



The Intermittent Fasting Guide

“A new lifestyle to help us all”

Fasting is not a completely new idea. It has been practiced for thousands of years by various religious groups and cultures. Though fasting has been a religious practice historically, it has also been described as a method for helping the body heal. Consider that during the last two decades fasting has been extensively studied and found to be beneficial for reversing metabolic diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Benefits from fasting have been rigorously studied and applied while the dietary trends over many years have produced an enormous list of do's and don'ts, most of which is based on very little science. During this same time the Natural Medicine community has raised the alarm about environmental toxins found abundantly within processed food and its effects on children and adults. Intermittent fasting helps address the negative effects of toxins from our food arising from the environment, processing, and the addition of disease causing additives. Because fasting is additive and does not replace an individual's typical diet, it respects all dietary plans and trends and is thus able to provide benefits in numerous conditions and situations, while reducing the toxic load. Fasting is proving to be an effective lifestyle with a lifetime of potential benefit in improved energy, weight loss, disease reversal and prevention, increased lifespan and healthspan. Excitingly, new methods of fasting and nutritional support are creating opportunities for everyone to successfully follow a regular pattern of fasting.

What is Intermittent Fasting?

The application and benefits of fasting have been studied in many various forms. One very common term in use today is known as Intermittent Fasting(IF). IF is a purposeful avoidance of eating for a duration of time also known as Time Restricted Fasting. It is not a diet with descriptions of diet do's or don'ts as already stated. And IF is not designed to meet a specific diagnosed disease or symptom. This means of course that even individuals who follow

very specific diets such as Keto, Paleo, Vegan, IgG food intolerance, Candida, FODMAP, SIBO(you get the picture), can stay on their unique diet plans as desired. Gratefully, IF respects native diets of people throughout the world without forcing dietary changes based on marketing trends or dominant local culture. There are no new required foods to eat, just less of the same traditional foods.

When regularly practiced, IF provides a foundation for a new “eating” lifestyle with significant potential for improving immediate health, reduced post meal fatigue, reduced food cravings, and extended health span. Remember, IF is so flexible in how and when we do it, that it can be accomplished by most individuals and health conditions, even with our busy lives, with minimal coaching.

What are the benefits of IF?

IF restores the natural human metabolism

The benefits of IF are numerous and broad in their effects. One of the most discussed topics in health today is metabolism. Metabolism denotes the calories we burn as a result of naturally occurring hormone production combined with the calories “burned” as a consequence of total body mass and energy expended during the day from activity. Modern living has made more of us more sedentary and constant “snackers”. We have even been told that frequent meals are a healthy way to live. This regular consumption of food along with inactivity has created an unnatural metabolism prone to diabetes, obesity, and heart disease, the three leading “killers” today. IF is the most direct method to restore our natural human metabolism. Our natural or historical metabolism required an abundance of physical activity and frequent exertion even in the absence of food for a duration of time beyond four hours. Our bodies were never meant to be constantly fed. These modern trends are literally killing us slowly.

IF reverses insulin resistance, diabetes, and more

One of the most common and leading diseases of premature aging and death is Type 2 Diabetes. Type 2 Diabetes is a disease of chronically elevated insulin, the leading cause of

which is frequent (every 4-6 hours) consumption of food, particularly grains. Grains and refined sugar increases insulin, cells eventually ignore elevated insulin, but insulin rises to combat elevating blood sugars. Grains have been touted for too long as a healthy choice. But we have known for decades that processed and refined grains were the leading cause of Type 2 Diabetes and heart disease. Fat was never the true villain. The good news is that we can change this pattern. IF is the fastest way to reduce chronically elevated insulin levels and reverse diabetes. The longer we go without spiking insulin, the more sensitive to insulin the cells become and the lower the sugars will fall and the more fat we will burn.

IF is the fastest path to Ketosis

Ketosis describes the body's state or source for energy in the absence of foods that raise blood sugar levels. During ketosis the body is using fat as a primary source of energy, which keeps insulin low. Ketosis has been historically how the body was able to continue to have energy and function in the absence of readily available food. The production of ketones from triglycerides provides many advantages including energy for the brain and body, dampened appetite, muscle growth, and weight loss from fat burning. In a culture of constant feeding we are not often or ever in ketosis, though ketosis is the best state to be in for burning our own fat, losing weight, and staying healthy. IF is the fastest way to enter ketosis and increases dramatically when fasting up to or beyond 16 hours.

IF and the Keto Diet

IF is the most efficient method of getting into Ketosis and can be a productive part of a Keto diet plan. When IF is applied at the same time as the Keto Diet, ketone production and utilization is maximized. While on a Keto diet keep protein intake low (<15%), fat intake high (>80%), and carbohydrate intake low (<5%) to minimize insulin release. Avoid the marketing hype to consume frequent keto meals or keto snacks in order to minimize insulin release and maximize fat burning from your personal fat stores. Exogenous Ketones may help Novice Fasters to avoid the "hangry's". By dosing in the early stages of Novice Fasting in place

of a typical meal, ketones can provide immediate energy, allowing the body with regular fasting to shift toward metabolic flexibility.

IF improves metabolic flexibility

When the body is in ketosis we are burning our own fat stores for use in all cells of the body, including the brain. When we are eating every 4-6 hours we are feeding our cells energy from the sugars we have consumed. When we fast in any pattern we are helping the body become more efficient at switching between fat burning and glucose burning. Fat burning is a very efficient state to be in and when we can switch between these two states easily we have what is called metabolic flexibility. IF fasting is an excellent method for improving metabolic flexibility. Exercise of course also can improve metabolic flexibility, especially when we exercise while in a fasted state.

IF is the leading intervention to reduce risk of most metabolic and age related diseases

Because IF improves metabolic flexibility and is the most effective method for reducing insulin resistance, there are also very positive reductions in other metabolic and age related diseases. Through the reduction of insulin and reversal of insulin resistance, IF reduces cardiovascular disease, dementia and alzhiemers, infertility, breast cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, kidney disease, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, fatigue, and obesity. The leading intervention to reduce risk of all metabolic and age related diseases is again intermittent fasting. Additionally IF is known to reduce inflammation. If we had any such medication or supplement that was able to do all that by ingesting one capsule it would be labeled a “miracle” pill. No such medication or supplement can replace IF.

IF is the most effective method for weight loss without dietary guidelines

Weight loss has been one of the greatest challenges of mankind. IF stands as a new champion in weight loss working often for even the most stubborn of cases. IF could be perhaps the most reliable method for weight loss. When IF is combined with other guidelines to be described later on, results are progressing weight loss without the worry of calorie counting or macro food avoidance. With no dietary guidelines to follow, IF becomes one of the easiest programs to follow. Different forms of IF should be applied over time to maximize weight loss so the body avoids a metabolic plateau. Alternating 16:8 with 20:4 or all day fasting will prevent most plateaus.

What if I have Diabetes or Insulin Resistance?

If fasting insulin, blood sugar, or HgA1c are elevated in labs then consumption of <50gm daily from complex carbohydrates such as grains is recommended to reverse diabetes. The following guidelines will add additional support for insulin resistant or diabetic individuals. These are good rules for everyone to follow either way.

The 5 feeding rules for ideal energy, weight loss or maintenance, and reversing Type 2 Diabetes

1. Eliminate or at least significantly reduce consumption of food and drink with added sugars. Avoid all added sugars from soda, candy, and pastries. Use Keto approved snacks, treats, recipes, with Keto approved sweeteners. Consume natural sugars from fruits as a dessert with cream. Use Monk fruit, Erythritol, and Stevia sparingly as a substitute sweetener for drinks, cooking, and occasional deserts.
2. Eliminate or at least significantly reduce consumption of refined grains. This is easy to do with intermittent fasting as no carbohydrates will be consumed at breakfast for example. Avoid carbs at one of the next 2 meals and minimize the carbs at the other meal to <50 grams. If intermittent fasting for breakfast, plan lunch to keep natural fats high to prolong ketosis. Again if grains are consumed, target <50gm daily preferably at the largest meal of the day.
3. Keep protein intake to a moderate level. For most individuals a single serving from animal sources once daily should be sufficient.

4. Increase consumption of natural fats from avocados, olives, butter, flaxseed oil, ghee, coconut oil, and MCT oil.
5. Mix up intermittent fasting from 16:8 to 20:4 to 5:2 for example. When weight loss plateaus consider a change in the style of fasting or mixing it up.

IF can reduce exposure to toxic food additives

The alarming rise in autoimmunity, allergies, food and EMF sensitivities, and mast cell disorders among many adults and now our children is a cause for great concern. There is no known explanation for this immune plague, but many posit it is due to the ever increasing toxic exposure in our environment and manufactured foods. Many patients report feeling less ill and improved energy by avoiding food generally and while intermittent fasting. IF allows sensitive and ill individuals an opportunity to heal healthily and reduce toxic exposures and additives so often found in food including GMO sugars from beet, corn, and potatoes. IF serves the interest of all Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS) or mold sensitive patients as well as autoimmune and immune compromised individuals. IF also fits well with detox therapies such as [Sauna Therapy](#), [Detox Footbath](#), and [HBOT Therapy](#).

IF is the leading therapy for extending life and healthspan(healthy aging)

Research now confirms that old or decaying cells in the body can persist leading to inflammation, damaged tissues, and premature disease and aging. These persistent cells have been labeled “zombie” cells. Our body has a method of removing “zombie” cells known as autophagy. Autophagy is a process in which the body breaks down old and dysfunctional cells and recycles the usable proteins or parts to make newer efficient cells. This is anti-aging or age reversal at the cellular level. Without autophagy inflammation and free radicals will speed the process of disease onset and premature aging and death. Autophagy is suppressed in a state of constant eating wherein the body's energy needs are regularly supplied by the foods we consume. Fasting is the most effective method to stimulate autophagy and it's free. Studies on fasting and aging suggest those who fast even 24 hours once a month will live 8-10 years longer.

IF increases muscle mass

One of the historic myths of fasting is the loss of muscle mass and physique as a result of prolonged fasting. IF has been established to increase growth hormone which provides energy, burns fat stores, and promotes muscle growth. The added support of sufficient sleep, adequate protein intake, and resistance training provides the best combination with intermittent fasting in maintaining and gaining muscle mass.

IF improves energy and mood

It is surprising that IF improves energy and lessens hunger cravings. The supposed suffering from fasting is an unvalidated myth. It is not surprising that IF increases the joy of food. It seems the constant feedings have stealthily removed the purpose and pleasure out of eating. Again, no suffering and more joy. What diet was able to provide it both ways at the same time? Answer: None. What then are we waiting for?

What baselines labs and assessment should I do before I start fasting?

Many of the benefits of fasting, such as weight loss, energy, and improved mood, are easily validated through personal experience without the need of feedback from assessments or labs. But many of the observed benefits associated with reduced risk and reversal of disease conditions, require observing improvement in various labs over a period of 4-12 weeks. A baseline assessment before beginning fasting determines where we are starting and helps define where we intend to be after 12 weeks. I recommend the following fasting labs and assessments before beginning a fasting program:

CBC- A complete blood count observes healthy red and white blood cell counts

CMP- A comprehensive metabolic panel describes our fasting glucose, kidney function, liver function, and electrolytes. Elevated liver enzymes may be an indicator of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. Elevated glucose is a warning of diabetes and insulin resistance.

HgA1c- This blood marker represents the average blood sugar over a 3 month period. This marker elevates late in the disease process of diabetes and is thus a marker for a long history of insulin resistance. Intermittent fasting over a 3 month period is likely to positively improve this lab.

Lipids- A lipid panel provides evidence of fasting triglycerides and LDL cholesterol(bad guys) both of which can reduce in time with intermittent fasting.

CRPs- C-reactive protein high sensitivity measures non-specific inflammation that is present in the body. Any weight loss as a result of intermittent fasting will reduce inflammation generally and can be tracked over the following weeks.

Insulin- Insulin should be very low on a fasting blood test. An elevated insulin level on blood tests is a sure sign of insulin resistance, which appears many years before diabetes is ever diagnosed. This is the most important lab to run as chronic elevation leads to increased risk and progress of many serious diseases. IF can improve fasting insulin in an incredible short few weeks.

Blood Pressure- Blood pressure can be tracked by your physician as well as on your own with an automated cuff. Elevated blood pressure is a cardiovascular risk which is known to fall within healthier ranges with long term IF.

Weight- Weight loss is often a welcomed and even desired side effect of IF.

These laboratory assessments represent the minimum required baseline labs. Your physician may recommend other labs to evaluate hormone levels, nutrient levels, inflammation, and appropriate labs of suspected diseases based on your symptoms and

concerns. Labs can be completed every 4 weeks to evaluate progress for the first 3 months. If significant progress has been made and fasting is now a part of your regular lifestyle, labs may be completed every 3-12 months afterward to monitor continued response and progress.



How is intermittent fasting accomplished?

There are many options for intermittent fasting all of which may be experienced until finding the one or combination that works for you. Our resource for helping everyone find success with fasting utilizes the knowledge base and nutritional products from [Fastwell](#). Fastwell™ is a fasting support company which provides individualized programs and supplements which lead to a consistent fasting practice with achievable goals leading to individual mastery. The application of daily fasting is attainable for nearly every individual with any range of health concerns, fears, or personal health challenges. Fastwell™ offers the most comprehensive fasting support program tailored to each individual seeking to master fasting.

Fastwell™ has divided intermittent fasting into 4 progressive programs with variations within each which allows for each individual to adopt some form of fasting sufficient to notice encouraging benefits. Click on each link below to review the options and guidelines. We would generally recommend starting as a Novice FASTER and progressing from left to right as your confidence and abilities improve.

[Novice FASTER](#)

[Semi-Pro FASTER](#)

[Pro FASTER](#)

[Master FASTER](#)

Considering individual needs, challenges, and diagnoses, some may find fasting not to be a challenge, and thus will reach the Semi-Pro or Pro Fasting status quickly. Others will need to build ability and confidence and as such they can find great success still as a Novice FASTER.

Fastwell™ also offers a line of supportive supplements that provide just the right nutrients to sustain us in our fasting states while we develop metabolic flexibility. The customized use of each supplement is also described in each of the fasting programs.

Sustain Premium Electrolyte

Sustain Premium Electrolyte is a refreshing addition to water that delivers the optimal level of electrolytes while fasting and helps prevent fasting headaches. The premium electrolyte blend includes an optimal balance of RealSalt* (sodium), magnesium, and potassium. Sustain is sweetened with all-natural, low-carb Lo Han Guo (monk fruit) to minimize insulin response and with less than 1 gram of carbs it will keep you in ketosis. Stir one scoop of Sustain into 8-10 ounces of cold water once or twice a day while fasting to improve your experience and keep in the fasted state.

Boost Pre-Workout Drink

Fasting increases your natural adrenaline and promotes the release of human growth hormone giving you plenty of energy and added muscle growth. Boost Pre-Workout Drink has been designed specifically to keep you in a fasting state while helping you perform optimally during your workout. Drink Boost 30-60 mins before starting your routine for more energy and power during your workout and the nutrients your body needs to support recovery. Because of the added energy with fasting and the addition of Boost, it will be easier to stay in a fasting state longer, thus optimizing fat burning. Stir two scoops of Boost into 8-10 ounces of cold water once a day while fasting to improve your workout and speed recovery while staying in a fasting state.

Curb Wellness Shake

Curb contains the optimal level of high fat and moderate protein to cut cravings while keeping you in a fasting state. Curb is made up of healthy low-saturated fats and omega-3s as well as a rich-tasting proprietary blend of whey protein that digests gradually so it can keep you satiated longer while also preserving lean muscle mass. Choose between Macadamia Chocolate or Madagascar Vanilla. For daily fasts (16-20 hours) Use Curb one time towards the

beginning of the fasting window, when cravings are strongest, or when your co-workers decide to bring donuts to work. For full-day or multi-day fasts use Curb when hunger pangs are strongest or most distracting, especially at the beginning of a fast or certain times of the day. Limit to one or two servings per day for the best results. Use Curb at the end of a fast to help transition back into eating. Stir one scoop of Curb into 16-20 ounces of cold water once or twice a day while fasting to cut cravings and keep enjoying the benefits of fasting.

Don't forget the BIG Picture!

It is so easy to get lost in doing so many little things that we can forget why we are doing it all. The hope of increasing longevity can motivate us to make positive changes. Longevity defined is the balance of lifespan (living longer) and healthspan (living vibrantly). Most individuals seem to agree that they would prefer to only live longer with a high quality of health. Thus vibrant living, living life fully in the present, is the greater goal superseding length of life.

Since choices that increase lifespan still contribute to a vibrant life, it is useful to become educated in the techniques of increased life expectancy. Increasing lifespan equates to living longer by actively opposing the progression of common diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and cancer so often influenced by genetics and environmental interactions. The six leading alternative therapies not promoted by modern medicine to reduce genetic and environmental impacts of disease onset over the lifetime include nutrition, exercise, sleep, stress resilience, physiologic prescriptions, and detoxification.

Lifespan choices do contribute to an enhanced healthspan, but healthspan is generally hardwired and requires a proactive approach decades before onset of the concerns. Cognitive, physical, and emotional functioning contribute or distract from the quality of life at any age, but are more disrupting and difficult to maintain as we age.

Diagnostic labs and brain imaging more accurately predict cognitive decline leading to earlier preventions. The variety and level of physical activity through our life becomes a significant predictor of physical decline as we age. The lack of social engagement or a sense

of purpose are small predictors of future emotional resilience and stability in an aging population.

Intermittent fasting contributes to the big picture as it effectively addresses many of the concerns associated with aging that affect lifespan and healthspan. It is a foundational idea upon which many other ideas can be built or added upon to contribute to reversal of and prevention of healthspan decline. Fasting in its many forms has been found to reduce the risk of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, hypertension, dementia, and joint pain, all leading concerns of aging and quality of life. While death is unavoidable, living vibrantly is a choice requiring precise action, with benefits appreciated in the moment and giving hope in the future.

Question most often asked about fasting

Can I consume any food or water while intermittent fasting?

Fasting has been historically a very rigid practice defined as avoidance of food and sometimes water for a period of 24 hours extending to days and even weeks. The last decade of research has confirmed insulin control as the leading health concern and benefit from fasting. Due to the fact that elevated insulin is the leading culprit, and knowing that fasting is the leading therapy to reduce insulin secretion, is there any food or drink that when consumed has no or very limited effect on insulin secretion? YES.

You can consume anything that does not elevate insulin. Secondly, you can consume anything that does not have calories which generally elevate insulin. Fat is the exception as it does not raise insulin in the body after consumption. If a food does not cause insulin to rise when consumed, then the state of ketosis is continued and fat burning is optimized. Still, fasting's best benefits are recognized in the complete absence of any food and drink beyond 24 hours. Knowing how difficult this can be, research has confirmed that some drinks and some food will still promote ketosis and minimal insulin spikes, all of which leads to a "fasting state" with the benefit of not feeling "starved".

Another marker to watch that is much easier to measure on a regular or daily basis are ketones. Ketones are produced while in a fasting state and are a measure of the physiologic promotion of ketosis signifying optimal fat burning. In summary, any drink or food that keeps insulin low and promotes ketone production, is promoting a fasting state. This gives us a little flexibility with intermittent and prolonged fasting as we are able to support our mind and body sufficiently long enough to see fasting's short and long term benefits. Let's discuss a variety of options below that we can consume as needed that have minimal impact on insulin and maintain active ketone production:

#1. Water. While fasting you should consume at least 2 liters daily. There are a variety of things to be added to water that provide a mild flavor and health benefits without adding calories sufficient to raise insulin. You can squeeze lemon or lime or add cucumber slices to flavor. Apple cider vinegar can also be added to your water and sipped through the day. All types of teas and coffee are acceptable, particularly green tea with its possible appetite suppressing benefits. Cinnamon and nutmeg also can be added to teas to enhance flavor and health. Sustain Electrolytes can also be added to water at the beginning or mid day to help maintain electrolyte balance and improve fasting tolerance.

#2. Fats. Fat is another exception that does not affect insulin secretion or stop ketone production. Fats that can be eaten without raising blood sugar or insulin include coconut oil, medium chain triglyceride (MCT) oil, butter, and heavy cream. Coconut oil has an added benefit in that the small chain fatty acids, like caprylic acid, are able to naturally kill yeast and candida species in the intestines. Adding a little coconut or MCT oil to green tea for example provides a little flavor along with a positive intestinal cleanse from yeast and extended energy in the day.

#3 Bone broth. Homemade bone broth from beef, chicken, or pork bones. Vegetables, herbs, and spices can be added to enhance flavor and nutritional value. In the absence of high blood pressure, a small dose of salt should be added to the broth to improve hydration which is vital when fasting beyond 24 hours.

Bone Broth Recipe: Add chicken, pork, or beef bones, vegetables(celery,

cabbage, carrots), 1 tbsp of vinegar, with salt and pepper to taste. Cover all ingredients with water, simmer for 3 hours, then strain and defat. Consume 1-2 cups of broth throughout fasting days.

Can I still exercise while fasting?

Of course yes. Exercise that is completed while in a fasting state is using up our own personal fat stores for the energy requirements. In the absence of sugars from our diet, our body shifts to burning our own fat, producing ketones which feed the brain and muscles so we are able to maintain activity. For added energy use Boost Pre-Workout Drink for extra motivation or Sustain Premium Electrolytes to avoid dehydration. Try to extend the intermittent fasting period as long as able following exercise to promote ketosis.

If I am very active, will I have enough energy when I fast?

You can take comfort in the knowledge that our bodies know how to keep making energy, even in the absence of meals and snacks frequently scattered throughout the day. As we practice fasting, we will become more metabolically efficient and burn fat which provides more calories for energy production than the same amount of carbohydrates. If you reach your goal weight or you are at your ideal body weight, consider one day a week fasting or a 5: 2 to maintain your benefits and to help maximize. Timing of meals and activity can be customized to individual needs. Don't try fasting while hiking the Grand Canyon for example. Do extended day fasting when life is a little slower and stress can be managed effectively.

Will I lose muscle mass or strength when I fast?

According to research, hormones like human growth hormone and testosterone increase as a result of fasting, reduced insulin secretion, and of course strength training. Historic myths of muscle loss with fasting are unsubstantiated. The best stimulus for muscle growth and maintenance is strength or weight training which demands muscle growth from the body. The added support of sufficient sleep, adequate protein intake with non fasting meals, and resistance training provides the best combination for

maintaining and gaining muscle mass. Remember sufficient sleep is also required for the body to repair and grow new muscle as a result of weight or resistance training.

Can I eat high protein and stay in ketosis?

The keto diet is not a high protein diet. It is a high fat diet. Protein can also raise insulin levels. If you eat too much protein you will not stay in ketosis. To stay in ketosis, fat needs to make up >80% of the diet with protein providing <15% total calories. Even as a percentage of total calories to be consumed in a day, 15% is not that high considering the bulk of dietary calories are coming from fat. If you are consuming more protein in place of sufficient fat you are not likely in ketosis or following a keto diet. Again that is alright, if by your intermittent fasting actions you are still in ketosis more hours in the day than not.

I get hungry when I fast, what can I do?

It is important to understand that in the absence of regular eating hunger pains will present. They do not stay permanently and will pass. Try to stay busy or do something active to take your mind off of it until that happens. To prevent the symptoms you can follow the first recommendation to stay well hydrated. Adding Sustain Premium Electrolytes should also be helpful at the start of the day or toward the end of the intermittent fasting period. Consider as a start to the day or mid fasting a cup of green tea with a 1 teaspoon MCT or coconut oil. Best time to consume this would be in the hour before the hunger pains seem to strike to prevent the onset.

Intermittent fasting seems to cause constipation, what do I do?

Due to the infrequent food intake and reduced fiber intake bowel motility may slow down causing constipation. The best way to treat this is by increasing fiber intake

with non fasting meals. Some individuals report that adding a mix of soluble and insoluble fiber with the meals eliminates the constipation. If the fiber intake is ineffective consider Magnesium 400 mg once daily to help with bowel motility.

What do I do with medications while I am fasting?

Many medications can produce side effects while in a fasting state by being absorbed less or working more efficiently. Generally intermittent fasting for 16:8 and even 20:4 should have no effect on medication absorption and dosing. That changes with multi day fasting and that means a reduction in some medications may be required. It is necessary, if you are taking any medication to let your doctor know that you are doing extended day fasting, so adjustments can be made if needed. Close monitoring by your physician would be recommended for multi day fasting in Master Fasting.