 hours before breaking your fast." I don't count my macros, and maybe I should. I just don't do all that. I don't have any health problems or issues that demand it. For more experienced IF'ers, those who are looking to greatly increase muscle or greatly decrease fat, or for those with known health issues, I would imagine doing some or all of those things would be extremely beneficial, But there's a part of me that needs to keep it simple. I love food, and love preparing food and learning all I can about where it comes from. I treat food with respect.

Sometimes I need to step back and remind myself that eating a healthy diet and feeling my best can be expensive, complicated and frustrating, or enjoyable, simple, and nurturing to the body, mind and soul.

Just my opinion of course.

Cheers to all, and have a wonderful weekend!

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I am 80 and been following this routine for years; still in excellent health!! Go for it!!

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[junemal](#) Joined On 04/24/2015

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I and 63 years old and have been using intermittent fasting since I first read about it in an article on Dr. Mercola's website early last summer. My weight has stabilized with weight loss easier than ever, and my energy has never been better. I am sleeping better than I have in years, waking refreshed after an uninterrupted night of sleep. Intermittent fasting made it easier for me to maintain weight (actually I lost weight) on my month long vacation this past summer -- never eating before 11 a.m. (brunch) and never past 7 pm (dinner). I was amazed -- vacations have always been a danger time for weight gain. But not this past summer! I have adopted intermittent -- or peak fasting -- as part of my daily lifestyle.

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[hiIs](#) Joined On 09/26/2007

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I started the 5:2 in October 2012, though for me it was 7:2 as I never felt very hungry on the feast days and therefore didn't want to lose weight too quickly. Over 2 years I lost 2 stone. I then continued on 6:1, but gave up after 6 months as I was still losing weight. All was ok until last Christmas when I managed to put on a half stone. So I'm back on strict 5:2 though after 3 weeks of losing nothing I cut back to 450 calories. One problem for me is that I have always had trouble sleeping after a fast day, not that I'm hungry or anything. Any thoughts?

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The following study is probably known by most readers here news.usc.edu/63669/fasting-triggers-stem-cell-regeneration-of-damaged-.. have tried it and seen good results in autoimmune issues like seasonal allergies and eczema. I have done it last year and this year plan a slightly different approach, of 72-hours once per month for three months. The results I have seen suggest that it does indeed have a role in immune system improvement. Personally, I routinely have a 24-hour water fast once per week - usually on the same day. It's a non-exercise day and I try to limit the size of my meal when I break that fast to about 700 calories.

There isn't much science (i.e, formally managed research), behind some of the fasting protocols, and my 24-hours once per week is among those. There is some, but not a lot, of science emerging for the eating window approach. There is more for the four day once per month and as I point out above, the 72-hour repeated three times. For all of these approaches, I found that I had to make quite a few changes to be able to have a full fast without undue difficulty, and I suspect that those dietary changes (switching off sugar and carbs as main energy source) have themselves quite possibly been responsible for a large part of the benefit I have accrued over the past four of five years (the time I've been doing this).

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Krofter; "saturated fats are good for vata and contraindicated for kapha" is not a universalized statement. A universalized statement would read something like "saturated fats are good (or bad)".

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[FitnessLawyer](#) Joined On 11/04/2015

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Suzi- Andrea and others.

RESEARCH PROVES FASTING STARVES OUT CANCER. In a 2014 California study by Prof. Longo proved that a 3day fast done by women taking poisonous CHEMO was able to REGENERATE A NEW IMMUNE SYSTEM! Fasting not only starves out cancer-it REGENERATES NEW WHITE BLOOD CELLS -even while the immune system is being poisoned by chemo drugs!

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Here are a few links to save googling.

www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/03/12/fasting-for-three-days-can-rege..

news.usc.edu/63669/fasting-triggers-stem-cell-regeneration-of-damaged-..

This does not mean that chemotherapy is the best allopathic "cure".

Far from it.

Like Myron Wentz said many times, "you've got to read, you've got to read (regarding health matters) because the doctors and Government Health Agencies have been seriously misled, willingly or not, by the Pharmaceutical drug pushers.

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In view of the science behind the Krebs's cycle, I am not sure our bodies "adapted" to burning carbs as much as it's simply the science of how the Krebs's cycle works, has always worked, and will always work. The Krebs's cycle is a chemical process that converts carbohydrates to energy. When we eat more than we use, the energy is stored and weight gain results. I realize our bodies "can" burn fat as fuel but that is a very inefficient means of producing energy (about 1/16th compared to carbs, if memory serves me correctly) and I believe that is the reason that reduction of carbohydrates in our diets results in weight loss. Our bodies are forced to use what's available, when the preferred fuel is not available. Same conclusion, just getting there by a different belief system; I'm saying that the Krebs's cycle is not an adaptation but rather how we were created. By the way, readers may find interesting, the Krebs's cycle uses (requires) certain B vitamins.

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Actually it is just common sense: The moment there are even the slight amount of carbs in the body, it will push the fats away, because the body prefers to use carbs as fuel because it is more efficient. You can be fat-adapted (whatever that means), and at the moment you eat carbs, you will use it to make energy, so, which is the preferred fuel for the body?

also, if you are skipping carbs and only eating fat, you will not put off your weight, because you are supplying your body with lots of calories, remember that per each gram of protein or carb you add 4 calories at your body, but for each gram of fat, you add 9 calories to your weight, if you don't use it.

Which is the morale of all my technobabble? Don't skip any macronutrient. For men a 40% healthy fats, 40% healthy carbs and 20% healthy protein will be suffice to keep T in place.

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sten Joined On 06/27/2006

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Great that fasting is brought up here. I am however skeptical about the following sentences in the article above:

"....don't have your first meal for at least 13 hours. Measure your blood sugar at that time. You can do this every half hour, and when it starts to dramatically rise, this is an indication that you need to break your fast and eat food.

Why? Because suddenly rising blood sugar when you haven't eaten is a sign that gluconeogenesis is setting in. By definition, gluconeogenesis refers to the production of glucose from a nonglucose precursor, such as protein. Once your body starts converting protein to glucose, you're breaking down your lean muscle mass, and this is NOT healthy by any means."

What I have learnt from Jason Fung -check his excellent blog [IDM](#) -, fasting does not break down muscle proteins, yet fasting makes body proteins available as fuel through "autophagy", probably most important part of fasting, the cleansing mechanism: Macrophages/phagocytes are during fasting getting their roles extended to convert damaged proteins and old inflammations to fuel, combined with repair of what is reasonably repaired. This will as I understand it when it starts, provide a first flux of gluconeogenesis, around the time mentioned. To stop fasting then could in my understanding make a major part of the fasting a waste of time! I have asked Dr Jason Fung about this on his blog just now! Also I think that eating anything in a 24 hour fast would consequently be counterproductive as it may take 10 hours to set the body in a state where the liver glycogen is largely emptied, and then topping up with 500 calories would prevent any further autophagy that fasting period! A friend got excited about 5:2 a few years ago but missed reading about the 500 calories - ate nothing on fasting days. A year later at his doctor his blood works had turned perfect, back from very poor a year earlier as he was diagnosed with heart disease and had one stent after a heart attack.

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alm7554 Joined On 10/18/2015

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Dr Mercola, I have always skipped breakfast and ate sometime between 11-3. Sometimes that is my only meal, other time I will eat in the evening around 6-7. Then to bed by 10-11. I have been told this why I am overweight. I do not lose any weight. My calories during the day range from 700- 1600. Just depends on my day. Why isn't fastig helping me?

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T1toburen Joined On 10/10/2012

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I'm not Dr. Mercola... but I have a theory... a few questions, first, though: How is your energy? Do you feel like you need to nap in the afternoons? How about temperature? Are you always cold? I would

suggest you take your temperature a few times a day - when you wake up, after breakfast, before/after lunch, before/after dinner and before bed. Are you consistently below 98.6F?

That was my problem... my metabolism was SO SLOW, that fasting caused a severe reaction in my systems, leading to headaches, depression, fatigue and the chills...

I took a few months to build my core temperature back to 98.6F by EATING.... lots of fat (cheese & real butter), some refined carbs (bread & crackers) and anything else from the produce aisle that sounded tasty (lots of fruits and veggies). (I still avoided processed foods.)

After I was warm (first time in decades), I then could skip meals and/or have fasting days without the bad side-effects, and it actually feels GOOD now to skip meals.

I think it goes back to the top post about your "Dosha"... fasting doesn't work for people who aren't built for it, or who's metabolism is so damaged from bad diets that it just compounds a problem instead of fixing anything.

...at least... that's my theory....

BTW - check your basal metabolic rate. Most full sized adults need more than 2000 calories per day to maintain weight - if their core temperature is at 98.6F. If you have been starving your body for a long time (<1600 calories/day), your body will adjust to emergency conditions (increasing cortisol and adjusting insulin to restrict the ability to burn fat from storage).

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maybe you should look at and adjust WHAT you're eating.

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I just read an article by Dr. Leah Cahill from Harvard that just finished a study on fasting and concluded that fasting leads to a higher risk of heart attacks or death from coronary artery disease..what do you think of this study?

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I Googled, and she specifically says to not skip breakfast. My approach, which I do for purposes of sleeping in a fasted state, is to eat only a snack in the evening, before 5pm. Because I like to start my day with my morning tea or coffee, I don't eat my first meal until 9am. It was not my goal to do IF, but eating all my food within an 8 hour window every day ends up being a very gentle form of IF.

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[Labtech S](#) Joined On 06/09/2007

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I would like to know: study design, how many participants on both sides (including the control group); were possible confounding factors listed, and so on. Sometimes too few participants, age of participants, and so on are not ideal for drawing a causal relationship.

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Is it this study highglen? www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/.../23877060

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This is rather amusing, as a teen this was essentially how I ate and I was called anorexic (they even put me in the hospital). My mom has given me grief for years about how much 'damage' I did to my body, I am definitely saving this article for the next time it comes up.

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Teens that are still growing need to at least keep-up with the demands of high energy output AND growth. Mother's Day is coming up, at least here in the USA, an appropriate time to thank your Mom for caring to that extent. Maybe a gentle reminder that today's youth are often plagued by obesity, and that is not without damage would help future discussion.

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Labtech S, you're right in many cases teens have a higher energy out put than some adults I never said I didn't keep up with my energy needs. I simply stated that I ate in this style and was accused of being anorexic. They made me believe there was something seriously wrong with me. And every illness or problem I have had since then my mom will always blame on "what you did to yourself". Because of course this style of eating made me unable to have kids, it changed the colour of my hair, it created my knee issues right? These are only a small sample of things my mom has blamed on "being anorexic" for years and will continue to blame and remind me for the rest of her life. So yes the next time she brings it up I am going to show her this article, not because I don't love her but because she will never believe me if I don't show her something in black and white. And I highly doubt she is going to bring it up on mother's day.

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The easiest way to get into intermittent fasting is to drink a cup of coffee with a spoon of butter, a spoon of coconut oil with a good amount of cream in it, early in the morning twice a week. You simply do not become hungry during the day then. This technique seems to help your body to learn to want to burn fats and not carbs. For the rest you simply follow Dr. Mercola's dietary prescriptions and eat as much as you want. With this system there is no need to even think of "dieting". It seems that eventually your body totally objects to carbs and sugars. After a while you feel ill when you eat them. To me it seems as though second stage develops when you quite naturally start eating less and less frequently.

I have a feeling this system is not only beneficial to your health but also financially quite beneficial for your purse. It becomes quite bewildering to the one has been making your meals for the last 30 years though. Unless of course she is on the same station as you are. Apparently O.Pos blood groups need a little carbs consistently to feel good, once they have flicked their systems over to wanting to digest healthy fats and a little proteins. Very important is, that if in the early stages of this process, you do crave sugars and carbs, you can even binge on them. You will quickly find that it is unpleasant doing so. That is why the word "dieting" is irrelevant with this technique. Don't even think of it.

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Hi, I too have been using this technique for quite some time..... I don't believe coffee needs to be drunk Black! I put coconut milk powder, whole raw milk and stevia (quite alot of the two milks too), I drink 2 cups of this every morning at around 6-7 am; then i usually don't eat my first meal till 2 or 3 pm, at which time i eat alot..... usually full fat raw cheese w/ what ever else I have a sizeable meal, i don't count calories never have and i make sure its all nutrient dense. Have a hip issue over the past 3 or so years so can't do alot of physical sweating type exercise so this has helped me tremendously w/ keeping trim and healthy and sane. I welcome the hunger feeling now as i know this is my body using up excess storage reserves etc. LÖve Dr. M's website and all his products i shop here often.

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coffee might not be best for everyone, especially those sensitive to caffeine or have adrenal fatigue/exhaustion. .a better option is to do roasted dandelion root tea (tastes and looks like coffee), mix in some beef collagen protein powder, and either some butter or coconut oil, and perhaps creatine if you're trying to avoid muscle loss during the fast. these are all easy and quick to digest so they should assist in the fasting benefits while also providing the body with a little fuel

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the moment you put butter or coconut oil or some fat (healthy or not) to your body, you are breaking your fast.

That bulletproof might work for some people but should not be considered part of a fast.

a fast is no or minimum calories...check all the calories you put in your body with the butter and coconut oil.

why do you think you will not feel hunger after your coffee? because all the calories on it! It is like a small meal.

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right, I was more suggesting an alternative to IF for people who have conditions like hypoglycemia, thyroid issues or adrenal fatigue. technically you're right, it's not "fasting" as in abstaining from food or calorie intake.

I agree with the salt and lime mixed in with water you mentioned as i do this often, only thing i add is some buffered vitamin c and rose hips powder. i do this one a few days a week and don't eat until about 10:30 or 11:00am. . . a few other days I do IF where I don't eat anything in the morning and then some mornings I eat breakfast with healthy protein, carbs and fat. i just listen to my body and adjust accordingly

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I believe that you can accomplish the same thing by taking digestive enzymes every so often in order to give your body a rest from the work of creating its own, just for a while. During these periods of enzyme supplementation, your body can ramp up its other work, such as detox and weight loss. This is what I hear. It makes sense to me, since I don't like to be without food for any more than 12 hours. I do not have "adrenal fatigue" - the latest syndrome fad disease. I just work fairly hard and need my food.

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I'm curious: Do you feel "adrenal fatigue" is over-used by those who have a need to be labeled with a "syndrome", or do you feel as though it doesn't really exist at all and is a made-up problem?

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[Horsea](#) Joined On 05/07/2007

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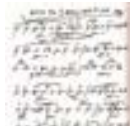
@Acroyali. Thank you for asking. This is my opinion: No one is committing any kind of crime by describing their lack of feeling good as "Adrenal Fatigue". No one is making anything up; when you feel

bad, you are not playing games, you really do feel bad.

I think that sufferers simply want to put a name to their overall poor health and inability to function optimally, and somehow "adrenal fatigue" is just replacing "hypoglycemia" or "candida". Long ago, it was "neurasthenia". These terms just kind of slithered onto the scene. If you go to a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine, you will find that underperforming, feeling-unhealthy people can have several syndromes at once that go by colorful, interesting names. I have found this to be more useful.

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Good to know, Horsea, and in a lot of ways I agree with you. I do believe the adrenal glands can be (what I would call) "fried"--overworked, over-taxed, and overused to the point where they decide they no longer can work properly. But yes--I see a lot of ads, people, tee-vee doctors saying that they can "cure" it in a week with this one magic pill just discovered in the depths of the Amazon rainforest, etc...and people buy it because they want to feel better, and want to feel better now. True healing takes a long time, but if you can heal on a very deep level, the benefits will far outweigh the cons of not having instant gratification!

I had a pet come down sick several years ago. It took over 18 months to heal her, holistically. And it wasn't a case of masking the symptoms and just keeping her away from her triggers. True healing happened, but it wasn't fast. We put TCM to use with her, and the results were outstanding.

Thank you for your answers, and clarification!

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[Dougibegoode](#) Joined On 03/09/2016

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Several years ago I started a 10 day fast of which one was allowed the following: Double distilled water, all the lemon water one wanted of any strength/no sweeteners, beet juice, celery juice as well as all of the green drinks one wanted as in the powdered type/unflavored. I also used a bottle of liquid herbal detox - Flora Essence I believe.

I went through 2 cans of powdered greens and 1 bottle of the Flora herbals in 6 days and on the 7th morning right after a bowel movement the following happened.

Anything that resembled body pain was gone and my mind was much clearer. For over 2 days I had to learn to walk again as there was no pain or resistance in my lower back, hips and knees - as when I stood up, I would walk like a puppet with knees lifting very high as there was no resistance or pain.

This freedom lasted about a week and slowly over the next week I was back to the usual pain and stiffness.

To this day, no GP, ND or health professional can explain how or why this worked. At the time I was on a vegetarian diet for about a year - I am no longer a vegetarian. As far as food goes my only suspect was/is

sprouted wheat and mixed grain bread.

I believe I will duplicate this fast again next month as I have been diagnosed with Chronic DOMS and will start using protein based enzymes on an empty stomach after the fast. As a side note, I have been using powdered turmeric and ginger with freshly/finely ground black pepper as per therapeutic dosages.

The best to all.....

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[Pete6119](#) Joined On 01/10/2016

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An excellent reference for intermittent fasting is The Obesity Code by Jason Fung. For the past 8 months I have been able to rebalance many of my metabolic issues by eliminating most non-fiber bound carbs, consuming only high quality fats (80-85% of my energy) and moderate protein (my limit is 0.5 grams per pound of ideal body weight). I have also managed to lose a significant amount of body fat while increasing my lean muscle mass. I also had my blood tested for micronutrients and minerals in order to allow the least impedance to healing my metabolism.

For those wanting to try intermittent fasting, the easiest approach is to become keto adapted, then skip breakfast on day one. If you find this easy to do, then try skipping breakfast and lunch. I found it quite easy to fast 20 hours, then only eat in a four hour window (called 20:4). This way I always get to eat with my family, but I am not encumbered by the need to stop for meals during the day. And the best bonus is that thorough autophagy, while I am fasting, I am actually feasting on my own fat!

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[N_caywoman](#) Joined On 06/12/2009

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Hypoglycemia often linked with adrenal fatigue. Cortisol is responsible for raising blood sugar levels when they drop too low. When cortisol levels are too low the body is not able to boost blood sugar up to a healthy level. Many people with hypoglycemia tend to have low cortisol. Then you wake up at 3am with anxiety and or feeling nauseous in the morning. Hypoglycemia and insulin resistance are not mutually exclusive. Blood sugar imbalances impact the brain's ability to make neurotransmitters. Neurotransmitters synthesis depends upon an appropriate insulin response, not too little or too much. This in a large part explains why brain chemistry imbalances are such a huge issue. Flooding the brain with neurotransmitter supplements popular today may bring you a little time or a little relief, as long as blood sugar imbalances dominate brain function you will never enjoy lasting success. From a functional medicine approach our adrenals must produce enough cortisol to free glycogen from the liver and muscles to stabilize our blood glucose levels between meals and especially overnight. Glycyrrhiza, a component of licorice has been shown to slow the breakdown of cortisol so it circulates longer in the system and can thus help keep blood sugar levels steady. Eat a breakfast of high quality protein and fat. Eating protein will dissipate nausea. If you have hypoglycemia eat a small amount of protein every two to three hr, a few bites will do. Find your carbs tolerance and stick to it. Never eat high carb foods without some fat or protein.

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[emriev](#) Joined On 10/23/2015

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If I try to skip a meal, and/or reduce meats and protein, or eat two meals a day (plus a few light snacks), I get shaky, lightheaded and feel overall unwell. Those symptoms will last at least a day past the day I was fasting. Some may say that's my body getting rid of toxins, but I don't know... I have a very specific diet where I eat 99% fruits, veggies and meats. The info I've heard on fasting makes so much sense, I would like to be able to fast occasionally, but it makes me so unwell! I don't know how to do it safely! I'd have to be in bed the whole time which isn't very functional.

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[N_caywoman](#) Joined On 06/12/2009

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You might have sugar imbalances. Investigate that. Google When your "normal" blood sugar isn't normal.

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[Leonus](#) Joined On 01/19/2013

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Hello, another good one of Dr. Mercola, but still leaves me a question.

I've been looking on the comments for some information about IF and exercise and didn't find anything.

Anyone knows how this can match with sporting life? For example, if you train strenuously 2-3 hours per day at week, and goes often to the mountains on the weekends.. which could be the main recommendation/suggestion to do it right?

In my case i'm a sport climber, but for sure this will be good information for other people here too.

Thanks from Chile!

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Turbo996 Joined On 05/25/2011

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Here's some info on fasting, ketosis and exercise. To get to my current level required fasting and I now fast every single day for at least 13 hours with no problem at all:

I've bounced back and forth into ketosis (burning fat as my primary fuel) the past three years (while looking for optimal health) and I exercise a ton. For example, 3,000 miles of mountain biking last summer (May - September), five days per week of heavy weight lifting in the gym the past 15 years, P90X ab-work, pull-ups, push-ups, etc. Being in ketosis and maintaining intense exercise is NOT easy; and it's especially difficult during the transition to ketosis. Once ketosis is realized, however, you'll notice these changes:

- 1) Increased endurance - great for marathon mountain biking, for example
- 2) Increased VO2 Max - much easier breathing on the bike (less CO2 expired is the reason)
- 3) decreased strength - not so great for weightlifting
- 4) decreased power - not so great for weightlifting

On a 24-hour fast, I'm able to mountain bike 65 miles hard with ZERO fuel, less water, and noticeably less heavy breathing. But I have lost some strength in the gym, and that's been a difficult thing to absorb (as going to the gym is done to get stronger, etc.)

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joe6966 Joined On 11/10/2006

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Wow, I am doing this daily peak fasting for months. I also started to use MyFitnessPal as per your article in Dec. 2015 on that. After 130 days I have only lost 34 pounds, so not at the 2 pounds per week level. Thirteen days eating under my 1240 calorie allowance and still the same weight. I eat in an 8 hour window most days.

Not impressed!

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daniboz0411 Joined On 04/15/2013

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In January 2014 I read about Intermittent Fasting for the first time on this website. I believed the science behind it actually made sense (contrary to the logic behind other diet restrictions) so I did the daily fast (constrict eating window to 8 hours a day) every day for about 4 months. I was almost 150 lbs when I started. By the end of 4 months, I had lost 20 lbs which is pretty significant for someone of my size. The change in my weight and internal body was amazing - I felt light, flexible, and yet stronger than I ever had (and still do 2

years later - same weight). Also, I have endometriosis with very painful episodes and since intermittent fasting I have reduced my pain considerably (less weight and less inflammation, I'm guessing).

Like Dr. Mercola noted, some people end up making this way of eating a lifestyle. I certainly have... more because I simply don't get hungry like I used to and am not prompted to eat randomly like I used to. Since I don't want to keep losing weight, I make sure I get enough calories each day, even if I'm only eating within a certain window.

However, my ironic dilemma now is I would like to GAIN some weight back, like even 5-10 lbs, but I find it nearly impossible! I used to gain weight super easily my whole life but now I can eat as much as my 6'2, 240lb husband and not gain anything...

Does anyone have suggestions on how I can gain back some weight in a healthy manner, considering my body is now in fat-burning mode? Do I need more protein? I have been trying to gain more muscle to help encourage weight gain but it is not happening very fast... have only noticed a little extra padding on my hips :/

Please let me know what works!

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[ros8032](#) Joined On 04/28/2016

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But most of the population is chronically stressed and don't even know it. Chronic stress seems to be the norm by which we all function. I only realized it though therapy and two bouts of gastritis.

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[ljbe44](#) Joined On 06/19/2006

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Protein, what about whey instead of animal flesh. I just don't want and cannot stomach animal flesh?

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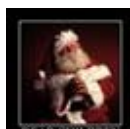


I have no experience with whey, but if someone (with experience) knows the answer I would imagine that whey is no different than animal protein: It's not all created equal. There's a huge difference between pastured eggs and grass fed beef vs. grocery store eggs and grain fed "beef" being sold for \$.39 a pound. So I imagine there's quality whey, and not-so quality whey.

While I eat animal proteins, I'm pretty picky about where they come from--not only from a standpoint of humane treatment, but of what we do and don't get through eating it. Can you stomach animal foods that aren't flesh (cottage cheese, yogurt, eggs, etc?)

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[Reverend Alan](#) Joined On 12/29/2007

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""""be sure to pay careful attention to hypoglycemic signs and symptoms,""" This is when I wake up at 3 AM wide awake and can't get back to sleep. I would test my BS and discover it had skyrocketed. I thought it was the high blood sugar that woke me up, gave me nausea, sweats and confusion, but now it seems that in my sleep my blood sugar drops too low and then blood sugar is released to compensate but too much too fast and that is what is causing me to wake up confused and with nausea. Even taking a nap in the afternoon I can wake up with nausea, confusion, chills and sweats, craving sweets. The rest of the day until I go to bed is a complete waste of sitting in front of the TV waiting to feel well enough to do something.

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Hypoglycemia often linked with adrenal fatigue. Cortisol is responsible for raising blood sugar levels when they drop too low. When cortisol levels are too low the body is not able to boost blood sugar up to a healthy level. Many people with hypoglycemia tend to have low cortisol. Then you wake up at 3am with anxiety and or feeling nauseous in the morning. Hypoglycemia and insulin resistance are not mutually exclusive. Blood sugar imbalances impact the brain's ability to make neurotransmitters. Neurotransmitters synthesis depends upon an appropriate insulin response, not too little or too much. This in a large part explains why brain chemistry imbalances are such a huge issue. Flooding the brain with neurotransmitter supplements popular today may bring you a little time or a little relief,as long as blood sugar imbalances dominate brain function you will never enjoy lasting success. From a functional medicine approach our adrenals must produce enough cortisol to free glycogen from the liver and muscles to stabilize our blood glucose levels between meals and especially overnight. Glycyrrhiza,a component of licorice has been shown to slow the breakdown of cortisol so it circulates longer in the system and can thus help keep blood sugar levels steady. Eat a breakfast of high quality protein and fat. Eating protein will dissipate nausea. If you have hypoglycemia eat a small amount of protein every two to three hr,a few bites will do.find your carbs tolerance and stick to it. Never eat high carb foods without some fat or protein.

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[chesebroughd](#) Joined On 07/25/2009

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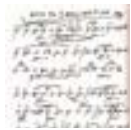




I have been doing intermittent fasting now for about a year. I really like it! I like the feeling of being completely "cleaned out" before I eat again! I enjoy that feeling. But here's a question for someone. I have been adding coconut oil and butter to my tea in the morning. I usually drink about 4 -5 cups on average. Sort of like "bullet coffee" but from what I have read, not as intense on the amounts. That said, would anyone think that is technically breaking my fast? Because of the fats and calories? Interested in thoughts.

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For me (personally), I do consider it a fast breaker. Some do not; as they feel 100-200 calories (even in drinkable form) is still a fast, and a fast is only broken during a meal. It's a very personal topic for a lot of people.

However, if you experience no ill effects and it's something you enjoy, I'd say go for it! It's not like you're breaking your fast with doughnuts with sprinkles, and a big glass of Nestles Quik chocolate milk ;)

If nothing else, you could try drinking your tea with nothing added and see how things go for a day and use that experience to decide what to do in the future.

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[dav8567](#) Joined On 06/23/2014

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How does this work with Doug McGuff's book Body by Science? For those of us trying to maximize our muscular genetic potential. The traditional body builders preach protein 20g at a time every couple hours....

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[mhelen2002](#) Joined On 02/01/2012

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Cortisol dysregulation

Please describe symptoms, treatments and causes of this condition.

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[kathymk1](#) Joined On 05/02/2014

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I skip breakfast and eat between 11am - 7pm, but I do take my vitamins when I wake around 6am, I wonder if that counts as 'food'.

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[javiersfox](#) Joined On 04/30/2012

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If the calories on them are very low, I wouldn't mind.

You are better with only your vitamins and a glass of water than the folks who think that drinking a cup of coffee with butter and coconut oil and they considered themselves they are fasting.

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[mende123](#) Joined On 05/01/2008

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Can a person with heart disease, lung, diabetes, and wears a pace maker do intermittent fasting?

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[Steve C](#) Joined On 08/29/2006

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I think that if it were me with those health issue, I'd be looking into it quite seriously mende123. However, I'd probably be starting (and sticking for an extended period), with the eating window approach as it is so easy to scale - you can start with delaying breakfast and move up and down the time scales until you find a sweet spot for you. You can check it out with your doctors too of course. I believe there is a presently ongoing study into 72-hour fasting to prepare cancer patients to be more resilient in chemotherapy, so it seems reasonable to consider it for you. I've never seen anything to suggest that it will regulate your

rhythms though.

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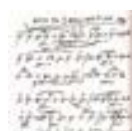


Reading further down here [mende123](#), I came across what seemed to be a reference to this study www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/.../23877060

which seems to make specific reference to skipping breakfast. So maybe some more research would be a good idea :-)

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I agree with Steve C wholeheartedly. If you have a trusted doctor you have a good relationship with, I would talk with them about it.

Even though humans aren't pets, there are some interesting and promising case studies that have been done on animals with organ diseases (or early stage wasting diseases like cancer) that show fasting intermittently can improve almost everything in their blood work profile, extend longevity and slow (or, in some cases, reverse) degenerative diseases. I'm more involved in the veterinary field than I am the human medicine field, and though the two aren't necessarily one in the same, when one (field) has an exciting new success, I feel the "other" field ought to take notice.

A veterinarian I trust fasts his own animals twice monthly, offering only home made bone broths and all the water they can drink. I'm starting to think I ought to try the same thing, as he says their energy levels go up ("good" energy, not nervous/anxious/"I'm hungry" energy)!

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[pat4829](#) Joined On 09/20/2015

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I have surgery a week from today on May 6 for a malignant tumor in my upper colon. What kind of fasting - eating should I be doing this week. I want to be healed!

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[grulla](#) Joined On 01/17/2012

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Try google searching <alkaline forming foods cancer>, but make sure that any fruit is low in sugar (fructose). Almonds and chestnuts are the only commonly available alkaline forming nuts. Green (raw) and non/less starchy veggies are the best;

www.acidalkalinediet.net/anti-cancer-diet.php www.chimachine4u.com/AA.html

articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2010/08/27/warning--fructo.. This article shows the safer and potentially beneficial alkaline forming, lower end of Dr. M's Glycemic Index for Fruit chart. Limited quantities of the safer fruit still need to be observed as per article recommendation of 15 grams.

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[dpolster22](#) Joined On 03/25/2010

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look up Ty Bollinger, "The Truth About Cancer". you will learn what you need to know.

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[lmschultze](#) Joined On 08/29/2010

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I have a question about the intermittent fasting program. What is OK to drink during the fasting hours? I know water is always OK, guessing unsweetened teas would be good. What about black coffee? Or coffee in the morning with a splash of cream? Of course I do organic coffee and organic cream. I choose to give up breakfast and usually have no trouble restricting my eating to 6-8 hours, but cannot or do not wish to give up my morning coffee with a bit of cream. Am I sabotaging the program?

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[hiIs](#) Joined On 09/26/2007

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You should be ok with that, but you will need to count the calories of the cream towards your allowance so you may find you would rather use those calories towards something else. However, I did manage a successful 2 year 5:2 fast regularly using mayonnaise or oil and vinegar on my salad. Maybe a smaller coffee and a correspondingly lesser quantity of cream? Regardless of which you choose, go for it! And good luck!

Presumed you are doing the 5:2?

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[javiersfox](#) Joined On 04/30/2012

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A fast is zero or very low calories, you should watch about the calories in the cream.

I rather drink the juice of one small lime in the tea than the cream.

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[Steve C](#) Joined On 08/29/2006

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I stick to zero calories myself lmschultze, so black coffee in the morning is okay in my protocol and an occasional green tea. But the rest is always water, and I do seem to need quite a bit.

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[spectrumkiddoc](#) Joined On 10/29/2015

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Would drinking a cup of tea with about 1/2 cup of milk in the morning derail one's Peak Fasting schedule in terms of blood sugar and other biochemical factors?

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[Labtech S](#) Joined On 06/09/2007

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All I know is that if I have to give up my tea with milk (no sweetener added) in the morning, I will fail, no uncertain terms. ;) I am no expert on the topic but have learned that the psychological component is strong and I think (my opinion) is it's important not to "derail" yourself. On the technical side, if you were fasting for a blood test, the milk would not be allowed.

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[javiersfox](#) Joined On 04/30/2012

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I wouldn't considered a fast if you put milk on your tea, especially whole milk, because you will have to digest the milk.

I just drink a glass of water with a pinch of sea salt and a squeeze the juice of a lime on it, in the morning and that's it.

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[8taj30](#) Joined On 11/30/2010

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Drinking milk will break the fast. Plain tea is OK, though.

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[chrisphillips](#) Joined On 09/27/2010

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looking for the most accurate blood glucose meter, not the cheapest one (ie bayer, which the article mentioned). evidently there is a lot of variability in this market. anyone know a great meter?

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Freestyle Lite and Freestyle Freedom are the most reliable and accurate meters. This opinion comes from all the research and experimenting we've done with meters for my T1D daughter.

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[Naana503](#) Joined On 10/28/2015

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What's the best food to eat after Peak Fasting for, say 18 hours?

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[grulla](#) Joined On 01/17/2012

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Welcome to the Mercola health forum "Naana503". As an example, I've been doing intermittent fasting (IF), each and every day, for about two+ years now, with an 8 hour eating window starting around 5AM with a typical breakfast with very few carbs. But if one wants to consume healthy carbs, breakfast or midmorning (especially for fruit), is the best time to do that as you would have the rest of the day to burn those carbs.

Then at noon, I have my big and last lunch time meal/dinner for the day. That not only gives me a 16 hour IF window, but also provides me about 6-8 of hours to empty my stomach before going to bed, which is far and above the minimum 3-4 hours bed time empty stomach that is often recommended here on the forum. Also, I should mention that I consume a midmorning snack, like fruit, perhaps an organic apple, once my stomach has emptied out and digested the breakfast for at least a couple hours.
www.mindbodygreen.com/0-4970/The-Major-Rule-for-Eating-Fruit.html

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[jec4077](#) Joined On 05/28/2008

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So I am not hungry for food or water at all when I wake up. And can often go til 1 pm without either. I'm 53 female. Skinny ankles and arms. Big belly :(I need to lose 25 lbs. so?? I've been told my whole life I need to eat breakfast!! So if I eat lunch at 1 (turkey sandwich with lettuce. Maybe a few chips. Pickle /or leftover chili and rice w salad/or stir fry chicken broccoli rice and usually a green smoothie) then I'm not hungry for dinner til 6-630.broccoli Stir fry. Or Rice Noodles and meat sauce w salad or organic pizza w salad or BBQ chicken and roasted potatoes w salad Buuuut I sially do have some dessert. Goat milk ice cream! Or strawberries w whipped cream. Or organic peanut butter cup or mango sorbet. And sometimes popcorn while watching tv!! :/ sooooo is it good I'm not hungry til 12-1??? If I ate popcorn at 8 or 9 pm then ??? Ideas? Thx!! :)

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0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[lipstic](#) Joined On 05/03/2015

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I'm not sure what kind of ideas you are looking for but at a quick glance that is a lot of carbs. I would be lowering your carb intake and upping your healthy fat intake.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

11 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[Brian_Australia](#) Joined On 01/23/2014

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Especially the popcorn.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

7 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[rrealrose](#) Joined On 11/10/2011

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jec4077

Agree with above comments, your carb load is high, many of the items you list turn to sugar the instant they hit saliva in your mouth! Suggest you may want to check out Dr Mercola's free, updated Nutrition Plan available on this site. It is loaded with video clips and information about food choices to best suit your type. Here's the link to get you started, and can be found anytime using the above search box:
www.mercola.com/.../index.htm

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8 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[grulla](#) Joined On 01/17/2012

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Not everyone starts their typically 8 hour intermittent fasting (IF) eating window as I do at the beginning of the day, from 5AM to 1PM. However, by shifting that 8 hour eating window to later in the day, you risk going to bed with food in your stomach (unless perhaps you're a night owl). It is always recommended

here on the Mercola forum, not to eat at least 3-4 hours before turning in, especially when it comes to various carbs. Healthy carbs, like organic fruit/fructose, are best consumed early in the day (at least a couple hours for fruit after the breakfast), in order to give your body a chance to burn off those (healthy) carbs over the course of the remaining day. www.mindbodygreen.com/0-4970/The-Major-Rule-for-Eating-Fruit.html

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[spectrumkiddoc](#) Joined On 10/29/2015

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Exercise with weights. Dramatically reduce carbs from grains and also sugars. I am 51, and people say I look like I am in my late 30s. I still wear a bikini and get looks. My daily diet looks like this: 1) tea with 1/2 cup milk in the morning (because Mom was a Brit), 2) lunch of salad, peanut butter on 1 slice of whole wheat sprouted grain bread at 11:30am, 3) snack at 4:00pm of veggies and a protein or sometimes a meal at that time, which would be salad and a piece of quiche, 4) meal or snack at 6:00pm, which might be something like an Asian stir fry with plenty of healthy oils or a taco salad without chips.

So the difference is, I am lifting weights and eating a lot of vegetables. If I add popcorn, lasagne, dessert, or something else that is high carb to my usual regime but keep calories constant, I start getting a belly in about 2-3 days. Skipping gym workouts for more than 2 days causes my body to feel weaker and ache, because exercise keeps my arthritis at bay.

Best thing for you would be to hire a trainer and learn how to use weights or join a body pump type class (nothing with too much dancing, because you won't build muscle). Muscle is key to maintaining a slim youthful physique, as you age. Exercise suppresses appetite, helps you sleep, and improves brain chemistry. Also ditch the carbs. If you hate this lifestyle, just decide you are going to live your later years with belly fat and enjoy the foods you love. It's a personal choice, and no one is judging you. Find a way to be happy with who you are :)

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

9 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[njlady](#) Joined On 11/21/2006

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try going gluten/grain/sugar free for a couple of weeks...see how that works

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

6 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[dragonfly1027](#) Joined On 09/18/2010

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I tend to do a fair amount of intermittent fasting. However, there was one day a few months ago that I did an all-day fast. I'd planned to continue the fast for 2 or 3 days depending on how I felt when I got up on Day 2. Well, I felt weak and woozy and almost like I might pass out. I immediately checked my blood glucose level to find it at only.....65! So I discontinued the fast and ate breakfast and other food throughout the day. I'd fasted from 1 to 3 days in the past (last Fall), and this had not happened. It wasn't a water-only fast - I also drank herbal teas and a couple of spirulina/chlorella-based green drinks. Would you have expected my glucose level to go UP or DOWN following a one-day fast? I would like to know how to prevent this glucose drop so that I can do more fasting. Speaking of which, do you know if fasting can starve cancer?

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0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[Steve C](#) Joined On 08/29/2006

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@dragonfly1027, there are reasons that you would find your blood sugar plummeting and if you had waited, you may have found your body responded and began breaking down fat and you would have been fine. During a 72-hour water fast, your triglyceride measures would also be seen to 'deteriorate' - I know this personally because I happen to have had a blood test during my last 72-hour fasting period, and Buhner's book on fasting also reports that it is likely to happen.

I'd say that you may not have done enough to shift your body over to burning fat instead of sugar before your extended fast. My personal experience is that even now, five years after taking the shift away from sugar and going through those horrible cravings, if I now take in refined carbs, wheat and/or sugar, my body has to go through a mini shift to get back to not demanding sugars again. In practice, I get cravings again but they last a day or two instead of two or three weeks as they did the first time I did it. I find that happens after the Christmas break, when sugars and wheat find their way into my diet, for example. I do some preparatory work on my diet before a longer fast but would do my routine 24-hour water fast straight away without preparation. Hope that helps.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

4 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[Suzubick](#) Joined On 12/22/2009

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Maybe you could ease into fasting?

My understanding is that fasting cannot starve cancer. Cancer cells break down the body tissues of the sufferer, literally eating the person from the inside out. Both muscle and fat are converted into sugars that the cancer uses to fuel its growth. That's why cancer patients have such spectacular weight loss. Cancer patients often fast involuntarily, because the flood of metabolic wastes produced by the breakdown of their muscles and fat make them feel too nauseated to even think of food without vomiting. As a result, they may not eat for several weeks prior to death.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

8 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



Andrea1956 Joined On 06/01/2011

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Are there more people who can comment on the subject of whether fasting can starve cancer? This is a great question and I would like to know more. Unlike Suzubick, I have come to understand the opposite; that a cancer patient who fasts can cause his body to "eat" the cancer as it looks for sources of energy.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



Titoburen Joined On 10/10/2012

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Check out the video series "The Truth about Cancer"... I think you might have to buy it now to see it, though. :(

LOTS of good information on what to eat to build your immune system and let your own body kick cancer's butt.

Personally, I would not want to stress my body more when it was already trying to fight cancer. I would want to provide my immune system with better bullets (i.e. good food)... but, I'm not a doctor.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



acsmith Joined On 01/07/2010

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This is an excellent way; however, what about if one is hypothyroid. Also some friends have diabetes. I thought we need to have more regular meals? I hope someone knows the answer

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0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



stanleybecker Joined On 11/12/2012

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REAS the article - adrenal fatigue/ hypothyroidism and diabetes are all covered by the contents of the article - possibly Dr Mercola should have added the caveat - "and always read the article "

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

5 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[Brian_Australia](#) Joined On 01/23/2014

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Smithy, my own belief is hypothyroidism is caused by a high carb diet (as is diabetes) and then hypothyroidism causes a vitamin D deficiency, which then exacerbates the hypothyroid condition in return. That can happen regardless of having regular meals or not. As Stan said, reas the article, apply the protocols and replace the carbs energy sources with natural fats and moderate protein for energy, then get more sunshine and you'll be fine.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

8 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[Suzubick](#) Joined On 12/22/2009

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I'm hypothyroid and hypoglycaemic. I need to eat rather frequently during the day, high in fat and protein. I probably practice peak fasting in that I like to have my evening meal around 6pm, and then I don't eat again till breakfast, which could be any time after 6am - basically, when I wake up. I'm always very hungry when I get up, and if I don't eat I crash. I never set out to do any kind of fasting; this is just the way I was brought up!

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[BigFoxy](#) Joined On 12/25/2012

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I am hypothyroid as a result of having weak adrenals from an autoimmune disorder. Adrenals cool the body so if they don't work well, the body in its wisdom, won't heat itself up (thyroid). Ayurvedic medicine recognizes this "adrenal/thyroid type".

None of this was caused by diet, but by extreme work stress from people I worked for. I was also sick in the same way as a child (dysfunctional family) so the people we surround ourselves with is really important, especially if you are sensitive.

My diet is ayurvedic for adrenal/thyroid type: high quality animal protein at all 3 meals a day as I am rebuilding adrenals and 2 eggs a day as cholesterol is used by adrenals to make hormones. Meals include vegetables and little grain and keep blood sugar levels fairly constant.

Diet was really good and played tennis tournaments before becoming sick so that definitely wasn't the cause. Was 18% body fat and now 25% but still in better shape than most americans so won't take synthroid this time. There was a period as an adolescent that I gained weight and the adrenal/thyroid issues had to resolve themselves for me to lose the weight.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[beyondtherainbow](#) Joined On 10/25/2007

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I'm busy most days and find intermittent fasting easy (forgetting to eat). When I do eat I find I want to eat as varied a meal as possible... for example a late breakfast would be boiled free-range egg with cheese on a rice cracker and raw garlic, then homemade yoghurt with added ground sesame powder, walnuts, raisins, kiwi and banana, a swig of organic coconut oil and a swig of apple cider vinegar plus 4 capsules of turmeric and a mercola magnesium supplement. I find with intermittent fasting that I only have two meals to be able to fit in what I consider healthy food... So my question is, is it good for the body to have to deal with such a variety of food in one sitting (not a big meal in quantity just variety)? I read a book on Chinese Qi Gong many years ago and it said keep meals simple and don't mix protein and carbs... and in this way the body's digestion isn't put under the strain of having to deal with so many food types and combinations.

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0 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)



[Brian_Australia](#) Joined On 01/23/2014

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I think protein, say the egg, with some carbs afterwards, as in kiwi and banana, should not be a problem. An egg with a high carb scoop of ice-cream or sprinkled with sugar or drizzled with honey, now that could be a problem. In any event, if you get the mix wrong, your tummy will tell you - commonly known as a gut's ache.

[Mark as Spam](#) · Posted On 04/29/2016

6 Points · [Like](#) | [Dislike](#)

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Peak Fasting — How Long Should You Intermittently Fast?



April 29, 2016 | 167,626 views

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By Dr. Mercola

Do you struggle with excess weight? Are you showing signs of insulin and leptin resistance? Is your fasting blood sugar above 100? If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, you may want to reconsider not only *what* you eat but *when* you eat as well.

One lifestyle factor that appears to be driving not only obesity but also many chronic disease processes is the fact that we eat too frequently.

Research reveals that a vast majority of Americans eat *all day long*.¹ Most also consume a majority of their daily calories late in the evening, and this type of eating pattern is a recipe for weight gain and metabolic dysfunction.

The reason so many struggle with their weight (aside from eating processed foods that have been grossly altered from their natural state) is because they rarely, if ever, skip a meal.

As a result, their bodies have adapted to burning sugar as its primary fuel, which down-regulates enzymes that utilize and burn stored fat. In addition, our ancestors didn't have access to food 24/7, and biologically your body simply isn't designed to run optimally when continuously fed.

Biological Repair and Rejuvenation Occurs During Fasting

Research has confirmed that many biological repair and rejuvenation processes take place when there's an absence of food, and this is another reason why all-day grazing triggers disease. Your body never has the time to clean out the garbage and regenerate.

When you go without food for a period of time, the resulting metabolic changes stimulate a natural cleansing process known as [autophagy](#), or mitophagy in the case of mitochondrial autophagy, in which your body detoxifies and rids itself of damaged cells.

When you're in constant "feast mode," your body forgoes many of these benefits. That does not mean you need to (or should) starve yourself for extended periods of time though.

Simply cycling between periods of eating and fasting on a daily or weekly schedule has been

shown to provide many of the same benefits as complete fasting, where you don't eat for several days.

What's so Great About Intermittent Fasting?

Intermittent fasting is a term that covers an array of different meal timing schedules. As a general rule, it involves cutting calories in whole or in part, either a couple of days a week, every other day, or even daily, as in the case of the scheduled eating regimen I prefer to use myself.

As noted by Time magazine, intermittent fasting is becoming increasingly popular, and for good reason — it works. And it works whether you're trying to lose weight or simply improve biomarkers for optimal health.

But what exactly makes it so effective for weight loss when other calorie-cutting diets have such a high failure rate? As noted in the featured article:²

"The body converts food into glycogen — a form of energy that it can store for later use. Your body then squirrels away that glycogen in both fat cells and in your liver.

'If you're eating all day, the stores of glycogen in your liver are never depleted,' [neuroscientist Mark Mattson, Ph.D.] says.

On the other hand, after about 12 hours without food your liver runs out of glycogen, at which point your body starts drawing energy from the glycogen stored in your fat cells."

In a nutshell, your body was designed to: a) run on fat as its primary fuel, and b) cycle through periods of feast and famine. Today, most people do the complete opposite. They eat sugar and net carbs (total carbs minus fiber), which is virtually identical to sugar metabolically, all day long.

So, by mimicking the eating habits of our ancestors, who did not have access to food around the clock, you restore your body to a more natural state that allows a whole host of biochemical benefits to occur.

Fasting May Hold Key to Cancer and Dementia Prevention

Besides normalizing your weight, intermittent fasting is also one of the ways by which you can significantly boost mitochondrial health and energy efficiency, which is important for chronic disease prevention, thereby cutting your risk for health problems like heart disease and cancer.

Intermittent fasting can also have a very beneficial impact on your brain function, and may even hold the key to preventing Alzheimer's disease.

Mark Mattson, Ph.D. has conducted animal studies showing that when mice, genetically engineered to develop Alzheimer's, are put on an alternate day fasting diet, they develop Alzheimer's around the age of 2 years, which in human terms is equivalent to being 90.

Normally, they develop dementia in half that time — around 1 year, equivalent to the age of 40 or 50 in humans. When he put them on a junk food diet, they developed Alzheimer's around 9 months! Mattson's research suggests that alternate day fasting can boost a protein known as brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) by anywhere from 50 to 400 percent, depending on the brain region.

BDNF activates brain stem cells to convert into new neurons. It also triggers other chemicals that promote neural health, and has been shown to protect brain cells from adverse changes associated with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

Which Intermittent Fasting Schedule Is Right for You?

There are several intermittent fasting schedules to choose from, and the "right" one for you is the one you will actually comply with. Here are a few of the most popular eating schedules. For even more fasting protocols, including ones that are specifically designed to be combined with [exercise](#), please see this previous [intermittent fasting article](#).

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Alternate day fasting

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to alternate day fasting, whereas the other 10 percent drop out within the first two weeks.

One caveat: more recent research

⁵

shows that if you want to lose weight, you *can not binge* on non-fasting

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At that point, you cease to experience frequent hunger pangs, and can go for hours without a dip in energy. Fat, being a slow

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breakfast or dinner. Which one to omit is up to you. However, if you choose to eat dinner, it's important to avoid eating for at least three hours before going to bed.

The rationale for this recommendation

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I have recently appreciated that this is another important factor that can help optimize

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What You Eat Still Matters

While some intermittent fasting programs claim you can binge on whatever you want on non-fasting days, I strongly recommend paying attention to the quality of your food regardless of the program you choose.

Since you're eating less, you'll want to make sure you're getting high-quality nutrients from your food. Healthy fats are especially important, as intermittent fasting pushes your body to switch over into fat burning mode. If you feel tired and sluggish, it may be a sign you need to increase the amount of healthy fat in your diet.

Cutting net carbs (total carbs minus fiber) is equally important. Fructose is particularly troublesome as it activates a key enzyme, fructokinase, which in turn activates another enzyme that causes your cells to accumulate fat and resist letting any of it go. If you're overweight, insulin-resistant, or diabetic, reducing [sugar consumption](#) is really key. So, as a general rule — whether you're fasting or not, and regardless of the fasting schedule you're on — I believe it's important to eat a diet that is:

- High in healthy fats. Many will benefit from 50 to 85 percent of their daily calories in the form of healthy fat from avocados, organic grass-fed butter, pastured egg yolks, coconut oil, and [raw nuts](#) such as macadamia, pecans, and pine nuts.
- Moderate amounts of high-quality protein from organically raised, grass-fed or pastured animals. Most will likely not need more than 40 to 80 grams of protein per day. (I recommend [limiting protein](#) to one-half gram of protein per pound of lean body mass.)
- Unrestricted amounts of fresh low net carb vegetables, ideally organic.

Peak Fasting — How Long Should You Fast?

Besides when and what to eat, another common question relates to duration. Just how long must you continue intermittently fasting? While some embrace it as a lifestyle (and this tends to be particularly true of those who restrict their daily eating to a specific window of time), it's not something you have to do for the rest of your life. I don't recommend any of the other types of fasting as they have major shortcomings from a metabolic perspective that I will discuss in my new book on this topic.

As a general rule, I recommend a new type of intermittent fasting that I call Peak Fasting, which is done every day rather than a few days a week. However you can certainly cycle in off days due to schedule or social commitments. The key is flexibility. But if circumstances allow, seek to do it every day. The process is simple.

Stop eating three hours before bed and don't have your first meal for at least 13 hours. Measure your blood sugar at that time. You can do this every half hour, and when it starts to dramatically rise, this is an indication that you need to break your fast and eat food.

Why? Because suddenly rising blood sugar when you haven't eaten is a sign that gluconeogenesis is setting in. By definition, gluconeogenesis refers to the production of glucose from a nonglucose precursor, such as protein. Once your body starts converting protein to glucose, you're breaking down your lean muscle mass, and this is NOT healthy by any means.

This is also why I strongly recommend avoiding longer complete fasts. Research shows you can lose about $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of muscle mass per day if you fast for two days or longer! If you reach 16 to 18 hours and your blood sugar still hasn't spiked, feel free to eat if you want to.

If you're overweight and/or have symptoms of insulin and leptin resistance, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or full-blown [type 2 diabetes](#), continue intermittent fasting until your insulin/leptin resistance improves, and your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol ratios, or diabetes normalizes. As an example, if you need to lose 50 pounds, you're looking at about six months or so of intermittent fasting, after which you can revert to eating more regularly.

After that, all you need is a "maintenance program." Keep track of your markers, and if they start sliding, go back on the fasting program of your choice again for a number of weeks or months. Alternatively, you could intermittently fast for say one month, twice a year, as a form of maintenance.

Remember over half of the U.S. population is either diabetic or prediabetic, so measuring blood glucose is a powerful and cheap test. You can purchase the Bayer meter⁶ on Amazon for \$7 and the strips are less than 25 cents apiece. I have tested many meters and this is the clear value winner. For less than \$1 or \$2, you can accurately and simply identify the ideal time of your intermittent fast.

If you are new to fasting, it may take some time to work up to 13 hours, but once you start activating your fat burning system you will easily achieve this. The most effective way is to limit your net carbs (total carbs-fiber) to under 40 grams per day and do not exceed more than 1 gram of protein per kilogram of lean body mass.

Tips for Making It Through the Transition Period

The toughest part of any intermittent fasting plan is getting through the initial transition, which can take anywhere from 7 to 10 days. Maybe even longer for some people, depending on how insulin-

resistant you are, and other factors, like your weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and if you are not consistent with the fasting and wind up cheating.

About 10 percent of people will report headaches as a side effect when they first start fasting, but the biggest complaint is hunger. It may be helpful to remember that part of why you're craving food is because your body has not yet made the switch from burning sugar to burning fat as its primary fuel. As long as you're running on sugar, which is a fast-burning fuel, frequent hunger pangs will be the norm. Fat is far more satisfying, as it's a much slower-burning fuel.

Remember, a diet high in carbohydrates severely inhibits your body's ability to produce lipase and use fat as an energy source. Lipase is inhibited because of *high insulin levels*, and your insulin rises in response to eating foods high in carbohydrates, so it's important to *replace* carbs with healthy fat in order to successfully make that metabolic switch-over and become an efficient fat burner.

Another factor that can trip you up during the transition period is purely psychological. If you're used to grazing throughout the day, it may take some time to break the habit. One trick is to drink more water. Oftentimes people mistake thirst for hunger.

Peak Fasting May Be the U-Turn You've Been Looking For

The vast majority of Americans are overweight and most would therefore benefit from intermittent fasting for a period of time. (Adrenal-fatigued individuals are perhaps an exception to this rule). When done correctly, you will inevitably lose weight and your insulin and leptin receptor sensitivity will be optimized, which is really important for optimal health. Fasting also:

- Decreases the accumulation of oxidative radicals in your cells, thereby preventing oxidative damage to cellular proteins, lipids, and nucleic acids associated with aging and disease.
- Raises human growth hormone. Research⁷ has shown fasting can raise HGH by as much as 1,300 percent in women, and 2,000 percent in men, which plays an important part in health, fitness and slowing the aging process. HGH is also a fat-burning hormone, which is another reason why fasting is so effective for weight loss.
- Inhibits the [mTOR pathway](#), which plays an important part in driving the aging process by increasing mitophagy and mitochondrial biogenesis.

If you decide to attempt intermittent fasting, be sure to pay careful attention to hypoglycemic signs and symptoms, and if you suspect that you're crashing, make sure to eat something, like [coconut oil](#). I do not recommend fasting if you're living with chronic stress (adrenal fatigue), or have cortisol dysregulation. Pregnant or nursing mothers should also avoid fasting, as your baby needs plenty of nutrients during and after birth, and there's no research supporting fasting during this important time.

A row of social sharing buttons. From left to right: a 'Share' button with a share icon and '3.8K' above it; a 'Tweet' button with the Twitter bird icon; a 'Share' button with '6' above it; a 'Share' button with '23' above it; a 'Share' button with '312' above it; and an 'Email' button with an envelope icon and '49' above it.

[-] Sources and References

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- ³ Cell Metabolism July 7, 2015: 22(1); 86-99
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Story at-a-glance

- » Intermittent fasting helps reset your body to burn fat for fuel, and helps optimize insulin sensitivity and mitochondrial health and energy production
- » Intermittent fasting involves cutting calories in whole or in part, either a couple of days a week, every other day, or even daily. It's one of the most effective interventions for normalizing your weight
- » Fasting has a number of health benefits, including improved cardiovascular health, reduced cancer risk, gene repair, increased longevity, and dementia prevention



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