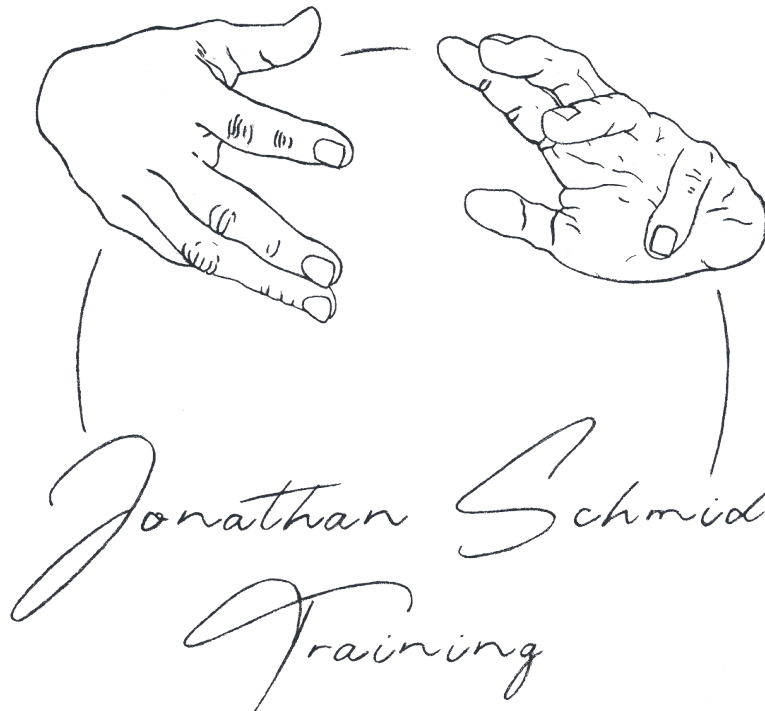


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Introduction

This document will introduce the method of fasting in a prolonged/extended way. Prolonged fasting is, not as intermittent fasting for example, a meal timing plan for your casual everyday life, but more a conscious renunciation of food for more than 24 to 48 hours. Fasting is as old as humanity.

Even the big three world religions mention fasting in their chronicles. The prophets Jesus, Mohammed and Buddha already fasted to strengthen their spiritual and mental powers. Even the ancient Greeks fasted to benefit from the mental clarity and focus that fasting brings. Nowadays, fasting is regularly used in classical naturopathy, as it has a preventive and therapeutic-healing effects on the human organism. It is known as the most intensive of all detoxifying procedures for cleansing, purifying and stimulating the self-healing powers of our own body. Fasting can thus be defined as the conscious, voluntary renunciation of solid food and stimulants for a limited time. It is a diet form within, which requires an individual level of physical activity and rest. When fasting is carried out correctly, there is no hunger and full physical and mental performance can be maintained.

The body's own processes that are set in motion during fasting have been sufficiently scientifically researched and if the fasting is done correctly it is a gift for the body and mind.

In the following, fasting will be explained using a metaphorical example to show what happens in the body and to dispel possible prejudices. The Buchinger method, as one of the most popular therapeutic fasting methods, will be introduced and lastly, I will mention some own fasting experiences that might help or motivate you for your first prolonged fast.

About Fasting

Prolonged fasting

Anyone who tells people who are not familiar with the subject that he/she would like to fast in the near future, or even does some form of intermittent fasting, has probably already had sentences thrown at his/her head like: This can't be healthy! You have no energy at all! Well, I could never leave the house without a good breakfast, because then I'm in a bad mood all morning! How are you going to concentrate if you haven't eaten anything?

On the other hand, it is sufficiently accepted in our society to go on a diet if you want to ,for example, reduce your body weight. Hardly anyone will accuse you of not being healthy. On the contrary, people will eventually approach you with more interest and may consider such a diet for themselves as well. Dr. Jason Fung (he has done a lot of research regarding fasting, check him out on YouTube) mentioned an interesting example in one of his lectures regarding fasting and weight reduction: He asked his son what he would do if he wanted to reduce his body weight. Most people would say: "Eat less calories". He said: "Why should I eat less calories? Just don't eat at all!". In my opinion this hits the nail on the head: moderation is more difficult for most people than complete renunciation. This is also one reason why classic diets only work temporarily, because in the long run, the body falls back into old nutritional patterns - the so-called JoJo effect occurs.

Through advertising, education and society, children are taught at an early age that you should eat food and nutrients regularly so that you have enough energy for the day. The best and most famous example of this is

probably the Kellogg's Cornflakes advertisement, which begins with the sentence "Breakfast is the most important meal of the day". Culturally, with the help of supermarkets, petrol stations, restaurants and fast food markets, we got used to the circumstance that food is available at almost any time of the day and any place. Several meals a day are taken for granted, plus a snack here and a dessert there ensures that the body almost never rests due to digestion.

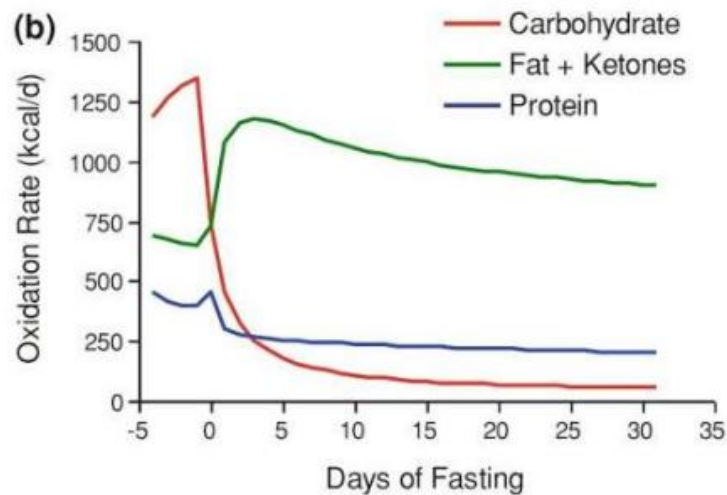
WHAT HAPPENS IN YOUR BODY WHEN YOU FAST

Our body derives its energy mainly from carbohydrates, in addition energy from fat is also possible and proteins can also be converted into energy. The carbohydrates from our food are either burned directly by the body or, if there is no need, deposited in the glycogen stores. This glycogen storage serves as a temporary energy store from which the body can withdraw when needed. When these stores are full, the food components are stored in the fat stores, which have an almost unlimited capacity.

When we eat food, a hormone called insulin is released. An insulin response is mainly triggered by carbohydrates, but also a little by fat and protein. Insulin is a storage hormone, i.e. a door opener for our cells, which ensures that the food is stored in the cells. Insulin channels sugar mainly into the cells of the muscles, liver, kidneys and fatty tissue, but not into the brain. The brain cells can absorb glucose independently of insulin. The body also stores glucose, which it does not immediately need for energy production, in the form of glycogen in the liver and especially in the muscles.

In addition to this key function, insulin has other tasks in the body. For example, it influences the sensation of appetite in the brain. The hormone also inhibits the breakdown of fatty tissue (lipolysis). As a graphical representation one can imagine it as follows: Our body is a big house. We have a refrigerator in the kitchen and a huge freezer in the cellar. The refrigerator represents the glycogen stores, the freezer represents the fat stores. It should be noted that it is always better to take food from the refrigerator than from the freezer, because you have to go to the cellar and you cannot eat the frozen food immediately. The insulin is represented by a policeman who stands at the cellar stairs and makes sure that first food is only to be put into the fridge and food is only to be taken out of the fridge. Every time we eat, we fill our fridge. But it is going to be full at some point and we don't want anything to spoil, so we store everything in the freezer. For many people nowadays the fridge is always full and they eat anyway. With the consequence that they become overweight. Historically, this body fat has to be considered as a reserve for days when there is less or nothing to eat. In modern society, however, these days do not come, which means that many people fall ill with diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer, Parkinson's, etc.

The insulin always indicates that food is coming and thus massively worsens the fat burning process. In a classic diet, where you consume fewer calories than you burn, the situation is as follows: The refrigerator is only partially filled, but the insulin still doesn't release the basement stairs for fat burning, which means there is little or no fat burning. In the long run, the refrigerator is only half full and the body will adapt. Therefore, after some time in the diet, a smaller refrigerator is purchased, i.e. the metabolism slows down. One then reaches a plateau in the diet; a further weight reduction is no longer possible. If you stop the diet now, you will eat more calories again, but the refrigerator is too small. The surplus food is therefore stored in the freezer again, i.e. in the fat stores. This leads to the well-known JoJo effect.



It's different with fasting: due to the lack of food intake, the policeman (insulin) becomes unemployed and the refrigerator is initially emptied completely. This is also clearly visible in the graph, in which the oxidation of carbohydrates initially rises sharply.

If the glycogen stores are emptied, protein is only used for a very short time to produce energy. However, these are only minimal muscle proteins and otherwise for the most part only surplus protein molecules that are found in the body and in the muscles. From a physiological and historical point of view, it does not make sense to use proteins. Firstly, they have a lower calorific value than fat (4 kcal vs. 9 kcal) and secondly, our muscles are essential for survival. Our ancestors were dependent on the complete function of their bodies. Otherwise, they could not have obtained food.

The glycogen stores, which are sufficient for about 24 hours, are now emptied and the body slowly switches to fat burning, which is also clearly visible in the graph. They now fall back on the freezer, which is sufficiently filled for normal people. Since one kilogram of body fat has about 7000 kcal, the body can consume it for about 3 to 4 days with a calorie turnover of 1800 - 2300 kcal. The metabolism is now in a state called ketosis - fatty acids become ketone bodies. Food is now no longer taken from the outside but from the inside. This gives the body time to heal and to cleanse itself.

Thus, fasting should not be seen as a tool for weight reduction, but rather as a process for physical and mental development. It provides a better attitude towards life and a healthier body. Besides, it can be used also for the preparation for a nourishing conversion.

Therapeutic fasting (the Buchinger method)

In the following I would like to introduce the Buchinger method as a method of therapeutic fasting. There are many different ways of fasting, such as juice fasting, base fasting, the Schroth cure or the Mayr cure. In my opinion, however, the Buchinger method has a special place within fasting because there are clinics all over the world which use this method to help their patients. There is a good documentary on this from ARTE on Arte Documentary. In addition, I have had very good experiences with this method and will now explain it a little.

Fasting periods of 24 to 48 hours without food intake are considered extended/prolonged fasting. So-called therapeutic fasting refers to a period of 5/7 - 21 days, during which the greatest physical and benefits come to light. Many chronically ill people, such as rheumatism patients, take professional help from fasting clinics to reduce their suffering. In my opinion, fasting for up to four or five or even seven days is not a problem for normal people in our society. Nevertheless, everyone fasts on their own responsibility and should inform

themselves sufficiently beforehand. Therefore, this document is not a complete guide to fasting, but only serves the purpose of sharing our own experiences and acquired knowledge. Fasting should therefore not be undertaken by people who cannot afford or manage to voluntarily give up food. This includes people who are severely mentally or psychologically impaired, who have no reserves for feeding from within, i.e. people who are seriously underweight (in cases of severe cancer, malnutrition, severe hyperthyroidism or anorexia nervosa). Furthermore, people with advanced liver and kidney diseases, as well as pregnant and nursing mothers and children and adolescents should not fast.

Something that makes fasting much easier is the right inner attitude. The inner drive and the intrinsic motivation should be the reason for fasting and not something external, because someone else has claimed that fasting is cool now or because one can lose weight quickly. There should be a certain desire for inner purification, a positive basic attitude towards fasting as a holistic experience should also be present. One should not be unsettled by various media reports or by statements from people who are not sufficiently informed and have never fasted before. The fasting should be regarded like a small vacation and therefore not be squeezed into the classical work everyday life. Therefore, a certain amount of preparation should be made. The fasting, which can last up to 14 days including days of relief and build-up, should therefore be set aside for a long weekend, a week's holiday or a time away from everyday life. For a positive experience, stress should be avoided and strenuous appointments and messages as well as hecticness should have no place during this time.

It is recommended that at least the first fasting experience be carried out under professional guidance, so that the methodology can be viewed professionally and interventions can be helpful in crises. On the internet you can find enough fasting teachers and fasting courses. Nevertheless, I conducted my first two fasting experiences on my own and almost without exception only had positive experiences.

Fasting process

For the first fasting 4 - 5, sometimes 7 days of fasting are generally recommended. In my opinion, one should fast for at least 5 days and then, depending on the fasting experience, one or two more days can be added. The period of fasting consists of preparatory relief days, the fasting and the build-up days.

For 5 to 7 days of fasting 1 - 2 days of relief and 3 days of build-up are planned. One should be aware that a fasting period of 7 days can last up to two weeks. If one assumes a fasting period of 7 days, the sequence of events could be as follows:

A) Relief Days

The one or two relief days before the fasting serve to prepare the organism for the fasting. Already during these days, one abstains from all kinds of stimulants (sugar, coffee, alcohol, white flour, tobacco, meat, black tea) and consumes fewer calories than usual. You should drink a lot during these days and only eat easily digestible food. You can have one day of fruit, i.e. 1.5 to 2 kg of fresh fruit divided between four to five meals. A rice day would also be possible, in which you eat 3 x 50 g natural rice with steamed vegetables. My favourite was the oat day, where you cook 3 x 40 g oat flakes (whole grain) briefly in water and add 100 g of fruit each.

B) Fasting Days

At the beginning of the fasting a thorough defecation should be carried out. For this purpose, 30 - 40 g Glauber's salt is dissolved in 750 ml of lukewarm water and drunk down quickly within 15 minutes. After a further 30 minutes, one should drink a litre of water or unsweetened tea, as a diarrhoea-like emptying of the bowels occurs for about 2 - 4 hours. Therefore, you should spend this time near a toilet. In my experience this is the worst part, but from this point on it gets interesting.

It can happen that fasting days 2 and 3 are accompanied by some headaches and slight discomfort, but this is due to the fact that the person has now adjusted to the fat metabolism and the craving for sugar-containing food is slowly diminishing. During these days, all excretion processes of the body should be promoted. Daily exercise such as walks or light sport should increase the general blood circulation, which at the same time increases breathing and thus improves the absorption of oxygen. Regular exercise also produces heat, which is lacking in the fasting organism due to lack of digestion. Active sweating also helps with excretion through the skin and helps to stabilise blood pressure. Drinking sufficient fluid (>3l/day) is intended to stimulate the kidneys, the liver can be stimulated by daily liver compresses or hot packs. A hot pack (hot water bottle wrapped in a damp cloth in the area of the right upper abdomen) helps here. With the help of an enema, also known as an irrigator, an enema with lukewarm water should be given every other day to cleanse the intestines. Also, the excretion through the skin should be stimulated by regular showering or body brushing. If you feel well, you can also go to the sauna.

The Buchinger fasting method is not a classic water fast, but rather drinks with few calories are taken throughout the day:

- In the morning and in the afternoon 0.25l tea with very little honey
- At noon 0.25l unsugared vegetable juice from the organic market
- In the evening 0.25l hot vegetable stock (various vegetables, wash, chop and let them soak for 20 - 30 minutes, then drain the stock and season a little)
- Additionally, at least 2 litres of calorie-free liquid, lemon slices or brushing your teeth help against a sticky mouth taste

C) Breaking the fast and build-up time

On the last day of the fast, an apple (as in the Bible when leaving paradise) is eaten at noon slowly, consciously and gratefully. It is best to chew each bite 25 - 30 times. From my own experience I can report that this was the most delicious apple of my life. This slow and conscious eating should be kept in everyday life even after fasting. The build-up days now serve to get the body used to eating solid food again with easily digestible food. On the first evening there is now, for example, instead of a vegetable broth, a thick potato and vegetable soup. The amount of calories should now be increased slowly over the following days. If this is done too quickly, the result will be a too rapid weight gain - the JoJo effect. Fat and alcohol should be avoided, and animal protein should also only be increased slowly and carefully. In the build-up days, spontaneous bowel emptying should occur by the 3rd day at the latest, but this requires enough fibre in the diet. Therefore, sufficient wholemeal products such as wholemeal bread, oat flakes or prunes and figs and enough to drink should not be missing. After 5 to 7 days you will be back to your everyday life, but hopefully you will eat more consciously and carefully. The health success of the fasting can be maintained if the fasting is understood and accomplished as entrance into a healthy nourishing way.

Own fasting experience

In the following I (Daniel) will report about one of my fasting experiences. As of today, I have fasted twice. At the beginning of January 2019 for 7 days (which I will report about) and at the end of March 2019 for 14 days. It should be noted here that between longer fasting periods there should be at least 3-4 months and generally a fast of more than 7 days should only be done once a year. However, as I caught a flu in autumn 2018 and did not recover from it properly, I was already ill for almost 4 months in January 2019, could not train and could not really participate in everyday life and for this reason I tried the Buchinger therapeutic fasting method on my own. Because of the positive experiences I fasted again for 14 days in March, which in retrospect was not a smart decision. Due to the fact that I did not have enough body fat, there was too little time between the first and second fasting phase and the second phase was too long. Nevertheless, I made these experiences and especially the first fasting gave me very positive impressions and brought about lasting changes, which is why I would like to share with you a part of my diary, which I wrote in January.

„Water fasting experiences 08 January 2019“

Day 1: Felt okay, went outside for a longer walk, my brain definitely wanted sugar, but not my stomach

Day 2: woke up with a feeling of dizziness, some palpitations, but everything was good again after some warm-cold-warm-cold-warm-cold showers, it smelled a bit like onions, probably because everything is excreted through my skin

Day 3: best day so far, felt good, especially after I went for a 30 minutes bike ride, legs were a bit sore after that, but I had pain in my legs as usual in the last months

Day 4: slept for 9 hours, took a wwcwc shower and went to the library to study, better than day 3, my sense of smell is much more sensitive than before, I can smell things I never smelled before, have enjoyed cutting the vegetables for the broth

Day 5: felt a bit cold, haven't been outside that much, all day in bed watching TV, but no leg pain as usual

Day 6: went to the sauna first, after that I was cold all day long, probably because my metabolism is in energy saving mode??, felt better after a bike ride and a bit juggling

Day 7: last day, a bit excited about my first apple tomorrow, in the meantime I am torn back and forth if I should fast one more day after all, drove 10 km with the bike today and went for a 45 min walk with my friend, my thighs are a bit sore, after the evening walk and strolling through Eppendorf I am very happy right now

Day 8: I broke the fast and felt good, I almost wanted to fast on or two more days

Resolution: The results and changes are great, now I am more conscious about what and how I eat. Goal is to fast once a year to for > 7 days.

These are the almost unabridged notes from my fasting diary. It should also be said that I was really not feeling well at that time, so fasting had a truly positive effect on my health. However, it convinced me to continue to do it regularly in the future. A few more remarks from my side:

Many sources write that days 2 and 3 are the worst. I can confirm this. Don't give up here because you feel a bit uncomfortable. The best days, namely days 4, 5, 6 etc. are yet to come. Many even report a real high of fasting like they have never experienced before. Furthermore, it is possible that during fast your head is pretending that you are hungry for junk food and which foods you would like to eat when it is over. It has helped me to write down these foods always, so they disappeared from my head. Interestingly, the thought of junk food after breaking the fast no longer played a role. Last but not least, my most important remark: A good preparation is essential. Try to plan the days well to avoid stress. Buy everything you need during the fasting period. Get information on the internet, in books or from people who have had enough experience with fasting. This will help you to act wisely if any problems arise. Contact us if you have any questions.