

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with a salad of diced avocado, pineapple, and cilantro, garnished with black pepper. The bowl sits on a white marble surface. Surrounding the bowl are fresh ingredients: a whole red radish, a sliced radish, a lime wedge, and several pineapple cubes. A semi-transparent green banner with white text is at the bottom, and a semi-transparent white banner with dark red text is at the top.

HEAL YOUR BODY AND MIND

INTERMITTENT FASTING

Introduction



It seems like everyone is talking about intermittent fasting these days. With this powerful guide you will learn what intermittent fasting is and how you can get started in the right way so that you maximize your chances of success.

We will explain in this guide how intermittent fasting works and how you can get the best results from it. Intermittent fasting is not easy so we show you how to inspire and motivate yourself if the going gets tough.

You need to choose the right intermittent fasting method and we will show you how to do that. We will also explain the common mistakes you need to avoid and why you may need to scale up your intermittent fasting to achieve the best results. This and more is all covered in the guide so let's get started.

Intermittent Fasting Explained



Chapter 1

With intermittent fasting you will participate in a cyclical diet where you will fast for a specific period of time and then eat for a specific period of time. The period of time where you can eat will vary depending on the type of intermittent fasting plan you choose.

You need to be aware that there are many types of intermittent fasting. In this guide we will cover some of the more popular ones, and also recommend what we consider to be the easiest intermittent fasting plan to follow. We want you to stick with your intermittent fasting plan and not be unhappy and want to give up quickly.

Fasting and Eating Windows

As you now know with intermittent fasting you will have a time to fast which we will call the “fasting window” and a time to eat which we will call the “eating window”. You need to know what you can and can’t do during these windows (especially the fasting window).

The Rules of the Fasting Window

When you are in the fasting window time you cannot consume any food. You can drink water but that’s all. It is very important that you do not consume any calories when you are in the fasting window.

The Rules of the Eating Window

You can eat while you are in the eating window. It is important that you consume calories during this time. With intermittent fasting your diet is a secondary consideration. So you could actually eat whatever you like during the eating window.

The Secret to Success with Intermittent Fasting

If you really want to succeed with intermittent fasting then it is essential that you are totally compliant during the fasting windows. This means consuming no calories and only drinking water. The reason that this is so important is that your body will turn to your fat stores as a source of energy.

When you are in your fasting window your stomach will be empty and your body will not have any food that it can use for fuel. It will have no choice but to tap into your stores of fat. This is exactly what you want as it will burn that unwanted fat away.

A lot of people struggle with weight loss because their insulin stores are full and their bodies are able to use the food they consume for fuel. Their bodies never get the chance to tap into their fat stores. Even if the person exercises they will struggle to see any visible results.

Go For a Calorie Deficiency

Although we said earlier that you could in theory eat what you like during your eating windows we do not recommend this. You will be a lot more likely to achieve the weight loss results that you desire with a combination of intermittent fasting and a calorie deficient diet.

Calorie deficient just means consuming less calories than are recommended for your body type. When you combine this approach with intermittent fasting you are going to see visible results a lot faster. This is important to keep you motivated to stick with your intermittent fasting.

How Intermittent Fasting works

With some intermittent fasting plans you will have an eating window of 8 hours each day and a fasting window of 16 hours. This means that you need to consume calories during the 8 hour window.

So you will consume less calories than you need during the 8 hour window (calorie deficit) and when this is over and you are into the fasting period your last meal will be digested around 3 to 4 hours into the fasting window.

This means that for around 12 hours your body will have no food to use for fuel and it will have no choice but to look to your fat stores as a source of energy. It doesn't matter if you are awake or sleeping your body will always need to burn calories to keep all of the processes going such as maintenance and repair. It will use your stored fat for this.

The concept of intermittent fasting is very simple. There are no requirements for a low carbohydrate diet, detoxification, a ketogenic diet and so on. All you need to do to get the best results is be fully compliant during the fasting windows and go for a calorie deficit approach during your eating windows.

It is no wonder that intermittent fasting is so popular these days. There are other health benefits associated with intermittent fasting as well that we will look at in the next chapter. Once you get into the habit of intermittent fasting you will find that it is easy for you to maintain this lifestyle.

Why Intermittent Fasting is better than other Diets

If you choose another type of diet you are constantly thinking about what you can and cannot eat. When people are used to eating whatever they want it can be extremely difficult for them to change to a strict diet and most people do not have the necessary willpower to maintain this for very long.

The reason that intermittent fasting works better than other diets is because it requires a lifestyle change and not a complete change of what you eat. You are going to change your eating patterns by introducing an “eat” and “not eat” cycle into your life.

Your focus changes from what you should eat to when you should eat. Although we recommend a calorie deficit approach to eating you do not have to do this. This means that you have a lot more freedom during your eating windows than those people that are on a rigid diet.

Please understand that intermittent fasting is not an easy ride. At first you may find it very difficult to fast for a period of time. You will need to be resilient here and keep on going with your intermittent fasting. After a while it will all become a lot easier.

In the next chapter we will discuss the benefits of intermittent fasting...

Intermittent Fasting Benefits



Chapter 2

You may think that burning fat and weight loss are the only benefit of intermittent fasting. This is not the case, and in this chapter we will make you aware of the other benefits of intermittent fasting.

The main reason for you understanding the various benefits of intermittent fasting is that it will provide you with the motivation to keep going. It is likely that you will experience some tough times with intermittent fasting, especially at the start. With these benefits in mind it will inspire you to push through any tough times and keep going.

Losing Weight

If you were to ask people why they are embarking on an intermittent fasting regime the chances are that almost all of them will tell you that they are doing it to lose weight. There is a lot of evidence to support that intermittent fasting will help most people to lose weight pretty quickly.

There are several reasons why intermittent fasting helps people to lose weight. One of the main reasons is that it helps to boost your metabolism which helps your body to burn fat faster.

Another reason why intermittent fasting is good for weight loss is that you are very likely to decrease the number of calories that you consume every day. This will lower your insulin levels and also help to increase your levels of growth hormone. It will also increase the amount of norepinephrine in your body.

Studies have shown that intermittent fasting helps to increase the metabolism by as much as 14%. With a higher metabolism you will burn more calories. Over a period of 3 to 24 weeks you can lose weight at a rate of 8% which is really impressive.

A lot of people that participate in intermittent fasting claim that they see a reduction in the circumference of their waist of around 7%. This is all down to reducing the amount of belly fat that you have which is the fat that can do the most harm and lead to serious diseases.

Another reason that intermittent fasting is better than other diets is that it does not result in the same amount of muscle loss. Muscle loss can be a real problem with diets that restrict calorie intake.

Cell Repair

When you participate in intermittent fasting the cells in your body begin the process of removing waste cells. This process is called “autophagy”. It is all about the breaking down of the cells in your body.

Autophagy also helps to metabolize broken and dysfunctional proteins that build up over time in the cells. The main benefit of autophagy according to the experts is that it provides protection against the development of some serious diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer’s. So intermittent fasting can help you to prevent disease and live longer and healthier.

Insulin Resistance

Unfortunately, there are more people struggling with type 2 diabetes today than there ever were before. It is more common with people that are considered obese. With diabetes you experience elevated blood sugar levels caused by insulin resistance.

If you are able to reduce your insulin then you should reduce your blood sugar levels. This is a great way to protect yourself from type 2 diabetes. There have been a number of studies proving that intermittent fasting can help with insulin resistance. It can help to reduce blood sugar levels significantly.

Some of the studies showed a decrease in blood sugar levels of 6% when people were fasting. When you are fasting your insulin levels can fall by as much as 30%. This proves that intermittent fasting can help to reduce the effect of diabetes and prevent you from getting the disease.

Improved Brain Function

Whenever you do something that benefits your body it will often benefit your brain as well. By increasing your metabolism through intermittent fasting you are very likely to improve your brain health as well.

Another benefit of intermittent fasting is that it can reduce the amount of oxidative stress. Fasting can also reduce blood sugar levels and inflammation. By reducing insulin resistance as we have already discussed as well these things all help to increase brain power.

There have been studies that show intermittent fasting helps to boost the growth of nerve cells. This also helps to enhance the brain. Fasting can also increase a brain hormone called brain derived neurotrophic factor. If you have a deficiency with this hormone then you are more susceptible to depression.

One other reason that intermittent fasting can protect your brain is that it can protect you from the damage caused by strokes. So as you can see, intermittent fasting is a good way to protect and enhance your brain.

Reduced Inflammation

People that suffer from chronic disease often have a problem with oxidative stress. This can be a big problem with aging as well. With oxidative stress free radicals are released. These are unstable and can react negatively with important things like protein and DNA. This can cause a lot of damage to the body.

Studies have shown that intermittent fasting can build up the body's resistance to oxidative stress. There are other studies that show the power of intermittent fasting when it comes to fighting inflammation.

So you now know that there are many other benefits that come with intermittent fasting other than just the ability to burn unwanted fat. It is really worth bearing these benefits in mind when you embark on your intermittent fasting journey.

If you find the going with intermittent fasting tough then you can read this chapter again to remind yourself of the many benefits that it can bring you. This should help you to focus and get you through any tough times so that you can continue with your journey.

At no time are we going to tell you in this guide that intermittent fasting is easy. It is going to take persistence and patience to get the results that you desire. With the many benefits of intermittent fasting you can use this to inspire you to keep going.

In the next chapter we will look at some of the most commonly asked questions about intermittent fasting...

Most Commonly Asked Questions About Intermittent Fasting



Chapter 3

If you are new to the concept of intermittent fasting it is only natural that you are going to have a number of questions about it. Of course you are not alone with this as many people are interested in the benefits of intermittent fasting. So we looked at the most commonly asked questions about intermittent fasting and have provided the answers in this chapter.

Where does Intermittent Fasting come from?

Intermittent fasting did not originate from one particular place. It is basically the way that our ancestors used to eat many years ago. In those days people had to hunt for their food so they would eat well some days and have nothing at all on others.

If you think about it this was intermittent fasting. On some days there was food to eat and on others people had to go hungry. People in this time were rarely overweight and led more active lives than most people do today.

The conclusion to draw here is that intermittent fasting is something that the human body will react to naturally. Our physiology has not changed that much over the many years that human beings have walked the Earth.

Is it Safe to participate in Intermittent Fasting?

We cannot say for definite that intermittent fasting would be 100% safe for you as everyone is different. What we can tell you is that intermittent fasting is safe for the vast majority of people that do it.

There have been several studies that show many people that start with intermittent fasting not only lose weight but experience other health benefits as well. These can include the lowering of blood pressure levels, lowering of bad cholesterol levels and reducing blood sugar levels.

When you are asleep you are fasting. This should help you to allay any fears that you may have about intermittent fasting. Most people sleep for around 8 hours each day and eat nothing during that period of time.

So you may be wondering why more people do not benefit from sleep fasting. Well the answer is that a lot of people do not get a solid 8 hours of sleep and will wake up and go and eat something. Also people tend to eat far too late at night so part of the fasting period is used to digest this food. The body is not in the fasted state for as long as it could be.

As soon as you wake up you are going to want to eat breakfast. This is OK but you need to realize that you are giving your body very little chance to access your fat stores for a source of energy.

We recommend that you consult your doctor before embarking on an intermittent fasting program. You may have some health problems such as gastric issues that may affect your ability to benefit from intermittent fasting.

Which type of Intermittent Fasting should you go for?

We have already mentioned that there are several different types of intermittent fasting. Usually these differences are fairly minor. There is always going to be a fasting window and an eating window with any type of intermittent fasting.

With this in mind your choice of intermittent fasting method does not really matter that much. You should be able to reap the benefits of intermittent fasting whatever type you use. The most important thing is that you use an intermittent fasting type that you are comfortable with.

Our advice here would be to choose an intermittent fasting method that is easy to follow. That way it will be more likely that you will stick with it. If the method is too complex with many changes then you are more likely to give up.

Please understand that it is going to take your body between 14 and 30 days to adjust to your new way of eating. It is very probable that your body will resist intermittent fasting at first and you are going to experience cravings.

This is totally understandable as your body is used to receiving food when you are awake. So you need to be prepared to expect a degree of resistance from your body. But you can be totally confident that your body will adapt and you are likely to see a decrease in your appetite as a result. You should feel more energetic and alert as you make progress too.

And of course the biggest plus is losing the weight. The joy of witnessing those pounds falling off and having a slimmer waistline are well worth the cravings and resistance that you had to fight in the beginning.

In the next chapter we will discuss the different types of intermittent fasting available...

Different Intermittent Fasting Methods



Chapter 4

There are many intermittent fasting methods out there so in this chapter we will take a look at the three methods that we feel are the best. We will look at some other intermittent fasting methods as well and also help you to decide which method is best for you so let's get on with it shall we?

Lean Gains from Martin Berkhan

Lean Gains is probably the most commonly used intermittent fasting method in use today. The best things about this method are that it is fairly straight forward to follow and it is also very effective.

There are slightly different rules for men and women with Lean Gains. Men are recommended to fast for 16 hours and women recommended to fast for 14 hours. This leaves them with an 8 hour and 10 hour eating window respectively.

To make the Lean Gains method work it is really essential that you are consistent with your eating window. If you don't do this then you will cause confusion with your body and you are not likely to get the best results.

Lean Gains is a combination of intermittent fasting and exercise. The method recommends that you schedule your eating around your exercise routines. So if your eating window stops at 8pm then you should schedule your exercise session between 5.30pm and 6pm and finish your last meal before 7pm.

It is a good idea to start your eating window when you have just finished your workout. When you do this you will help your body to repair muscles etc as there is food available. You don't want to schedule your exercise session after your eating window as there will not be much food, if any, to repair your body.

Warrior Diet from Ori Hofmekeler

The Warrior Diet from Ori Hofmekeler is a lot more severe than Lean Gains. You have to fast for 20 hours each day and only a single large meal each night. The reason for this is that Ori believes that our ancestors used to do this.

Nobody knows if our ancestors did have these kinds of eating habits of course. At the end of the day the Warrior Diet is very effective. Many people that have participated with the Warrior Diet have lost a lot of weight and seen significant health benefits.

If you are new to intermittent fasting, the Warrior Diet may be a bit too much for you. You will probably be better off trying an easier method and then gradually decrease your eating window over a period of time until you reach the 20 hours of fasting recommended by the Warrior Diet.

As a newcomer to intermittent fasting it is going to be very tough tackling a 20 hour period of fasting. You need to be aware that the Warrior Diet does allow the eating of a few smaller meals during the eating window. But there are pretty strict rules about what you can eat and cannot eat.

So if you think that you have the discipline to stick to the strict Warrior Diet then it could be the best option for you. It works really well but the fasting periods are long and you can only eat certain foods during the eating window.

Eat Stop Eat from Brad Pilon

This intermittent fasting program sells very well online. Eat Stop Eat has some pretty simple rules. You have to fast for a whole 24 hours twice or three times a week. On your eating days you can eat anything that you want.

By using the Eat Stop Eat method you will reduce your calorie intake each week so you will lose weight. You will not be deprived of your favorite foods with this method so it makes it easier for you to stick with it.

Some people will really like the fact that they can eat what they want on the eating days. But fasting for a full day can be really tough, especially for beginners. So again, you may want to start with an easier intermittent fasting program and then work towards fasting for 24 hours.

The 5:2 Intermittent Fasting Method

This is another popular intermittent fasting method. What you do here is eat as you normally would for 5 days a week and then on the other two days you restrict your calorie intake to around 500 to 600 calories. Michael Mosley created this method and calls it the "Fast Diet".

The diet recommends that men can consume 600 calories on their fasting days and women 500 calories. It is up to you to choose the two days that you will fast.

But it is not a good idea to choose consecutive days such as the weekend as it will be very difficult to get through two days in a row with severe calorie restriction.

On the days that you have chosen to restrict your calorie intake you can choose to eat one meal or two or more small meals as long as they do not exceed 500 or 600 calories. This is an effective method but not one that we would recommend for beginners.

Fasting for 36 Hours

This is a tough intermittent fasting plan that does deliver good results. You will need to fast for a complete day and then another half a day. It is different to Eat Stop Eat where after a 24 hour fast you can eat.

Here is an example of how the 36 hour fast could work. Let's say that you finish consuming a large meal by 8pm on your first day. Your fasting window starts from here and you will need to avoid eating for the entirety of the following day. You cannot resume eating again until 8am the day after this giving a full 36 hour fast.

There is quite a bit of evidence to show that this method produces fast results. Some studies show that it had some benefits for diabetics as well. But it is going to be a real challenge for you to go 36 hours without eating. You only need to perform the 36 hour fast once a week to achieve results.

Fasting for Alternate Days

This is definitely not a good idea if you are new to intermittent fasting. But after a while it may be something that you want to consider. The bottom line here is that you will eat one day and then fast the next. With some versions of this intermittent fasting diet you can consume up to 500 calories on a fasting day. With others you can only drink water.

It will be difficult to maintain this regime even as an experienced intermittent faster. You will have to get used to going to bed hungry a few nights each week. Some people swear by alternate fasting and claim that the results are really good.

Extended Fasting

Following the Lean Gains method where you eat for 8 hours and then fast for 16 hours (8 hours of which you will be sleeping) is one of the easiest forms of intermittent fasting. Even the Eat Stop Eat method is not that difficult once you get used to it.

But this is not enough for some more experienced intermittent fasters. They want to extend their fasting period to 42 hours. This is very tough to do but the results can be worth it in terms of weight loss and your overall health.

Here is how it could work in practice. On day 1 you finish your large meal (dinner) by 6pm. The following day you cannot eat anything and then the day after this you can resume eating again at 12 noon. This is a full 42 hour fast.

In order to make this work we recommend that you do not restrict what you eat at all during your eating windows. This is definitely not suitable for beginners so if you are just starting out don't even think about doing this!

Some experienced intermittent fasters will tell you that fasting for longer periods is definitely the way to go. There are people that believe if you fast for a full 7 days this will help you to prevent cancer. We do not have any evidence to support this.

It is technically possible to fast for a full 7 days or even 14 days. Some will tell you that the longer you fast the better your mental clarity becomes. Again we cannot offer any evidence to support this so we recommend that you follow an intermittent fasting method where there is evidence that it works.

Deciding on the right Intermittent Fasting method

It is essential that you use an intermittent fasting method that suits you and you are comfortable with it. The first step in deciding what intermittent fasting method to use starts with analyzing your current habits. This includes your existing eating habits, your working habits, your sleeping habits and so on.

Tailoring an intermittent fasting method that suits you is critical. Let's say that you have a job where you have to work nights. It is totally impractical to think that you will be able to fast at night because your hunger will take over. So choose your sleep hours as part of your fasting time and then maybe start your eating window 6 hours after you wake up.

We are assuming here that you will use the Lead Gains method of intermittent fasting as it is one of the easiest. You also need to take into account that you may have other social commitments that will be a challenge to your intermittent fasting journey.

It is inevitable that whatever fasting method you choose that it will clash with your social life at some stage. So you will need to work around this. You need a way to ensure that you stick with your eating and fasting windows no matter what social pressures you find yourself under.

Assess each method to see which one is more likely to work for you. It is natural that you will be keen to start intermittent fasting as you are now aware of the many benefits. This keenness can lead you to be over ambitious and overestimate your will power to fast for a long time.

A 24 hour fast is likely to be extremely difficult for you. Your body will resist like crazy and there will be high probability that you will not last the distance and eat when you shouldn't. This will make you feel bad about not sticking to the method and will increase your chances of giving up on intermittent fasting before you have even gotten started.

The reality of this situation is that you just went for too tough an option. If you set goals that are unreasonable then it is very unlikely you will achieve them. So unless you know that you can handle a long fasting period, choose an intermittent fasting method with a shorter period of fasting that you can extend if you want to.

Is it OK to try one method and then change to another if it doesn't suit you? Absolutely yes it is. But the problem here is that you may fail so badly with the first method that it puts you off of the whole idea of intermittent fasting.

You know yourself better than anyone else does. It shouldn't be that difficult to decide which intermittent fasting method is going to be the most suitable for you. Getting it right first time is always preferred.

In the next chapter we will discuss your diet during your eating windows...

Your Eating Window Diet



Chapter 5

With the Eat Stop Eat intermittent fasting method you are encouraged to eat anything that you want on your eating days. This is great for not having to let go of the foods that you really love but is it the best thing to do to achieve the best results?

We don't believe that eating whatever you like is the best thing to do. You will get the best results with intermittent fasting if you pay close attention to what you eat during your eating windows.

The biggest reason for obesity in the world is the type and quantity of food that people eat. Let's be totally honest here – you know what you should be eating and what you shouldn't. You don't have to be a genius to know this.

The importance of Vegetables

You are probably aware that fresh vegetables are essential for good health. They contain the right amount of antioxidants, vitamins, fiber and minerals. Vegetables are perfect for the human body.

But despite knowing this, too many people eat processed foods and treat vegetables as a secondary option. If they eat vegetables they do not eat enough. Not eating the right amount of vegetables is definitely not good for your health.

It is foolish to think that French fries are vegetables. Yes they are made from potatoes, but they are fried and there is little goodness in them. You will be much better off eating tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, cabbage and kale.

It doesn't matter that these fresh vegetables are not as interesting and exciting as French fries. You need to think about the health benefits that you are deriving from going for fresh vegetables. This is far more important than the taste.

We recommend that you eat as many vegetables as possible when you are intermittent fasting. It is easy for you to consume a lot of vegetables and still maintain a calorie deficit as vegetables do not contain a lot of calories. Vegetables will fill you up as well so you will reduce the amount of hunger pangs that experience.

Don't forget Fruits

Eating fresh fruit is very good for your health as well. You should look to consume a wide range of fruits as long as they are totally natural. Most fruit juices are not 100% natural. Always choose fresh and natural fruits and they contain high levels of fiber which will help to keep your insulin levels stable.

Almost all fruit sold in a can or a jar will contain additives. The same goes for almost all fruit juices. You can make your own fruit juice with fresh and natural fruit and a blender. This is easy to do and so much better for your health.

Healthy Meat Cuts

If you eat meat then you want to make sure that you choose the healthiest cuts. It is much better if you steam your meat or grill it rather than frying. Lightly sautéing your meat is also acceptable.

Avoid deep fried meats at all costs. This includes spam and sausages. These are OK to eat occasionally but do not consume them regularly. Usually these kinds of meats have a lot of additives and calories.

Consume Healthy Fats

Healthy fats are essential for your wellbeing. Two of the best sources of healthy fats are virgin coconut oil and extra virgin olive oil. Coconut oil is superior to olive oil. Unfortunately, the olive oil industry has changed and now a lot of olive oil products are diluted and not as good for you as it should be.

It is very unlikely that you will come across diluted coconut oil. It is very beneficial for your health and it is not bad for cholesterol as some people will have you believe. There have been a lot of studies recently that prove that coconut oil is really good for your health.

Eating Junk Food and Intermittent Fasting

With most intermittent fasting methods you will still lose weight even if you eat junk food. But losing weight is not the only thing that you should take into consideration with intermittent fasting. Use it to provide you with other health benefits too.

If you want to be really healthy then you need to eat healthily. A lot of people exercise regularly but cannot achieve their health goals because their diet is poor. Your health is more important than anything so always watch what you eat.

Find a Healthy Diet that is right for you

This is not a healthy eating guide but we consider this to be so important that we wanted to include a chapter about it. There is a ton of information online about healthy eating and you should be able to come up with a diet that you will enjoy that is also good for you.

So when you are at the grocery store next time forget about those processed foods. Go for fresh fruit and vegetables and healthy cuts of meat that you can steam or grill. Also stock up on coconut oil so that you are getting a regular dose of healthy fats.

In the next chapter we will look at the best way to get started with intermittent fasting...

Getting Started With Intermittent Fasting



Chapter 6

So you now know that intermittent fasting has a number of benefits for you apart from steady weight loss. What you need to do now is make a start with intermittent fasting. Because there are several methods available a lot of people tend to make starting more complicated than it really is. There is no need to overthink this at all.

In fact you don't need to think about it hardly at all. You are already fasting every single day with your sleeping cycle each day. Whether you sleep for 8 hours a day or a little more or less, you do not consume any calories while you are asleep right?

Build on what you already have

What does this mean? It means that you can do it and have had years of practice! It also means that you have a block of hours every day where you are already fasting and you just need to build on this.

During your waking hours do you think about food and eating every second? Of course you don't. There are times that you are hungry and you eat when this happens but that's it. This means that there are another batch of hours when you awake when you are not thinking about eating.

So when you put all of this into context you have the makings of a fasting window and an eating window. All you have to do is to make some adjustments so that you only eat during the eating window.

No major re-engineering

This is all good news for you. There are significant amounts of time that you are not eating each day. All you have to do is organize your fasting and eating patterns a bit. You are not looking at any re-engineering here – this is not something completely new that you will be doing.

Many lifestyle changes are difficult because you have to introduce totally new concepts into your life and make them stick. With intermittent fasting all you need to do is reorganize what you are already doing every day and have done since you were a child.

Is it really that easy? Well you will have to replace an old habit with a new one by determining a fasting window and an eating window. Breaking habits is not easy but you can certainly win the day with a bit of persistence. Keep all of those benefits of intermittent fasting uppermost in your mind.

Look there is no miracle solution to breaking an old habit and installing a new one. There will be times in the beginning where things get a bit tough for you. During your fasting window you are probably going to be tempted to eat. But many people have overcome this and you can too.

Consult your Doctor

We recommend that you consult with your doctor before you start intermittent fasting. If you are on some special medication (not over the counter) there may be a risk for you. The same goes if you are pregnant. Just ask your doctor's advice first.

You may have a heart condition or suffer from anxiety or depression. This may not mean that you cannot participate in intermittent fasting but you need to check first. Your doctor may tell you to go for a specific intermittent fasting method that will be safe for you. We can't force you to speak with your doctor but we highly recommend that you do.

Choose your Eating Window

The most important aspect of intermittent fasting is your eating window. You need to be comfortable with this and forget about what others are saying. We are all different and what works for others may not work for you.

For example, some people are active through the night and considered "night owls". They get up late in the day and stay awake until morning when they finally sleep. Others like to get up very early in the morning because they do their best work at this time. They will sleep early in the evening.

The majority of people fall between these two extremes. You know your own pattern and what would work best for you. Never let intermittent fasting impose a different pattern. It has to fit in with what you are currently doing.

Think about when you are the most active. This is the time that you will want to eat the most. Identify an 8 hour window if you are a man, and a 10 hour window if you are a woman that covers your active time.

It is critical that you base your eating window on your current lifestyle. Trying to change your lifestyle to fit someone else's idea of a good intermittent fasting schedule is never going to work. There will be so much resistance that you will resort to your old eating patterns very quickly and we don't want you to do that.

Decide when you are going to Start

Maybe you are thinking that it is unnecessary to include this in this guide. How many times have you thought about starting something and never quite got around to it? We all do this, so having a fixed start date for your intermittent fasting is very important.

There is an old saying that "tomorrow never comes" and this is so true. If you keep saying that you are going to start on your intermittent fasting journey tomorrow and you don't then you will probably never start at all.

So make a commitment and write it down if this helps. You can say that from a specific date you will eat between your chosen eating window and fast for the remaining hours of the day. And then of course you must start on this day and follow the schedule.

When you are setting your start date you need to take into account a visit to your doctor to ensure that it is OK for you to participate in intermittent fasting, and the determination of your eating window.

Plan what you will eat

The most important thing to achieve with your eating window is satiety. This means that you will feel full before your fasting window begins. There are both physical and mental elements to satiety. On the physical side your body will break down the food that you consume and then look for more.

On the mental side you need to consider your current eating habits. Are you a comfort eater? Or do you eat only when you are hungry? We are all different so you need to take these things into consideration.

Certain foods may make you feel fuller than others. You need to identify what these foods are and include them in your eating window. Foods that have a high fat and protein level will tend to fill you up more than others.

You may not get this right the first time around. It may take a few days or even weeks to find the right combination of foods that will make you feel full in your eating window. That's OK just stick at it.

Check for cravings here. Remember that satiety is physical and mental. Your aim is to reduce the cravings as much as you can during your fasting window. If you experience a craving then drink a whole glass of water and see if that satisfies you. Otherwise you will need to make some changes to your diet.

Think about the best eating window for you. Is it going to be best for you to eat as soon as you wake up? Or perhaps it will be better for you to fast for a while after getting up and then introducing your eating window around lunch time? Having a large meal before you start your fasting window usually works well.

If you are on a plan where you will fast for 24 hours then decide whether the weekend days will work well for you or not. It may be better to choose weekdays as you will probably have a lot of things going on to distract you from the thought of eating.

Don't be afraid to move your eating window around if you have to. You may experience a slight dip in results when you do this but it is better to make this change if your current plan is not working. Think long term here.

Plan for Exercise

You knew this was coming didn't you? There is no need to panic if you don't usually participate in regular exercise. You can just add some gentle exercise such as walking into your routine.

The key to success here is to make small changes and build on these. So initially you could just do some gentle stretches or go for a short walk for example. We are not suggesting that you have to go to the gym for hours.

Walk instead of taking the car to the local shops. Start using the stairs instead of the elevator. Park your car further away from a store entrance than you normally would so that you have to walk a little. Just do what you can to introduce regular exercise into your life and build on this. The benefits will be amazing for you.

Get a good Sleep

If you are not getting a good, uninterrupted sleep right now then you need to take steps to fix this. Don't drink caffeine laden beverages before you sleep and avoid foods with sugar as well. Use different methods to relax your mind such as mindfulness meditation and listening to soothing recordings.

You have to ease into a good sleep pattern if you are not currently experiencing this. Prepare yourself mentally for a good sleep each night. When you do sleep well it is less likely that you will wake up feeling hungry.

If you are hungry drink water

If you are feeling hungry then you do not need to run to the fridge and find something to eat. Take the time out to monitor your hunger pangs. When did they start? Did they last for a long time? Was it really that unbearable?

The thing is that hunger pangs tend to come and go. They are never usually as bad as you think they are going to be. One of the best ways to get rid of hunger pangs is to drink water. When you are drinking your water your mind will not be fixated on the hunger pangs. If you have to, you can drink a zero calorie soda – but water is better for you.

Drinking water is a very effective way to deal with hunger pangs.

In the next chapter we will discuss the mistakes that you need to avoid with intermittent fasting...

Avoid These Intermittent Fasting Mistakes



Chapter 7

A lot of people make mistakes when they start with intermittent fasting. We don't want you to make the same mistakes so we have identified the most common ones and will discuss them in this chapter.

Quitting too quickly

We have said throughout this guide that intermittent fasting is not easy. It is going to be quite a change for you and you need to understand that and be prepared for some difficult times at the start. You must develop the willpower to continue with your intermittent fasting for at least two weeks so that your mind and body become accustomed to it.

So many people give up on intermittent fasting far too easily. If you eat something during your fasting window because you were so hungry then don't use that as a reason to throw in the towel. It will probably make you feel guilty but just get over it. Never give up on your intermittent fasting journey.

In time you will notice your appetite decreasing. You will get used to the eating and fasting window and you will develop the discipline to stick with this. This normally happens around the 2 week mark which is why we recommend that you persist in the first fortnight.

One of the problems that you will need to overcome is not feeling full in your eating window. Be prepared to experiment here with different foods to see what works the best. There is no perfect solution with intermittent fasting because we are all different. Just never give up.

Failing to Plan

If you don't plan your intermittent fasting routine properly then you are far more likely to fail. Poor planning can lead to you clock watching for your eating window to begin. This can be very stressful and it is something that you want to avoid at all costs.

Accept that it may not work perfectly for you from the start. Making adjustments to your eating window diet is something that most people have to do. So be prepared for setbacks and make the necessary adjustments. Create a plan for your intermittent fasting and have a plan B and C etc for your eating window.

Trying to do too much

We have told you in this guide that intermittent fasting with longer periods of fasting usually produces the best results. It is natural for you to want to see fast weight loss results but if you try to do too much at the beginning then it is likely to end in failure.

Start with the gentlest plan and work your way up to 24 hour fasting if that is what you want to do. If you try to fast for 24 hours from the start you are going to find this torturous. It's like starting to learn mounting climbing by climbing Everest!

Wrong Diet for your Eating Window

We have already discussed that we do not support the "eat anything you like" philosophy during your eating window. It is always better that you identify healthy eating solutions that will make you full and create a calorie deficit. You will see weight loss results faster when you do this and you will probably experience other health benefits as well.

If you find it tough to give up on your favorite foods initially then keep eating them. It is essential that you feel full at the end of your eating window. But make a commitment to transition to a healthier eating plan as your body becomes accustomed to intermittent fasting. Small changes usually work the best.

Failing to Exercise

It is a lot to ask for you to start with intermittent fasting, change your diet to a healthy one and add regular exercise into your life. You do not have to do all of these things at once, but we do recommend that you get there fairly soon after starting your intermittent fasting.

As we discussed in the previous chapter, you just need to make some small changes to start exercising. Don't go crazy and go for an intense two hour gym session. This will probably put you off exercising for life. Just walk a bit more, climb the stairs more than you do now, go swimming and do some stretches for gentle exercise.

In the next chapter we will discuss daily intermittent fasting and what you need to do to prepare for this...

Daily Intermittent Fasting



Chapter 8

In this guide we have not recommended a specific intermittent fasting plan for you as we know that everyone is different. All of us have different schedules and lifestyle patterns as well as different responsibilities. The purpose of this chapter is to provide you with some tips to help you to succeed every day with intermittent fasting.

Set Goals

It is very likely that you want to get started with intermittent fasting to lose weight. If this is the case then you should set a specific goal for your weight loss with intermittent fasting. We recommend that you follow the SMART goal setting process to do this:

- Specific – how much weight do you want to lose?
- Measurable – how will you measure your progress (bathroom scales etc)?
- Achievable – specify an amount of weight to lose that is achievable
- Realistic – You are not going to lose 100 pounds in a month so be realistic
- Timed – add a timeline such as losing weight in 6 months or a year

Take time to write down your weight loss goal for intermittent fasting. Think about how you will feel when you have lost this weight. How good will you look? Make the feelings strong and write these down as well.

Carry your weight loss goal around with you wherever you go. Make copies and have them available everywhere in your home. If the intermittent fasting is tough going for you then get out your goal sheet and remind yourself of why you are doing it. It will provide you with the inspiration to carry on.

Create your Schedule and stick to it

Timing is very important with intermittent fasting. Your eating window and fasting window are the foundations of success. It is essential that you identify the best times for these windows and stick to them.

Take a good look at your current schedule and determine the best time for your eating window. It is really important that you get this right. If you have to make adjustments to this then you could affect your intermittent fasting results a bit. But it is better to make a change if you have to for long term results.

How many Meals?

Do you think that eating one or two big meals will work best for you in your eating window? Or will it be better for you to eat a lot of smaller meals? It really doesn't matter which of these options you go for (you could even have a number of small meals as well as larger meals).

It is better to have a plan for the meals that you are going to eat each day than just trying to wing it. Write down what you will eat every day in your eating window and make sure that you have the provisions available.

When will you exercise?

This doesn't matter too much if you are just going to introduce gentle exercise into your lifestyle such as short walks and climbing the stairs instead of taking the elevator. But it is important when you want to do more than this.

It is never a good idea to have a full workout session just before your fasting window begins. Your stomach will be empty and you will definitely experience hunger pangs. So schedule your workouts to end within your eating window so that you can consume a meal after exercising.

Stay Hydrated

It doesn't matter what method of intermittent fasting you choose it is essential that you stay hydrated. During your fasting window you must not eat any food as this contains calories. But you can certainly drink as much water as you want. You can also drink zero calorie diet sodas during your fasting window as well.

By staying hydrated you will ensure that you flush away the toxins in your body. This is good for your health and losing weight as well. Good hydration has a number of other health benefits such as a healthier skin and regular bowel movements. Being hydrated will also help you to avoid headaches.

We have already discussed that drinking water or calorie free beverages can stave off hunger pangs during your fasting window and help you to feel full. It is worth mentioning this again as some people think that the fasting window means abstaining from everything.

In the next chapter we will discuss why you need to consider scaling up your intermittent fasting and how to do this...

Scaling Up Your Intermittent Fasting



Chapter 9

You do not need to consider scaling up your intermittent fasting efforts until you have reached the point where you have built up a good amount of momentum, and that it is now more difficult for you to stop your fasting activities than it is to get started with them. Congratulate yourself for getting to this stage!

Why you should consider Scaling Up

This is going to depend on your physiology, but after you have followed a particular intermittent fasting method for a while you may start to hit a plateau. Intermittent fasting is a great way to lose weight and as you know it has other benefits too.

A lot of the weight that you lose in the beginning with intermittent fasting will be water weight. Some people will have around 20% of water weight which is a significant amount. But this does vary from one person to the next – some people are prone to retain water more than others are.

Once you have lost this easy water weight with intermittent fasting then the plateau can strike. We cannot tell you when this will be as it is different for everyone. When you notice that weight loss is not happening very much then it is probably the plateau. You then need to strongly consider scaling up your intermittent fasting.

If you are on the lean Gains 8:16 program as we recommended you do not have to go into “full on” fasting to get over the plateau. Just follow the advice in this chapter to make an easy transition with the scaling up process.

Change to Eat Stop Eat

As you know you will need to go full days fasting with the Eat Stop Eat method. You will eat one day and then fast on the next day. This can really help to trigger ketosis in your body which is where fat stores are used for energy because food calories are not present.

It is fairly easy to make the transition from Lean Gains to Eat Stop Eat after you are used to fasting. One thing to remember is that when you transition to Eat Stop Eat you need to moderate the amount of carbohydrates you consume or it will be more difficult to trigger ketosis.

The 2:2:2 Method

Once you have transitioned to Eat Stop Eat and got used to it you can make the move up again to fasting for two days in a row with the 2:2:2 method. Here you will eat for 2 days then fast for 2 days and then eat for 2 days again.

When you fast for longer periods it helps to activate ketosis. Fasting for 2 days is certainly not easy and we do not suggest that you rush into this. Spend some time with Eat Stop Eat before you make this change.

The 3:3:3 Method

After using the 2:2:2 method successfully you can scale up to the 3:3:3 method. Yes this means 3 days of eating followed by 3 days of fasting and then 3 days of eating again. Fasting for 3 days should not be too difficult for you after you have got into the habit of fasting for 2 days with the 2:2:2 method.

Again the longer fasting period should make triggering ketosis easier. There is a much better chance of you burning more fat if you can fast for 3 days regularly. You must watch your carbohydrate intake with the longer fasting methods though.

Use Mindfulness to help you with Intermittent Fasting

Adopting a mindfulness routine should help you with whatever intermittent fasting method you are using. We especially recommend this when you are scaling up. You don't need to formally meditate here. Just learn how to achieve mindfulness in the best way that suits you.

Mindfulness is a powerful way to control your thoughts. If you are having continuous thoughts about eating on fasting days then mindfulness can distract you and bring you back to the present moment. It is a good way to improve your self discipline.

In the final chapter we will discuss the best practices we recommend that you follow to be successful with intermittent fasting...

Best Practices For Intermittent Fasting Success



Chapter 10

Here are the 9 best practices that we strongly recommend that you follow to start intermittent fasting and be successful with it. Intermittent fasting is not easy but the end result will certainly be worth it for you, so embrace these best practices and make your intermittent fasting journey a success.

1. Understand what Intermittent Fasting is and what it isn't

It is very important that you understand what intermittent fasting is and what it isn't before you get started with it. You need to know that you will have an eating window and a fasting window and that you must comply with the rules of the fasting window for the best results. Knowing how intermittent fasting works will help.

2. Intermittent Fasting Benefits

There are more benefits to intermittent fasting than just consistent weight loss. It can help to repair your cells to eliminate waste cells, it can break down insulin resistance to stabilize blood sugar levels, it can improve your brain function and reduce inflammation in your body. Keep all of these benefits in mind so that you persist with intermittent fasting.

3. Commonly asked questions about Intermittent Fasting

Intermittent fasting didn't originate from any particular place. Our ancestors used to live like this. Some days there was food and other days nothing. It is safe for most people to participate in intermittent fasting but always consult your doctor first. The best intermittent fasting method to start with is the easiest one which is probably the Lean Gains 8:16 method.

4. Choose the right Intermittent Fasting Method

There are several different types of intermittent fasting methods. The difference between them is the amount of time that you will fast. You will get the best results with methods that have longer fasting periods. But always remember that it is not easy to fast for longer periods when you are just starting with intermittent fasting.

5. Choose a Healthy Diet

Some of the intermittent fasting methods allow you to eat whatever you want during your eating window. This is fine to get started but you will get better results if you change to a healthy, calorie deficient diet.

6. Get started with Intermittent Fasting

A lot of people think about getting started with intermittent fasting but never get around to it. It is essential that you decide on a start date and go for it. Choose an eating window that will work best for you and plan what you will eat. Plan to introduce some regular exercise as soon as you can.

7. Avoid Intermittent Fasting Mistakes

There are a lot of common mistakes that people make with intermittent fasting. People tend to give up too easily. If you make a mistake then just try again. Not having a plan will not help nor will trying to use an intermittent fasting method that demands too much of you. Getting your eating window wrong is another common mistake.

8. Daily Intermittent Fasting Success

Set goals for your intermittent fasting. How much weight do you want to lose by when? Write your goals down on paper and use them to motivate you. Create a daily schedule and stick to it. Plan how many meals you will eat during your eating window. Stay hydrated especially during fasting periods.

9. Scale up your Intermittent Fasting

You can reach a plateau with an intermittent fasting method where you will not get the results you want. Your body adapts to the method. In this situation you need to scale up to an intermitting fasting method that has a longer fasting period.

Conclusion



We have worked hard to bring you everything that you need to know about successful intermittent fasting. Please do not just read this guide and then do nothing. Take the time to identify the right intermittent fasting method and get started. The next move is yours. So take action right now and benefit from intermittent fasting.

We wish you every success with your intermittent fasting!