

[IMAGE]

## What's Your Eating Window?

By Editorial Staff

Intermittent fasting is an increasingly popular method of weight loss, but it also has profound cellular benefits, according to an expanding body of research. It also isn't nearly as challenging as you might think, so let's explore why contracting your daily eating window should be under consideration, regardless of whether you need to lose weight or not.

Let's deal with the difficulty factor right off the bat. If you eat within a 10-hour window (let's say 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.), that means you fast for 14 hours per day. Not too shabby – and completely achievable, considering you're likely sleeping for more than half of those 14 hours. If you don't eat breakfast until 9-10 a.m., that gives you more flexibility in terms of eating until 7-8 p.m. (if work and other obligations make an early dinner challenging).

How about the cellular benefits? When you're not eating, something simple happens: Your body has time to rest and rejuvenate. Insulin levels go down, fat cells release stored sugar for energy (because no new food / energy is being consumed), and other biomarkers (inflammation, blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.) also appear to improve over the long term, according to research.

weight loss - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark But there's more to it than that. Your cells can't be working 24/7 processing food. During the fasting window, they appear to switch from a growth phase to a repair phase, allowing for increased cellular defense, stress resistance and more. In other words, a healthier, stronger you from head to toe!

There's another reason to restrict your daily eating window, and it has to do with both weight maintenance *and* overall health. If you're eating 18 hours a day and sleeping for six, at least two major events occur. First, you probably ingest too many calories, and particularly later in the evening, those calories are more likely to be the unhealthy variety – snacks, desserts, etc. Second, if you eat too close to bedtime, you may find your sleep habits aren't as pleasant as they deserve to be. That's because your body is focused on digestion, not rest and rejuvenation.

There's no danger in giving intermittent fasting a try, particularly if you stick to the suggested window that includes sleep time. And remember, just because you're contracting your eating window doesn't mean you're starving yourself; it just means you need to be cognizant about getting enough of the food your body needs. (For example, skipping meals during your eating window likely won't work.) Talk to your doctor for more information.

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