

How to Start Fasting

The Freeman · 6 Jun 2022 · 8 · By Rachael Link, MS, RD

There are many different types of fasts, making it easy to find a method that fits your lifestyle. Here are a few of the most common types of fasting:



Water fasting: Involves drinking only water for a set amount of time.

Juice fasting: Entails only drinking vegetable or fruit juice for a certain period.

Intermittent fasting: Intake is partially or completely restricted for a few hours up to a few days at a time and a normal diet is resumed on other days.

Partial fasting: Certain foods or drinks such as processed foods, animal products or caffeine are eliminated from the diet for a set period.

Calorie restriction: Calories are restricted for a few days every week.

Within those categories are also more specific types of fasts. For example, intermittent fasting can be broken down into subcategories, such as alternate-day fasting, which involves eating every other day, or time-restricted feeding, which entails limiting intake to just a few hours each day.

To get started, one may try experimenting with different types of fasting to find what works best for him or her.

Safety and Side Effects. Despite the long list of possible health benefits associated with fasting, it may not be right for everyone. For one who suffers from diabetes or low blood sugar, fasting can lead to spikes and crashes in blood sugar levels, which could be dangerous. It's best to talk to the doctor first if one has any underlying health conditions or is planning to fast for more than 24 hours.

Additionally, fasting is not generally recommended without medical supervision for older adults, adolescents or people who are underweight. In deciding to try fasting, one must be sure to stay well-hydrated and fill his diet with nutrient-dense foods during his eating periods to maximize the potential health benefits.

And, if fasting for longer periods, he must try to minimize intense physical activity and get plenty of rest.

The bottom line: Fasting is a practice that has been associated with a wide array of potential health benefits, including weight loss, as well as improved blood sugar control, heart health, brain function and cancer prevention.

From water fasting to intermittent fasting and calorie restriction, there are many different types of fasting that fit nearly every lifestyle. When coupled with a nutritious diet and healthy lifestyle, incorporating fasting into one's routine could benefit one's health. (www.healthline.com)