Intermittent Fasting

Beginners Guide

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH INTERMITTENT FASTING TO BOOST YOUR ENERGY AND ACHIEVING YOUR WELLNESS GOALS.

WHAT IS INTERMITTENT FASTING

How it works

Intermittent fasting is a way of eating that allows a window of time when eating can take place along with a window of time when the kitchen is closed. The goal of fasting is to optimize health and for some, promote weight loss. Rather than focusing strictly on *what* to eat, intermittent fasting also focuses on *when* to eat. Fasting has many health benefits when done correctly such as, improved metabolism, anti-aging effects, improved metal clarity, better blood sugar control, and enhanced fat burning.

When fasting, the body goes from a digestive state to one of repair and rejuvenation. During the fasting phase insulin levels drop in response to a decrease in blood sugar which in turn allows the body to utilize stored energy including fat. This metabolic shift turns on autophagy. You can think of autophagy as the bodies recycling service; damaged parts of cells are discarded and the working parts are reused.

In addition hormones such as human growth hormone increase which preserve our muscle and bone tissue.

Fasting is a stressor on the body (similar to how exercise is a stressor), therefore there is such thing as too much. When done correctly fasting leads to improved resiliency. When abused, negative side effects can occur.

Benefits of Fasting

- Improved mood and memory (promotes production of BDNF - protein for brain health)
- Reduced inflammation
- Anti-aging effects (via autophagy - cellular repair)
- Improved insulin sensitivity and weight control
- Improved blood cholesterol and LDL/HDL ratios
- Potential to reduce risk for cancer

Potenial Side Effects

Though the benefits of fasting are tremendous, there are a few things to watch out for. If you are just getting started with fasting, increase your fasting window slowly. If you go too long without eating when your body has not been trained for this, you could experience headaches, lethargy, irritability, anxiety, constipation, or sleep disturbances. By slowly increasing your fasting window you can improve your insulin sensitivity and reduce the chances of feeling any negative symptoms. Also, if you are taking medications, fasting may influence the effectiveness of your medication. If you have any health conditions or are taking any medications, speak with your doctor before fasting.

TYPES OF FASTING

Your Way is The Best Way

There are several different types of intermittent fasting. It's essential to choose a method that suits your individual lifestyle for long-term adherence and the method that will yield your desired results.

16: 8

Most Popular

16 hours of fasting with an 8 hour eating window.

Example Schedule: Have breakfast at 10am and end dinner at 6pm.

Pros: Improved control over hunger hormones, weight loss, and longer period of time with low insulin levels (therefore improving the bodies ability to burn fat). Improved release of human growth hormone which helps the body repair damaged cells.

Cons: Can increase cortisol levels too high for some, which can effect a woman's menstrual cycle and increase stress.

14:10

Most Feasible

14 hours of fasting with a 10 hour eating window

Example Schedule: Have breakfast at 9am and end dinner at 7pm.

Pros: Same as with the 16:8 fasting schedule, just to a lesser degree. One may choose this over a 16:8 if they are feeling anxious, irritable, or dizzy after 14 hours.

Cons: May increase cortisol levels higher than ideal in people with anxiety disorders.

12:12

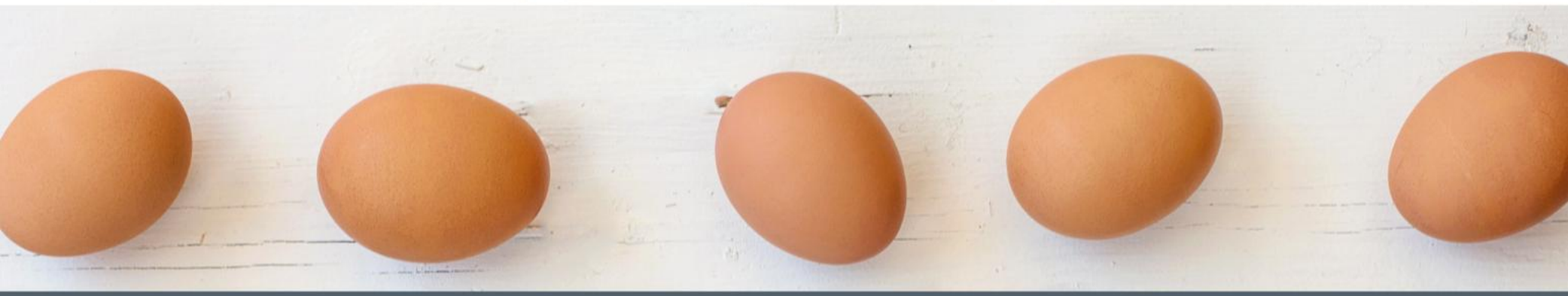
Great Place to Start

12 hours of fasting with a 12 hour eating window

Example schedule: Have breakfast at 7am and end dinner at 7pm. No snacking after dinner.

Pros: Easy to get started with. Minimal to no side effects. There are benefits without risk.

Cons: Will not enter autophagy phase of heeling and may not improve metabolic flexibility as much as with a longer fast.



TYPES OF FASTING CONT.

Your Way is The Best Way

5-2

<u>For Those Who Like Variety</u>

With this schedule you would fast on 2 days of the week and not fast for the other 5 days. Some people do a 24 hour fast on their fasting days while other people do a 16 hour fast on these days.

Example Schedule: Fast on Monday and Thursday (either choose a fasting window or 24 hour fast). Eat as you normally would every other day.

Pros: Allows more flexibility in your schedule while still getting some benefits from fasting such as improved release of human growth hormone, improved gut healing/repair, and improved metabolic flexibility. Also reduces risk of adaptation.

Cons: 24 hour fasts can cause a lot of stress on the body leading to increased anxiety and changes in the female menstrual cycle. 24 hour fasts can also cause dehydration.

24+

<u>Maximize Autophagy</u>

This would be 24 hours without caloric intake (or very minimal fat intake such as MCT oil in your coffee). Water is needed!

Example Schedule: Fast from 6pm one evening to the following evening at 6pm.

Pros: More likely to enter the autophagy phase which is our bodies best cleanup system. In this phase our body gets rid of dead cells, repairs DNA, builds new DNA, and reduces inflammation.

Cons: 24 hour fasts can cause a lot of stress body leading to increased anxiety and changes in the female menstrual cycle. 24 hour fasts can also cause dehydration.



INTERMITTENT FASTING DO'S AND DON'TS

Make an Impact

Intermittent fasting can be a very effective strategy, but only when done correctly. Just because you are shortening your eating window, doesn't mean you will benefit if you binge eat, or eat unhealthy foods during that time.

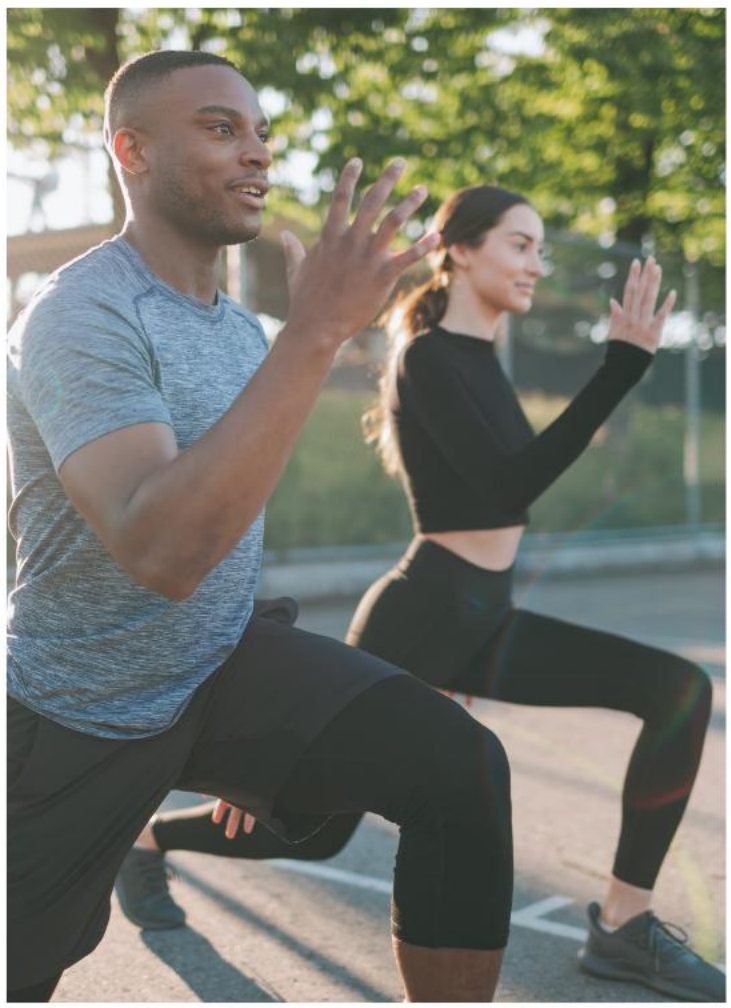
One of the most important things is how you break your fast. The first thing you eat after fasting can make or break the progress you will see. Clean protein and healthy fats should be the focus of the first meal of the day. High fiber vegetables or fruit can be included when well balanced with protein and healthy fats (see next page for examples).

Hydration is also very important, plain water is best to have while fasting. Black coffee is also okay, though be sure to pay attention to how your body feels having caffeine while fasting. If you are anxious or jittery, avoid caffeine while fasting and opt for decaf. Also avoid artificial sweeteners, creamers, or flavorings in your water or coffee while fasting.

For women who are still menstruating it is important to adjust the fasting window during certain times of the month. Longer fasts are better tolerated a few days after your period begins though two week into your cycle. The last couple of weeks before your period, it is best to shorten your fasting window.

Fasting Essentials

- Break your fast (first meal of the day) with a meal high in protein and healthy fats
- Limit or avoid caffeine if you feel at all anxious or jittery during your fast
- Drink water while fasting
- Gradually increase your fasting window
- Listen to your body. If you are lightheaded, irritable or have another other symptoms, shorten your fasting window.
- Perform low to moderate intensity workouts in a fasted state. If you are new to fasting HIIT workouts, endurance training, and heavy lifting may not be best while fasting.



BREAK-FAST IDEAS

Maximize Your Benefits

Keep blood sugars controlled and reap the benefits of fasting. You will want to avoid high carbohydrate meals as this will spike blood sugars too quickly and reduce gains from your fasting efforts. Opt for high protein meals with healthy fats and natural fiber.



Egg Platter

Hard boiled eggs with mixed low glycemic fruit and nuts. Berries, pears, apples, and peaches are some examples of low glycemic fruit.



Tuna Salad

Canned tuna with olive oil, sea salt, and dill over mixed greens, avocado, red onion, cherry tomatoes, and cucumber.



Turkey Lettuce Wraps

Organic sliced turkey, mozzarella, tomato, red onion, and avocado in a lettuce wrap.



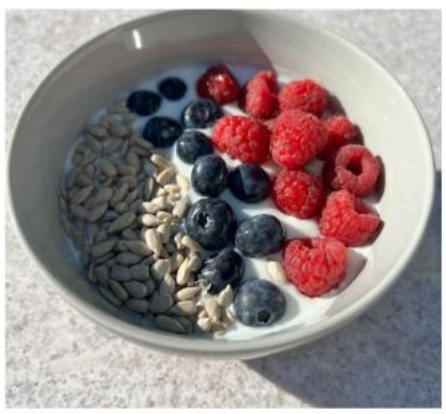
Cottage cheese with mixed berries

Full fat or low fat cottage cheese topped with mixed berries, pecans, and chia seeds.



Mediterranean Omelette

Three egg omelette with goat cheese, kalamata olives, spinach, and fresh basil.



Yogurt Bowl

Greek yogurt topped with mixed berries and sunflower seeds.



Smoked Salmon and Broccoli Salad

Chopped broccoli, red onion, unsweetened dried cranberries, sliced almonds, avocado oil mayo, salt, and pepper, topped with smoked salmon.



Ground Turkey Skillet

Ground turkey, olive oil, paprika, salt, pepper, chopped sweet potato, chopped bell pepper, and spinach.

WHAT TO DRINK WHILE FASTING

Maintain You Fast

Stay hydrated and satisfied.



Coffee
Black or with:

- 1 tsp MCT
- 1 tsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp heavy cream
- Dash of spices such as cinnamon or cayenne



Unsweetened Tea
Plain or with:

- Spices such as turmeric, cinnamon, or ginger



Apple Cider Vinegar

Dilute in water and enjoy.



Broth
Under 50 calories (only for longer fasts, such as a 24 hour fast)

- Vegetable broth
- Bone broth
- Beef broth
- Chicken broth



Water
Plain flat/seltzer or with:

- Squirt of lemon
- Soaked ginger slices
- Pink Himalayan salt.



Unflavored Collagen

The verdict is still out. One scoop of collagen is about 30 calories but there is some uncertainty of whether or not this stops autophagy. Most leaders in the field agree that collagen can be had and you will remain in a fasted state. It may even improve benefits of fasting.