

# INTERMITTENT FASTING FOR BEGINNERS

**Your complete guide to starting your  
Intermittent Fasting plan**



AMBER  
*Shaw*

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AMBER  
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# welcome



AMBER  
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*Hiya Gorgeous!*

*I'm your coach, Amber!*

I know what it's like to never be satisfied in your body. I know what it's like to feel overwhelmed, confused and frustrated when it comes to losing weight. I also know what its like to be over 40 and suddenly your body doesn't feel the same as it did when you were in your 20's or 30's.

Health and fitness has always been a part of my life - but after I became a mom, things changed. I gained around 65lbs with BOTH kids and found it really difficult to shed the weight. I found I had less time for myself and and it seemed impossible to make myself a priority again. And on top of that, weight loss strategies that worked in the past, just didn't seem to work anymore.

I tried every diet on the planet. I would have success and then as soon as I went back to "normal" life, the weight would come back on. I found myself in this vicious cycle of deprivation dieting and was more unhappy in my skin than ever.

It wasn't until I gave up ALL of the dieting - the macro counting, the calorie counting, logging my food - that I found true freedom. I started focusing on eating more real food, intermittent fasting and an effective exercise program that didn't require hours in the gym and my body AND my mindset changed.

Now I want to share what worked for me, and countless other clients, with you. I want to show you that losing weight doesn't have to be so complicated and miserable. I want to work with you to build a lifestyle so you can shed the weight and stop the dieting forever. I want to show you how to use food as medicine to balance hormones and find relief as our bodies change. I want you to feel confident and sexy in your own skin and have the energy to do the things you love.

**So c'mon mamma, let's do this. Let's do this together.**



WHAT IS  
INTERMITTENT  
FASTING?

*Intermittent Fasting has been a powerful tool for me in my health journey.*

Intermittent Fasting or IF for short, is a cyclical diet strategy which involves a period of eating and a period of fasting (not eating).

Intermittent fasting has been used for centuries. There are many types of Intermittent Fasting. The duration of the non-fasting period is what varies. What stays the same is that you do not eat or consume calories during your fasting time.

Dr Axe, a leading expert in health, says "intermittent fasting results in lowered levels of oxidative stress to cells throughout the body." What could this mean for you and your health?

**The goal of this beginner's guide is to introduce you to this amazing tool for health. Some of the benefits are:**

- Increased energy
- Fat loss
- Boosted metabolism
- Supports the body to metabolize insulin better
- And more...

One of the most common questions people ask is, "If you're not eating for that long, isn't that like starving yourself?" Absolutely not. Fasting is not starvation. Starvation is when you are deprived of food or nutrition for an ongoing time period. With fasting, you are simply choosing WHEN to eat and when to not eat. Your body still gets the benefit of good nutrition and caloric intake but is allowed a greater time to rest and reset on a cellular level.

It might surprise you to know that intermittent fasting is not a new thing. Unlike fad diets and trends, IF has been around for millennia! Think about how our ancestors ate. Long ago, food wasn't as abundant as it is now. To eat, people had to hunt and forage. If the hunt was unsuccessful or no food was found while foraging, they would go without eating. When food was scarce, they would be hungry and when food was available, they would eat – this cyclical pattern is what we can tap into today with IF.

The main difference is that then, fasting wasn't necessarily a choice.

Fasting is also not a completely foreign modern concept either... Think about the word "breakfast" – breakfast means to break your fast! The time you spend between eating dinner and waking in the morning is a fast that you do on a daily basis. It's really just a part of our everyday lives, but we have forgotten what a powerful and therapeutic tool fasting can be.

A M B E R  
*Shaw*



HOW  
INTERMITTENT  
FASTING WORKS



## INTERMITTENT FASTING WORKS BY TRIGGERING YOUR BODY TO BURN OFF EXCESS BODY FAT TO FUEL YOUR ENERGY NEEDS.

After you eat your body digests the foods you consume in a process that can take up to 5 hours! Your insulin levels are higher during this period, and fat burning is virtually impossible. When your body isn't digesting food, your insulin levels are lower, and your body can burn more fat.

Your body can't shift into a fasting state if insulin levels are high. It normally takes about 12 hours after your last meal for insulin levels to reach a point when fat burning kicks in naturally. If you don't eat when your body is in that fat burning/ fasting state, then your body begins to catabolize your stored fat or basically eat at the fat stores to get the energy it needs. It's a balancing act!

**When we ingest more food than can immediately be used for energy the body stores that food as fat.**

Biologically, this is a protective mechanism... early humans experienced food scarcity, so when they were able to eat larger quantities of food their bodies stored whatever wasn't needed as fat. That fat could then be accessed during times of famine (when fasting occurred).

Remember that insulin is the key hormone in this process. Insulin is the hormone that tells your cells that they should accept glucose as fuel. When the body receives a signal that you have eaten, your pancreas produces insulin, and your cells get the signal to absorb glucose from your bloodstream.

If you have diabetes or dysregulated insulin levels, your cells don't get the message and don't allow glucose to be absorbed. In this case, glucose stays in the bloodstream.

The body senses that blood sugar is high and tries to get back into balance by grabbing the excess glucose and storing it as fat to bring blood sugar levels



## **When you eat a balanced diet and when insulin is working properly, your cells use glucose from your bloodstream and life goes on.**

The problem comes with excess --- and unfortunately, our modern diet is full of that! Fast food, processed food, sugary drinks and added sugars are everywhere.

The body gets bombarded with sugar and toxins and signals get messed up.

Insulin resistance is what happens when glucose is knocking on the doors of the cells, but no one answers. The pancreas pumps out insulin to signal that glucose is coming, but your cells don't get the message and glucose stays in the bloodstream... and the pancreas keeps trying to get the message to the cells by pumping out more and more insulin... which puts stress on the pancreas and on the cells.

The glucose is converted to fat or it recirculates and raises blood sugar levels, triggers chronic inflammation and causes a host of other problems including diabetes.

Basically, you eat, insulin levels rise and your body either burns sugar or stores sugar by converting it to fat. This fat is often stored in your liver but can also be deposited in other places. When you don't eat, the process goes into reverse. Instead of insulin levels rising, they fall, and the body starts burning up stored energy from fat as no food is coming in.

**Our bodies are constantly in two states, the fed state, and the fasted state – either storing food for energy or burning it.** If each of us were to start eating food the minute we got out of bed in the morning, continuing to eat until we went to bed again at night, our bodies would spend all the time in that fed state.

We would gain weight, not having allowed our bodies to burn any of that food into energy. To restore some balance and to lose weight, we need to spend time fasting to allow the body to use up stored energy.

**Our bodies were designed to work like that.**





# THE BENEFITS OF INTERMITTENT FASTING



## THE FIRST ONE IS WEIGHT LOSS, BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER REASONS.

### **Intermittent fasting:**

- Cleanses and detoxifies the body
- Gives your body a break from digesting
- Improves concentration and mental clarity
- Reduces blood sugar and balances insulin levels
- Increases energy
- Increases growth hormones
- Lowers cholesterol
- Reduces systemic inflammation
- Taps into the body's innate healing processes

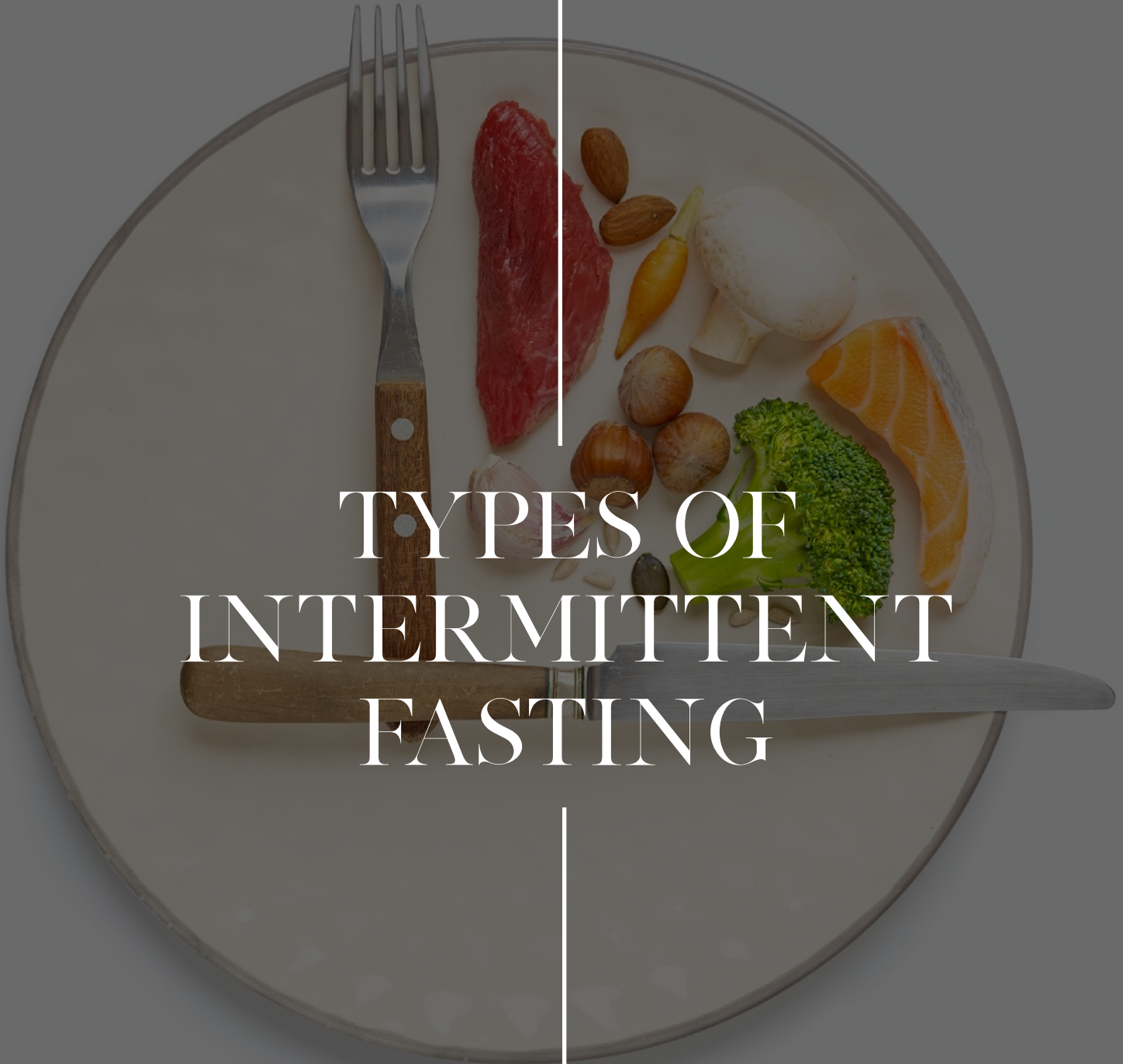
The organ that benefits most from intermittent fasting and extended fasting is the liver.

### **Your liver is a workhorse that's responsible for:**

- Filtering your blood to remove toxins such as viruses, bacteria, and yeast (a healthy liver can filter out 99 percent of bacteria and other toxins in your blood before that cleansed blood goes back into circulation!)
- Storing vitamins, minerals, and carbohydrates
- Processing fats, proteins, and carbohydrates
- Producing bile to break down fats for digestion (about a quart of bile is produced daily!)
- Breaking down and detoxifying the body of hormones, chemicals, toxins, and metabolic waste

In one minute, your liver filters about two quarts of the five quarts of blood your body contains. To appreciate how incredible that is, if we compare the liver to the filter on a swimming pool, that filter would need to clean half of the pool's water every minute to keep up with what your liver can do.

Your liver may get overloaded by toxins from the environment, food and water... food allergies and parasites burden the liver too! Fasting can help give the liver a break and allow it to naturally reset so it can perform better and keep you healthier.



TYPES OF  
INTERMITTENT  
FASTING



Type	Hours Fasting	Hours Eating	Notes
16:8	16	8	Recommended Most for Women
20:4	20	4	
24-Hour Fast	24		If you eat dinner tonight, then your next meal is dinner tomorrow night. Essentially, this is one meal a day, at the same time every day.
5:2 Day	48(2 days)	120(5 days)	Eat healthily for 5 consecutive days, then fast for 2 days. On your fasting days you are allowed no more than 500 calories per day. This fasting method was made popular by Dr. Mosley in his book called 'The Fast Diet'.
36 Hour	36		An example of this type would be eating dinner tonight, fasting all day tomorrow and then having breakfast the next morning. You would then fast the remainder of the day, and the next day and have dinner.

## LONGER FASTING PERIODS LIKE THE 48 HOUR FAST:

This type of fasting lasts 48 hours or longer. Extended fasts are typically done under medical supervision with a knowledgeable doctor. Nutrient deficiencies are a risk, so it is recommended that you take a multivitamin if you are fasting for longer than 48 hours. However, certain vitamins need fat, protein or acid to be properly metabolized, and fasting doesn't support that. Some people also experience upset stomach or nausea when taking multivitamin or supplements on an empty stomach.

Want to know the longest fast ever? 382 days. So, if you believe that doing a fast lasting around 7-14 days is impossible for you, think again! However, extended fasts are NOT recommended for everyone, and in fact, are contra-indicated in many! If you are interested in extended fasting, consult your doctor or a health center that specializes in extended fasting. True North in California is a trusted resource. Hippocrates Institute in Florida is another. Complications can happen from extended fasts or improperly done fasts. [Look here.](#)



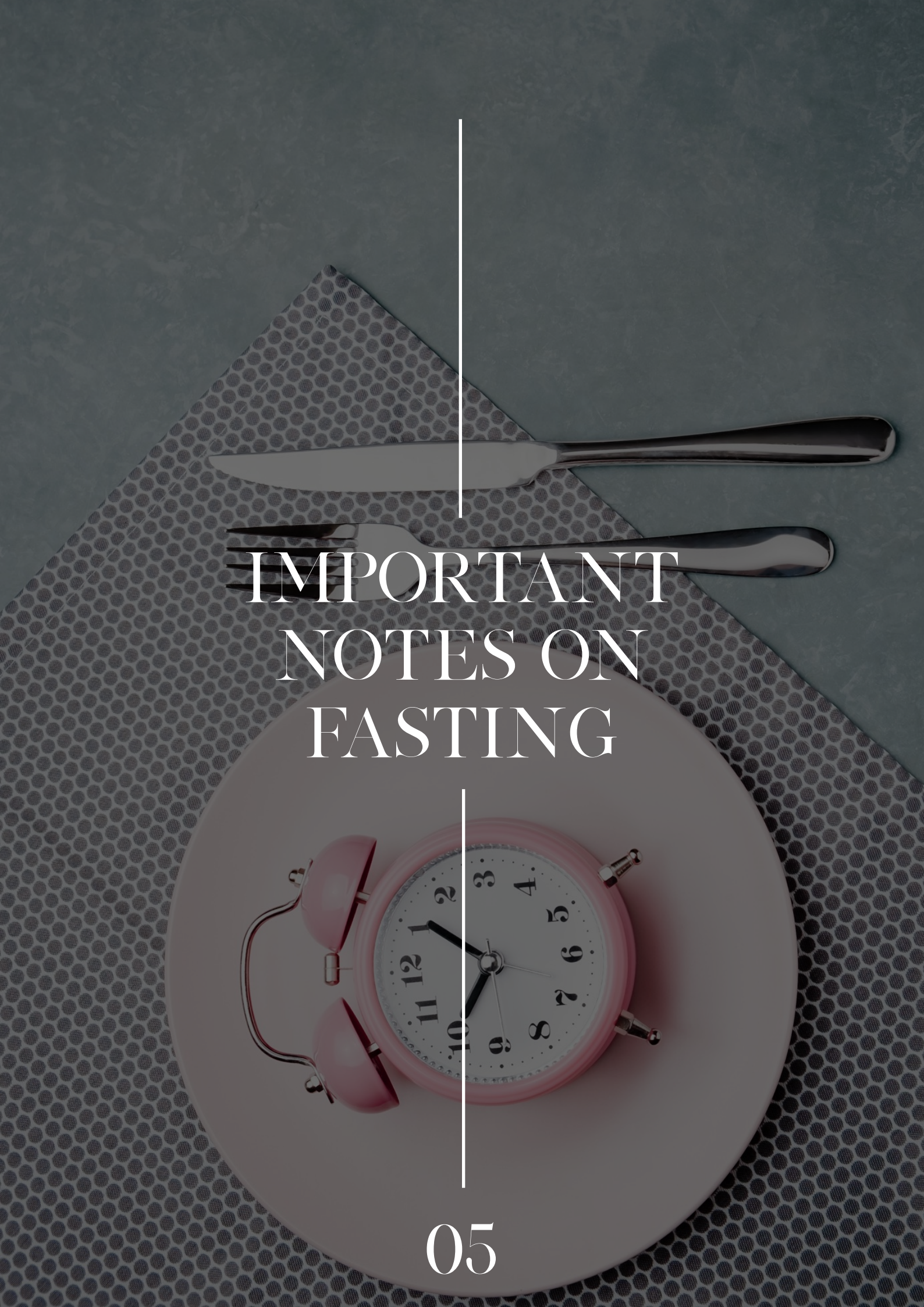
WHO  
SHOULD  
NOT FAST



## FOR SAFETY, SOME PEOPLE SHOULDN'T FAST.

**If any of these conditions apply to you, do NOT undertake fasting without permission from your doctor and possibly supervision by your doctor:**

- ✘ If you are underweight and your BMI (body mass index) is under 18.5.
- ✘ If you are extremely overweight or obese.
- ✘ If you are pregnant or breastfeeding – because your baby needs all the nutrients it can get and because toxins can shed into your breastmilk.
- ✘ If you are under 18 because you need the nutrients for growing.
- ✘ If you have a history of eating disorders.
- ✘ If you are extremely debilitated or malnourished, such as patients with cancer, AIDS, severe anemia, or any severe wasting conditions.
- ✘ If you are having surgery or have just had surgery, since it may interfere with your ability to heal.
- ✘ If you suffer from cardiac arrhythmia or congestive heart failure.
- ✘ Do not fast if you are struggling with mental illness, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, or anxiety.
- ✘ Do not fast if you suffer from severe liver or kidney disease.
- ✘ Do not fast if you are a type 1 diabetic.
- ✘ Do not fast if you are taking medications including, but not limited to anti-inflammatory medications, aspirin, antidepressants, narcotics, chemotherapy, or diuretics. (Medications such as thyroid hormones and hormone replacement therapy are safe to take during a fast. Always consult your physician before fasting if you are taking any medication.)
- ✘ If you are taking prednisone you will need to wean off this medication slowly under a doctor's supervision.
- ✘ If you have high uric acid or suffer from gout. Fasting can create a nutrient deficiency that may lead to fatigue, constipation, dizziness and a hike in your uric acid levels



IMPORTANT  
NOTES ON  
FASTING



## WOMEN & FASTING

Some studies done with rats showed that intermittent fasting made female rats more masculine, emaciated and infertile and caused them to miss their normal menstrual cycles.

There are reports of women who claim their menstrual periods stop while intermittent fasting but returned to normal when they stopped fasting. If this becomes an issue for you, IF may not be the best choice.

If you have irregular or absent periods to start with, if infertility is an issue, or if you are trying to conceive, are pregnant or breastfeeding, fasting is likely NOT a good choice.

The 16:8 schedule is most recommended for women because the longer fasting periods may cause dips in hormone levels. Please note, if you already suffer from hormone imbalances, you will want to pay attention to your body and how you are feeling. If you notice a hormone shift it may be that a 12:12 is a better fit or perhaps not IF at all. Always consult with your physician.

## EXERCISING WHILE FASTING

For short fasts and intermittent fasting, it is a good idea to continue exercising normally. Food is not necessary to provide energy for doing exercises.

You will be burning fat to meet your energy needs. However, use common sense and pay attention to signals from your body such as fatigue, dizziness, changes in heart rate, headache, feeling faint. Your body may respond differently when burning fat for fuel. Adjust your exercise routine as needed.

It is usually better to eat/time your feeding window after workouts because the body can regain lost energy and consume fuel needed to maintain metabolism.

Fasting also stimulates the release of Human Growth Hormone (HGH), which promotes lean muscle mass. When you fast, HGH goes up and insulin goes down. Fat burning hormones increase, which raises metabolic rates by around 3.6-14%. There is a study that shows that intermittent fasting causes less muscle loss than other methods of dieting or calorie restriction.

Keep in mind that the main reason intermittent fasting works is because you consume fewer calories. This means that if you eat more or binge in your eating periods, you are not likely to lose weight.





## SIDE EFFECTS FROM FASTING

It is possible that you will suffer from some side effects while you are fasting.

**Let's look at what they are:**

- Headaches
- Constipation
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Bad breath
- Muscle cramps
- Heartburn

Side effects happen during fasting as a result of blood sugar imbalance, lack of fiber and bowel movement, electrolyte imbalance, release of toxins from fat, dehydration and changes in stomach acid. Staying properly hydrated often decreases side effects. Exercise can help to get you sweating and get your lymph moving – both help get toxins out. Fat burning can lead to a process called ketosis. Ketosis can cause a sweet/maple syrupy smell to your breath. This should go away once you refeed or break your fast. If fatigue, dizziness or muscle cramps become uncomfortable, consider shortening the fasting window. Your body may not be strong enough for lengthy fasting windows to start. As your toxic load decreases and your body becomes healthier, fasting should become more comfortable.

Remember, fasting is a cyclic pattern. Try to embrace the rhythm and allow yourself time to rest. Many people find that IF helps improve self-care because, honestly, there's more time for it when your focus isn't always on food!

## HOW TO COPE WITH HUNGER WHILE FASTING

Incredibly, when you are fasting, there is a point where hunger pangs cease. Many people worry that they will find fasting intolerable because hunger will be too hard to manage. At the start of a fasting window, waves of hunger are normal. Often, what feels like hunger is really the body digesting the last meal. Digestion makes your stomach rumble and gurgle. Hunger, physiologically, is felt as a sensation in the back of the throat that is like thirst!

When intermittent fasting, water is the beverage of choice, but tea, coffee and other non-calorie beverages are fine. Do not add sugar to beverages and do not consume beverages that contain sugar. Your body will not burn fat if sugar is introduced. Intermittent fasting allows some milk or cream. In fact, coffee can be quite beneficial to you when you are fasting because it can blunt the hunger pangs.

If you do an extended fast, hunger usually increases in the beginning but gradually recedes. By days 3 and 4 you are not hungry at all because your body is being driven by the fat, kind of like 'eating' the fat on your body.



# CAN'T I JUST REDUCE CALORIES?

**No.** Fasting is about reducing the time you eat.

Calorie reduction is deciding how much. They are really two different decisions and issues, not to be confused. While fasting does reduce calorie intake, it is done specifically to get your body from rest and digest mode into fat burning. A calorie restricted plan could have you eating a few hundred calories throughout the day which would keep your body in a state of digestion. Fat burning would not be triggered because the body would still be getting energy from food and would have no reason to switch into fat burning mode.

## FASTING DO'S AND DON'TS

### **Do:**

- Plan so your sleeping hours fall within your fasting window and try to wait 4-6 hours after waking up to start your eating window
- Drink plenty of plain water to stay hydrated
- Keep busy so that you are not concentrating on your fasting as much
- Drink coffee or tea to help you ride out the pangs of hunger
- Set a goal – try intermittent fasting for 3 weeks or a month
- Eat properly between fasting periods. Many people follow a low carb diet to reduce hunger and make the fasting process easier.

### **Don't:**

- Let people know you are fasting if you know they will be disapproving
- Binge after fasting! The way to break a fast is to start off gently. The longer you were on the fast, the more gently you need to introduce foods to your body. If you have been on short fasts and then eat a huge meal afterward, you will end up with a sore stomach which is not serious but unpleasant – just eat gently and normally after a fast.

## GETTING STARTED

1. First, decide which type of fast you want to try – decide on how long you are going to fast.
2. Consult your doctor if you have any medical issues, are overweight or obese, are taking medications or are not sure if fasting is safe for you.
3. Think about upcoming events on your schedule that might sabotage your plan. If there is a wedding, business event or social setting on the horizon, plan your fasting times around it OR commit to fasting through the event.
4. If you cook for your family, it can help to prepare a few meals so you aren't working with lots of food on your first few fasting periods.
5. Start – continue with your usual way of life whilst fasting; it is best to keep busy.



## BREAKING A FAST

**Once your fasting time is done you can't just gobble up anything and everything or you're bound to feel bad, gain weight and trigger inflammation and blood sugar imbalances.**

If you are committing to fasting, then you are committing to healthy eating too. A balanced, nutrient dense, clean, whole food diet is known to support good health. Basically, eat real food and ditch the crap. Fasting is not an excuse to eat poorly nor is it a solution for bad choices. It can be part of a healthy routine, but it can also enable disordered eating. Be mindful of your health. Consult with your doctor or trusted Health Coach if you aren't sure about how to eat when not fasting.

When you break your fast, do it gently. Fruits provide energy fast and are best eaten on their own to support good digestion. If you are feeling at all shaky or lightheaded near the end of your fast, fruit can be a good choice for your first food of your eating window.

Clean protein, fat and fiber (from veggies and whole grains) should make up the bulk of your nutrition. These things will keep your blood sugar stable and help your body adapt to a fasting lifestyle.

Fasting is not "dieting" in the conventional methods. You could more describe it as an eating pattern. When you really get down to thinking about fasting, you have to realize that it came about because the ancient people did not have grocery stores to buy food or refrigerators to store food. Often, they had to function without food for extended periods of time.

In fact, the Bushmen people of Southern Africa still follow that ancient way of living to this day. They often endure long walking stretches or even running to find food, carrying it on their backs to their abodes. You never really see "obese" Bushmen because their bodies are "ripped", lean, and in the right proportions. Their constrained lifestyle does not stimulate the massive muscle growth sought after by people today, beyond what the body requires.

Their energy goes towards maintaining their strength, their endurance, and their tenacity.



## FASTING IS SIMPLE

A major benefit of intermittent fasting is that if you are a healthy eater and watch your diet and weight, it makes your healthy eating lifestyle even simpler – fewer meals to prepare and cooking and cleaning up afterward.

Most intermittent fasting plans don't tell you what to eat; they rather tell you when to eat, making them very customizable. So, if you want to eat a high-protein diet, then you can and if you want to eat a moderate-carbohydrate plan, you can do that too. Maybe you want to eat less processed food or you want to try a raw diet...

Common sense and your own intuition will tell you that it is a good practice to get good nutrients into your body and this should really be your practice when you are involved in an intermittent fasting pattern.

## CONCLUSION

Intermittent fasting is not a one size fits all solution, but it is backed by science, has been practiced for centuries and can be part of a healthy lifestyle for some people. If your health situation permits you to try intermittent fasting and you are keen on the idea, do a little research and set yourself up for success.

Intermittent fasting can simplify your life by reducing the amount of time you spend cooking and eating. Experiment with different timing and see whether IF suits you or not – If you feel better and enjoy the simplicity of eating less frequently, score! If it's not for you, simply move on.

Weight gain and insulin resistance can happen by 'snackcident' – but you don't have to get stuck in that trap! Give your body a break – it deserves to be looked after to the best of your ability so that you can reap the benefits that intermittent fasting brings – try it yourself – it is certainly is a powerful tool for healing and vibrant healthy living.



# CHANGE YOUR BODY

*The right way!*

A combination of eating the right foods and Intermittent Fasting can give you some amazing long-term results. Your body cannot operate to its full potential without the nutrients it needs, and these foods can help you get back on the right track.

Join me inside the women's empowerment support group:

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ambershaw>**

You'll get tips each week on how to start making yourself a priority and starting to live the life you want and deserve.

**Amber x**

