

Intermittent Fasting

What - Why - How

Intermittent Fasting (IF) is not, as many people think, a specific diet. It is more like a meal timing plan which does not specify what you eat but more when you eat. When doing intermittent fasting, your day is split into a certain fasting window and into an eating window. There are many different forms of intermittent fasting. Probably the best known and most popular method is the 16/8 method, which also reflects the minimum in the world of intermittent fasting. This method involves fasting in a time window of 16 hours and eating in a time window of 8 hours.

In fact, intermittent fasting or prolonged fasting is more natural than always eating 3 to 5 meals per day as most Europeans and Americans do it. Our ancestors have not had the possibility to access regular food nearly in every hour in the day. If you are hungry these days, you simply walk to the supermarket or bakery nearby and buy something to eat. People back then needed to hunt or gather and did not have a fridge or freezer to preserve their food. Their meals were considerably larger, but in return they often could not eat for many hours or even days.

Nowadays fasting is still present in our society, as many people do it for religious or spiritual reasons. But that is not the reason why we have created this lecture. In the following, we want to show you some health benefits of intermittent fasting, which types of intermittent fasting do exist and how you can integrate intermittent fasting into your everyday life.



Intermittent fasting reduces the daily eating window.

This can bring various benefits, such as increased metabolism, better digestion and greater concentration.

Intermittent fasting can bring a lot of health benefits, which can be split up into physical and mental benefits. First we look at the physical benefits since much of our practice consists of a physical practice.

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

- Intermittent fasting can reduce insulin resistance, which results in lower blood sugars and lower fasting insulin levels which helps to protect against type 2 diabetes
- Intermittent fasting can reduce inflammation, which is often a cause for chronic diseases
- Intermittent fasting increases heart health, as it reduces the “bad” LDL cholesterol
- Some new research with animals shows that intermittent fasting may prevent cancer
- Some animal studies are showing that intermittent fasting is causing an anti-aging effect (rats are having an increased lifespan when fasting)
- Intermittent fasting is speeding up fat loss without muscle loss (on the contrary, it is also possible to gain lean muscle)
- Intermittent fasting speeds up cellular rejuvenation, which is called autophagy, which means that old cells get eaten up by new cells which then results in clearer skin, better hair, and nail quality and so on

MENTAL BENEFITS

- When fasting the brain goes into a sort of survival mode which increases focus. For example, my handstand training is a lot better when I am in a fasted state in contrast when I had a meal before. Also, when I want to do work which needs a lot of focus and deep concentration, it is more easily to get it done when fasting.
- In addition, much more focus can be put on other areas of life because you save time by eating less meals. Less often food must be prepared and less often the dishes have to be made; it can lead to a certain mental freedom and „feeling light“ because a big everyday thing no longer needs to be thought about so often.

THE 16/8 METHOD							
	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
Midnight	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST
4 AM	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST
8 AM	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST
12 PM	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal
4 PM	Last meal by 8pm	Last meal by 8pm	Last meal by 8pm	Last meal by 8pm	Last meal by 8pm	Last meal by 8pm	Last meal by 8pm
8 PM	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST
Midnight	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST

An example of the 16/8 method schedule - The classic and recommended introduction to intermittent fasting.

As described above, the best-known method is probably the 16 hours fasting and 8 hours eating, or the 16/8 method. More experienced people can then try the 18/6 method or even the 20/4 method, which is also called the Warrior Diet. Some people are even trying to just eat one meal per day, where you just spend one to two hours everyday eating. For anyone who is really interested in fat loss can try the 5:2 diet or the eat-stop-eat method. In the latter you fast for 24 hours and then eat for one day and fast for one day and so on. The 5:2 diet, on the other hand, provides that you eat very little or nothing at all two days a week and distribute these days throughout the week. For example, on Tuesdays and Fridays you eat very little or nothing at all, and on all other days you eat normally as usual.

We recommend starting with the 16/8 method. For example, when you had your last meal at 8 p.m. you can have your first meal on 12 noon the next day. For most people, this seems to be the easiest way to start with intermittent fasting. Basically, this just means to skip breakfast and directly breaking your fast with lunch. Although you might feel weak or you are not performing as you want to at start, give yourself some time and let your body get used to it. Try this method for four to six weeks and be aware for any changes in your physical state, your mental state, and your everyday life. But do not overthink it! It must fit into your life, do not be too harsh with yourself and try to force it. Just because you are doing intermittent fasting, it should not be too strict. Please do not skip breakfast when your grandma has invited you to spend some time with her. I will guarantee you, that you will be excited about your meal and enjoy it even more. If, after a couple of weeks, you think that the 16/8 method is easy and you have a decent control over your hunger and your cravings, try to improve with the 18/6 or even the 20/4 method.

We recommend having a lot of healthy fats and a fibers in your last meal, as this will keep you more satiated throughout the next day. For the fasting window, you must not consume any calories. This means only black coffee, unsweetened tea or simply water. Also, try training in a fasted state in the next morning. You will be impressed that you are still having a lot of energy from the meal last night.

As you know and what we try to present with our practice and in your journey, life revolves exclusively around experience and development. Intermittent fasting gives you the opportunity to take a closer look at your attitude towards food and also makes you more antifragile. Where for other people the world collapses because they cannot eat for a few hours, for you just a little bit of fasting starts.