
Fasting

There are plenty of advocates for the practice of fasting; some do it to lose weight, others do it because they hope to gain spiritual insight through fasting; other reasons people fast include the excuse that 'everyone does', as now and then fasting becomes a trend for a while.

You should know me by now: I don't follow trends; I self-analyse to discover what works best for me, and I act on what I find.

It's the same with fasting.

None of the rules below are 'written in stone', but I feel better when I bend myself to follow them.

I try to abstain from solid food for at least 14 hours each day I eat.

I've heard shouldn't drink calories. Well, too bad. I usually drink two coffees with milk, each about 60 calories.

On days that aren't immediately following a full fasting day, I don't eat till noon and I have my first big meal about 3 pm.

I've found I don't tolerate food for a couple of hours after waking up.

I have been like that for at least the past 10 years. I had even trouble adopting the habit of drinking a glass of water first thing in the morning. My body just needs some time before digesting anything.

At least once a week I abstain from food altogether.

It's always Friday, because of my religious beliefs.

I don't mind fasting twice a week. My additional day of fast is usually Monday (after the weekend's indulgences) or Wednesday (another traditional Catholic fasting day).

If I fast more often than that, my body rebels.

It 'thinks' I'm going to starve myself, and pull out all manner of mind-tricks, so I'll feed myself. At present (as I'm writing this), it is Advent (the weeks leading up to Christmas), and I'm fasting 3 days a week.

Three days a week is hard; it is unsustainable long-term for me.

If I am trying to gain some weight, I don't fast more often than once a week, or longer than 36 hours.

BULLETPROOF HEALTH AND FITNESS

YOUR SECRET KEY TO HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

What Works For Me:

- Refraining from eating for 14-16 hours each day.
- Fasting at least once per week for 36 hours
(I fast from Thursday evening until Saturday morning).
- Fasting twice per week and/or longer than 36 hours to shed off some weight.

My Suggestions for You:

Reflect: ask yourself what your body needs.

That should be your first step.

- **Experiment:** for a week, try going several hours each day without eating, or don't eat at all for a whole day.
- **Look for external motivation** to help you; ask what will this fast do for you, in the widest possible sense?

Assess how fasting affects your mood, your productivity, your attitude. And then decide whether - and how - you could usefully use fasting in your life.

'Do it Now! If you don't, there will be no results tomorrow.'

MICHAL STAWICKI