

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with a salad of diced avocado, pineapple, and radishes, garnished with fresh cilantro. The bowl sits on a light-colored marble surface. Scattered around the bowl are more ingredients: a whole red radish, a sliced radish, a lime wedge, and several pieces of pineapple. A grey cloth is visible on the right side of the frame.

HEAL YOUR BODY AND MIND

INTERMITTENT FASTING

The Benefits Of Intermittent Fasting

Losing weight is the primary benefit of intermittent fasting and the reason for its popularity across the world. But burning fat is not the only benefit that intermittent fasting can provide for you.

It is really important that you know and understand all of the major benefits of intermittent fasting. You are going to have some difficult days when you start out with intermittent fasting and if you keep these benefits in mind then it will help you to persist with it and prevent you from quitting.

So let's take a look at the major benefits of intermittent fasting:

Burning Fat

If you stick with an intermittent fasting method you will lose weight. Your body will run out of food energy sources while you are fasting and it will turn to your fat stores for energy. This is a process called "ketosis".

You are very likely to experience a boost in your metabolism when you participate with intermittent fasting. When your metabolism is higher you will lose more weight. Intermittent fasting also helps to reduce your insulin levels. If your insulin levels are too high then this can prevent you from losing weight.

Autophagy (Cell Repair)

By using an intermittent fasting method you will increase the cell repair activities in your body. This process is autophagy which breaks down the cells in your body so that it can eliminate waste cells.

Autophagy will also break down and metabolize dysfunctional and broken proteins in your body as well. With this kind of enhanced cell repair triggered by intermittent fasting you will have added protection against serious diseases such as Alzheimer's and cancer. It will give you more of a chance of a longer and healthier life.

Insulin Reduction

There are far too many people that have type 2 diabetes these days. It is more common with people that are overweight. Diabetes means that your blood sugar levels are elevated and the cause of this is insulin resistance.

Studies have shown that intermittent fasting reduces the amount of insulin in the body. When this happens, blood sugar levels are stabilized. You are much less likely to suffer from type 2 diabetes when you have stable blood sugar levels.

Increased Brain Functionality

You may have heard that when you do something that benefits your body it is very likely to benefit your brain too. Intermittent fasting helps to increase your metabolism which should lead to better brain health.

Some studies show that intermittent fasting can boost nerve cell growth which in turn increases brain functionality. It can also assist with the increased generation of the brain derived neurotrophic factor which helps to prevent depression.

Reducing Inflammation

A common factor in those that suffer from chronic illnesses is that they have oxidative stress. As people age they are more likely to experience oxidative stress as well. The reason that oxidative stress is so bad is that it releases free radicals which can cause inflammation and have an overall negative effect on the body.

A number of studies have proven that intermittent fasting helps to develop the resistance in the body to oxidative stress. Several test show that when someone is intermittent fasting they reduce their inflammation in the body by a significant factor.

So keep these benefits of intermittent fasting in mind so that you can get through the tough times and experience them yourself.

Is Intermittent Fasting Safe?

Everybody is different so it is impossible to say that intermittent fasting will be totally safe for you. The good news is that it is safe for the vast majority of people that participate with it. However, you need to be sure that it will be safe for you.

There are a few cases where intermittent fasting is either not a good idea at all or that caution will be required. It is important that you understand this and make the right decisions. Although intermittent fasting has a lot of health benefits you do not want to put yourself or your loved ones at risk.

Children

If you have a child that is overweight then intermittent fasting could help. But you need to understand that children need calories for their growth and development. It is also essential that they get the right amount of vitamins, minerals and proteins.

You need to be cautious about getting children involved with intermittent fasting. We are not saying that it cannot be beneficial but you need to do it carefully. If a child does not receive the right levels of proteins it can lead to a whole host of health problems.

Diabetics

If you are suffering from diabetes then intermittent fasting can help you but again you need to be cautious. Intermittent fasting can help you by stabilizing your blood sugar levels through the reduction of insulin in your body.

What you need to avoid is your blood sugar levels falling dangerously low during your fasting window. If you are currently taking medication to regulate your blood sugar levels then this is more likely to happen.

It is very important that you consult with your doctor if you are suffering with diabetes and want to do intermittent fasting. Your doctor should be able to recommend an intermittent fasting method that is safe for you. If not then you need to avoid it.

Pregnant Women

Most doctors will recommend that you do not participate with intermittent fasting if you are pregnant. A pregnant woman needs to feed herself and her baby. She needs to consume the right amount of calories here. Nutrients are also vital during pregnancy.

Some pregnant women have used intermittent fasting methods successfully. Usually they achieve this under strict medical supervision. So a discussion with your doctor is essential if you are pregnant and are thinking about intermittent fasting. You may have to wait until your pregnancy is over.

Eating Disorder Tendencies

If you have a tendency towards developing eating disorders then intermittent fasting may not be right for you. Fasting could trigger an eating disorder and if you develop an anxiety about eating then you need to stop fasting.

The trouble with intermittent fasting is that the focus is on not eating. To someone that is disposed to eating disorders this can mean that they start to ignore signals of hunger and it can be very dangerous.

Sometimes, intermittent fasting can lead to binge eating. You have fasted for several hours and now in your eating window you over indulge in food. A lot of eating disorders have this characteristic so intermittent fasting is not a good idea.

You must speak to your doctor before starting with intermittent fasting. They will know you well and any conditions that you have that can make this dangerous for you.

The Most Popular Intermittent Fasting Methods

There have been numerous research studies that prove intermittent fasting works for weight loss and delivers other health benefits as well. If you are considering it then there are different intermittent fasting methods that you can choose from.

All of the popular methods shown in this article will produce results for you. They have all been tested and people have seen good results from them. You may have seen some of these methods before. Some of them are best sellers.

There is a principle with intermittent fasting that you need to understand. The longer that you are able to fast the better results you will achieve. That's why there are so many methods out there that have different eating and fasting windows.

When you are just starting out with intermittent fasting it is essential that you do not try to do too much. It is going to take time for your body to adjust to not eating all day so we recommend that you choose an easy method to begin with. Here are three of the most popular intermittent fasting methods:

1. Lean Gains 8:16

Lean Gains or the 8:16 intermittent fasting method is far and away the most popular. The reason for this is because it is most likely the easiest method to adopt. You have an eating window of 8 hours and a fasting window of 16 hours.

While you will see good results with the 8:16 method even if you eat what you want during your eating window, it is recommended that you change to a healthier diet if this is necessary. You will get better results when you do this. The important thing is that you feel full when your eating window closes.

You will probably already be fasting for 8 hours a day while you sleep so the adjustment to 16 hours of fasting is not as bad as some of the other intermittent fasting methods. This is a great method to get started with.

2. The Warrior Diet 4:20

If you want to see better fat burning results then you can look at the Warrior Diet. This is not for the faint hearted as there is only a 4 hour eating window and a 20 hour fasting window. With only 4 hours to eat it is unlikely that you will be able to consume more than one large meal or two small meals.

This is an intermittent fasting method that we recommend you consider once you have been on the 8:16 method for a while and your mind and body are used to the fasting concept.

3. Eat Stop Eat Fasting For Whole Days

This is another popular intermittent fasting method that produces good results. Here you will eat for a couple of days and then fast for a full day. In a week you are going to be fasting for 2 or 3 days.

Can you handle fasting for an entire day? It is not something that you should do to start your intermittent fasting journey as it will be extremely difficult for you to maintain. But after a while you can think about scaling up to this method.

So we recommend that you start with Lean Gains and 8:16 fasting and get used to this. You can then make the change to the Warrior 4:20 method and finally to fasting full days with Eat Stop Eat. Just start with the easiest method and work your way up.

Scale Up Your Intermittent Fasting

If you want better results with your intermittent fasting then you need to consider scaling up. This means going for an intermittent fasting method that has a longer fasting time than the one you are currently using. Do not even consider doing this until you have spent at least a month from starting out and your mind and body are used to intermittent fasting.

The Dreaded Plateau

If you perform the exact same workout in the gym each time it will not be long before your body reaches a plateau. It gets used to the same exercise and these become largely ineffective. They do not take you to the next level. Unfortunately the same can be true with intermittent fasting.

If you have been using one particular intermittent fasting method for some time you may experience a drop in results. When this happens it is time for you to consider scaling up to a new method with longer fasting windows.

You will lose Water Weight fast

All of us have water weight. With some people this can be as much as 20% of their overall body weight. When you first start with intermittent fasting your water weight will be the first to go whatever method you choose.

This is great as you can look really good after losing your water weight. But most people want to go further than this and the best way to achieve that is to scale up your intermittent fasting. If you stick with the same method for a while you will lose some other weight on top of the water weight loss. But in time you will plateau and need to change for better results.

Start with the 8:16 Method

We would always recommend that you begin your intermittent fasting journey with the 8:16 method or Lean Gains. This gives you an 8 hour eating window and a 16 hour fasting window. This is the easiest method to start in our opinion and you should definitely see results with it.

The time that you stay with the 8:16 method is really up to you. If you are still seeing good results with it then stick with it until you don't see good results. You may notice that you have not lost much weight at all this week compared to last week for example. This is likely to be the plateau point.

Try the 4:20 Method

This is known as the Warrior method and provides you with a 4 hour eating window and a 20 hour fasting window. You might think that this is a big jump to make but it shouldn't be too bad if you have persisted with the 8:16 method for a while. You should start to see better results again when you scale up to 4:20.

Fasting for a Day or more

How do you feel about fasting for an entire day? If you think that you are ready to do this then you could go for the Eat Stop Eat method. Here you will eat for a couple of days and then go a day without eating. This means that each week you will fast for full days 2 to 3 times.

There are other methods where you can fast for up to 36 hours, 2 days at a time, 3 days at a time and so on. Migrate to these slowly having some experience of the less challenging intermittent fasting methods first.

Intermittent Fasting – Cheat Sheet

Heal Your Body And Mind

Step 1: What is Intermittent Fasting?

- A cyclical diet of eating and fasting
- You will have an eating window
- You will have a fasting window
- Don't break the rules of the fasting window
- It works by triggering ketosis
- Ketosis looks to fat stores for energy

Step 2: Benefits of Intermittent Fasting

- Losing weight fast
- Removing waste cells through autophagy
- Reduces insulin to stabilize blood sugar levels
- Increases brain functionality
- Reduces inflammation in the body

Step 3: Commonly asked questions about Intermittent Fasting

- Intermittent fasting does not come from a specific place
- Our ancestors had to do it
- It is safe for most people to do intermittent fasting
- Always consult your doctor before starting
- Begin with the easiest intermittent fasting method

Step 4: Different Intermittent Fasting Methods

- Lean Gains 8:16
- Warrior Diet 4:20

- Eat Stop Eat where you fast for 2 or 3 days each week
- 5:2 method where you eat for 5 days then fast for 2 days
- Fasting for 36 hours once a week
- Alternate days fasting
- Extended fasting
- Choose the method that best suits your lifestyle
- The longer you fast the better your results

Step 5: Your Eating Window Diet

Step #1: Eat what you want to start with

Step #2: Commit to changing to a calorie deficit diet

Step #3: Include lots of fresh vegetables

Step #4: Include lots of fresh fruit

Step #5: Eat healthy cuts of meat

Step #6: Consume healthy fats

Step #7: Eat junk food in moderation

Step #8: Choose a diet that makes you full

Step 6: Getting started with Intermittent Fasting

Step #1: Build on what you already have

Step #2: No re-engineering necessary

Step #3: Consult your doctor first

Step #4: Choose your eating window

Step #5: Decide when to start

Step #6: Plan what you will eat

Step #7: Plan for exercise

Step #8: Get a good sleep

Step #9: If you are hungry drink water

Step 7: Avoid these Intermittent Fasting Mistakes

- Don't quit too fast
- If you make a mistake keep going
- Failing to plan can make you fail
- Don't try to do too much to start with
- Don't choose the wrong diet for your eating window
- Don't forget to introduce exercise

Step 8: Daily Intermittent Fasting

Step #1: Set inspiring goals

Step #2: Use these to motivate yourself

Step #3: Create your schedule and stick to it

Step #4: Decide how many meals you will eat

Step #5: Decide on an exercise schedule

Step #6: Stay hydrated

Step 9: Scaling up Intermittent Fasting

Step #1: You can experience a plateau

Step #2: You lose water weight first

Step #3: Get used to your current method first

Step #4: Choose another method with a longer fasting window

Step #5: Scale up to a new method whenever you need to

Step #6: Use mindfulness to help you transition

Step 10: Habits Best Practices

- Understand what intermittent fasting is
- Intermittent fasting benefits
- Know the commonly asked questions
- Choose the right intermittent fasting method
- Chose a healthy diet
- Get started with intermittent fasting
- Avoid intermittent fasting mistakes
- Daily intermittent fasting success
- Scale up your intermittent fasting