

# Intermittent Fasting - The Spiritual and Physical Benefits

Your body is made for fasting to survive the seasonal changes and famines that have occurred over the millennia. Body fat is a virtual storehouse of energy similar to the battery in your cell phone or flashlight. Your body will store fat (charge the battery) in feasting during times of plenty and burn fat during fasting or famine (draining the battery). Cells in your body including the brain, heart and muscle can use glucose (from carbohydrates) or ketone bodies (from fat) for energy.

For thousands of years the human race has fasted due to lack of food and even thrived during what we would now consider difficult times. During these forced times of fasting people noticed an improved communication and relationship with the higher being. So now most religions encourage times of fasting, meditation and prayer.

Fasting can take on several methods including:

- Skip an occasional or daily meal. (Not usually effective.)
- **Intermittent Fasting**
  - **16/8 - 16 hour fast with 8 hours of moderate eating**
  - **18/6 – 18 hour fast with 6 hours of moderate eating**
  - **5/2 - fasting 2 days with moderate eating 5-6 days per week**
- Prolonged fasting for 1 or more weeks at a time. (Not recommended)

All of these options require sufficient hydration and water since we can't live for more than 3-4 days without water. Water

also helps you eliminate toxins released from fat cells.

The New Testament of the Bible, the foundation for the newer beliefs of Christianity, discusses fasting 12 times. In Matthew 6:16 Jesus Christ states "*Whenever you fast...*", not "if you fast". Jesus expects his followers to fast. In Matthew 17 Jesus teaches that serious health issue healing requires fasting and praying.

My first exposure to Christian fasting was in the book *God's Chosen Fast* by Arthur Wallis that my pastor gave me in the 1990's. I've been fasting ever since. I started with skip one weekly meal and have now progressed to intermittent fasting 2 days a week. *One purpose of forgoing food is to spend time meditating and praying during the time it would have taken to prepare and consume the food.*

Spiritual benefits are difficult to quantify from a scientific and medical standpoint. You need to experience it for yourself. The following information pertains to the physical benefits of intermittent fasting from research published in medical journals.

Several studies of Muslim Ramadan fasting, a type of intermittent fasting for one month, found the practice reduces body weight, waist measurement, body fat, blood glucose, blood pressure, anxiety, blood cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL cholesterol, inflammation chemicals and cancer promoting chemicals.

The Journal of Neuroscience published a 2014 summary stating that intermittent fasting bolsters brainpower, protects neurons against injury and

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neurodegenerative disorders (Alzheimer's and Parkinson's), improves energy production in the body and function of the nervous system that controls the heart, intestines, sex organs, thyroid and adrenal glands.

The Journal of Nutrition, Health and Aging published a study demonstrating intermittent fasting in men provided significant decreases in tension, anger, and confusion while improving mood and energy compared to the control group of men. Depression scores were not affected.

The Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics published results showing after 4 weeks of intermittent fasting individuals gained improved spatial planning and memory.

Several adult and child studies find the brain function of attention is not better in fasting and low blood glucose levels. This negative effect is even greater in children. Glucose allows faster brain function while ketones may slow brain function. Cognitive performance is the same in both groups.

Schizophrenia patients with metabolic syndrome may notice worsening emotional symptoms during intermittent fasting.

Some people develop extreme hunger while trying to fast. This can develop if there are physical issues keeping the body from burning fat. We've measured similar issues in failing weight loss programs and discovered water retention and cellular damage worsens in this type of person. Usually this issue resolves with liver support that helps convert fat soluble toxins to water soluble that can be eliminated in urine.

While intermittent fasting may provide many spiritual and physical benefits it may not be appropriate for everyone. Children under 18, people with schizophrenia, diabetes, GERD, hypoglycemia, heart, kidney, or eye disease, pregnant or lactating women should consult with their healthcare practitioner prior to fasting.

## **We Help You Feel Better Faster!**

**We can assist with other issues that make it difficult to lose body fat including:**

- Pre-diabetes**
- Food Sensitivities**
- Diabetes**
- Toxins**
- Craving and eating too much food**
- Low thyroid function**

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