

## 8 Intermittent Fasting Benefits and Tips for Permanent Fat Loss and Healthy Lifestyle

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The weight loss industry is booming, but why are so many people still obese or over-weight? It's simple, because people look for quick fixes and are not willing to make changes to their lifestyle. They believe in following fad diets which help them lose a few kilos, then they go on to reprise their old lifestyle and the weight invariably comes back, so they are caught in a vicious cycle. So is there any [best way to lose weight](#) and keep it off?



Yes, there is, but it's not only about any diet, it is a lifestyle change which helps shed those stubborn kilos. It is called intermittent fasting. Yes, we all have done fasting for various reasons in our life, but have you ever attempted fasting strictly for health reasons? We say health and not weight loss because intermittent fasting is not about losing weight only, it is much more than that.

### What Is Intermittent Fasting? Types of Intermittent Fasting

This is a way of eating that incorporates regular short-term fasts. Fasting is generally abstaining from food for a stipulated period of time. Many people do it for religious reasons, but intermittent fasting is done to help the body lose weight and is one of the [best ways to prevent diseases](#).

We have been inundated by various kinds of diets in the past few years, and most diets advise you to eat every two hours or so, to lose weight. But intermittent fasting has a small eating window; you can eat within that time

frame and close down your kitchen after that. Seems difficult? Not really, if you condition your body. Also, the constant thinking about food gives you a lot of stress.

Intermittent fasting takes that stress away, you can concentrate on your work and not think about how many calories you are consuming. Sounds good? It will be even better when you know about the types of intermittent fasting you can try and choose one which fits your lifestyle.



There are different intermittent fasting methods. Three popular ones are:

- **The 16/8 Method:** This method is all about skipping breakfast every day and eating during an 8-hour feeding window, such as from 12 noon to 8 pm.
- **Eat-Stop-Eat:** Do one or two 24-hour fasts each week, for example by not eating dinner one day until dinner the next day.
- **The 5:2 Diet:** The weekend fasting or just selecting two days of the week to fast. You can consume only eat 500-600 calories on those two days of the week but eat normally the other 5 days.

If you don't feast on the remaining days, you will find this to be a very [effective way to control your cravings](#) and eat healthily.

## The History behind Intermittent Fasting

Our ancestors were more in tune with the fasting and feasting method, since they did not have continuous access to grocery stores or food around the clock. They would sometimes feast when they had ample food and sometimes fast. It was all a part of their lifestyle when they went through periods of feast and famine, and modern research shows that this cycle of eating methods produces a number of biochemical benefits.

## What Happens when you don't eat for a while?

When you try **fasting for fat loss** and don't eat for a while, you will feel certain changes impacting your body. To elaborate, your body starts the process of repairing at the cellular level. It also impacts the hormone levels, so that the stored body fat becomes more accessible.



These are some of the positive changes that occur in your body during fasting:

- **Insulin levels:** Blood levels of insulin dip considerably, which helps in efficient fat burning.
- **Human growth hormone:** The blood levels see a sharp rise in human growth hormone, which may increase as much as 5-fold. If you have high levels of this hormone, it will help in [fat burning and muscle gain](#).
- **Cellular repair:** The body also starts removing toxic waste at the cellular level when it is in fasting mode.
- **Gene expression:** There are changes in the gene and molecular level, protecting the body against diseases, thus ensuring longevity.

## Top 8 Benefits of Intermittent Fasting

An essential feature of intermittent fasting is that you should be able to stick to this lifestyle change for a longer time. Since there are no unnecessary dietary restrictions, you will be able to stick to this lifestyle change with a lot more diligence and patience, and thus will be able to enjoy the benefits of an intermittent fasting diet plan.

- **Intermittent fasting will help in weight loss-** Can fasting help in losing weight? Losing weight is more difficult than we would like to believe. Giving up the foods we like is never easy, isn't it? So if we do it a little differently, just by sticking to an eating pattern, it can help us burn fat lose more weight. Short-term fasting can help us increase the metabolic rate by a good 3.6 to 14%, thus helping you to lose even more weight. People are even able to lose 4-7% of their waist circumference.



- **Intermittent fasting can be a powerful tool to combat diabetes-** Type 2 diabetes has been rearing its ugly head in recent times. Intermittent fasting can be effectively used as a tool to curb those sudden spikes in blood sugar levels or insulin resistance. This benefit is more impactful in men than in women.
- **Intermittent fasting helps reduce oxidative stress-** Oxidative stress is instrumental in fighting inflammation, the precursor to many chronic diseases. Intermittent fasting is, in fact, one way of strengthening the body to fight inflammation and oxidative stress of the body and thus stalls aging in its tracks.

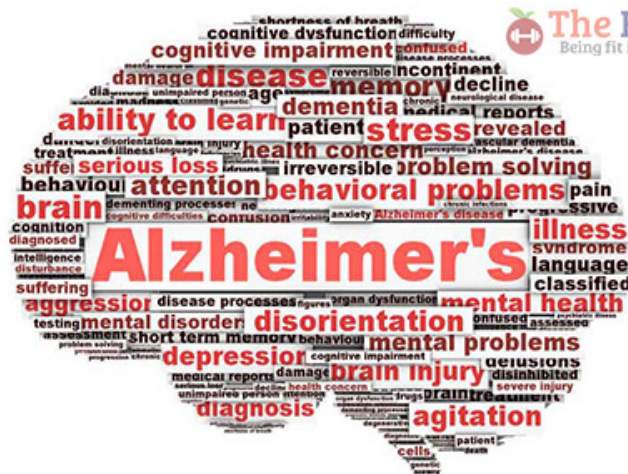


- **It helps protect your heart-** Risk factors like elevated blood pressure levels, total and LDL cholesterol, blood triglycerides, blood sugar levels and inflammatory markers, which put your heart into jeopardy can be controlled considerably with the help of intermittent fasting. Research has shown promising evidence of helping heart conditions in animals studies. However, since most of the studies have been animal based, more substantial evidence is needed to prove the benefits of intermittent fasting on humans.

- **It helps in preventing cancer-** Promising studies have come up with the fact that IF or [intermittent fasting can prevent cancer](#). It works on the metabolism to reduce the risk of cancer and also alleviate some of the sufferings or side-effects of chemotherapy undergone by cancer patients.



- **It helps with your brain-** IF is a powerful tool to combat degenerative brain diseases. It helps generate new nerve cells, which benefit the functioning of the brain. It helps in proliferating the brain hormone BDNF, or Brain derived neurotrophic factor, which combats depression and other brain problems. Also, IF can mitigate the brain damage caused by strokes.
- **Prevent Alzheimer's with IF-** Alzheimer's is a neurodegenerative disease and a cure for the same has not been found yet. Preventing the disease is key, and intermittent fasting can act as a tool to prevent the disease and also reduce the severity of the symptoms.



- **Live longer with the help of intermittent fasting-** With the myriad benefits IF has for disease prevention, it also helps extend your lifespan. There has been substantial scientific evidence that proves that IF can help you live a longer and healthier life.

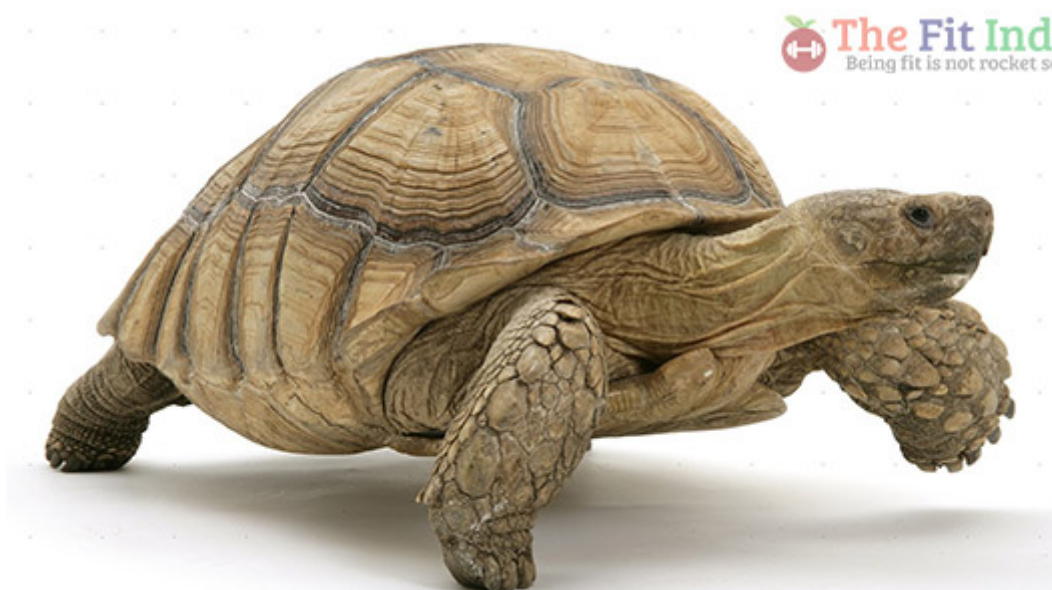
## Tips to Follow Intermittent Fasting

Though an [intermittent fasting diet plan](#) can be a powerful tool to help you lose weight, it has to be done right to get effective results. Eating smart is the key; if you have fasted for a period of 16 or more hours and think that you absolutely deserve to gorge on junk food, then we are afraid it is not for you.

Eating right is still important, if you do want results, that is. But of course, obsessing over calories can be safely nudged aside. Discipline is the key, overindulging isn't. Get your facts right before you jump into this bandwagon of intermittent fasting.

### 1. Eat when you want

When you are following intermittent fasting, you don't really have to refer to your watch continuously to find out whether it's time to eat. Eat when you are hungry and savor every bite. You needn't lose sleep over the number of calories you are consuming. Just eat within the eating window period but stop going overboard.



Usually, on a [weight loss diet](#), you consume about 1200-2000 calories a day, so you can get away with eating within that 5 hour window.

If you are on a quest to gain more muscle mass, you will probably need to consume about 2000 calories per day, so you need to have an eating period of 6 to 8 hours. To get the right amount of calories and to lose weight, you can finish up your meals within 4-10 hours.

### 2. Start Slowly

Fasting requires a lot of diligence, so immediately jumping into 20-24 hours of fast can be difficult. So start by fasting for 12 hours and then extend it for 16-24. Once you are able to fast for 24 hours, you will be able to ensure that you burn fat at a faster rate.

### 3. Water fast

There are innumerable benefits of a water fast. When you are attempting intermittent fasting, drinking more water is probably the best idea. It helps get rid of all the toxins accumulated over the years. It also helps to curb your hunger. The other two beverages which you can try during your fasting period, are green tea or coffee.



Green tea and coffee help increase your fat burning metabolism. If you keep yourself busy and active, you will probably not miss food that much, and the tea or coffee will help keep your hunger pangs under control.

#### 4. Workout while you fast

Does that sound impossible? Your blood sugar, stored carbs/glycogen and insulin levels are running low when you are fasting, so when you exercise while fasting you burn a lot more fat. Consider interval training or HIIT as your exercise of choice and you will end up burning an insane number of calories. Also, you can consume your cup of Joe spiked with coconut oil or grass-fed butter and burn tons of calories. The [bullet-proof coffee is especially suited to intermittent fasting](#).

Here is a sample of a 16-hour intermittent fast, this can be a great start to your fasting protocol. Try and add half an hour extra to the fasting hours as you go, and you will soon be able to be at your leanest best with this unique lifestyle method.

1. Sunday night at 8pm: You eat your last meal and shut down the kitchen officially for that day.
2. Sunday night at 11pm: You hit the snooze button; you have already fasted for a good three hours.
3. Monday morning at 7am: You wish yourself good morning and the realization hits you that you have already fasted for 11 hours.
4. Monday 7am-to-12pm: You have only spent 5 hours of your waking time in fasting.
5. Monday at 12pm (noon): You have successfully fasted for 16 hours.
6. Monday from 12pm-to-8pm: You eat 2 or 3 meals at a time you prefer during this period, and you can cater to the exact number of calories you are designated to have during this time period.
7. Monday night at 8pm: Start your 16 hours fast again.



Don't confuse **intermittent fasting** with any other diet program. Also, it is not your two-week diet or four-week diet; it is something which you need to stick to till you get the desired results. Fasting can reduce your over-dependence on food. Whenever people want to shed the excess pounds, they want a tailor-made diet, but choose one that suits your lifestyle and your body will respond better to it. That is why intermittent fasting just works. There are multiple methods which you can try; yes, it is that flexible. Choose the one which is best adapted to your lifestyle, and you will watch stubborn pounds melting away with ease. It is about losing weight minus the stress that is usually associated with diet plans. So what are you waiting for? Start fasting a' la your ancestors, and believe us, you will soon be in perfect shape and health.

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