



# Ways to help with a calorie deficit – Intermittent Fasting

Intermittent fasting (IF) is currently one of the world's most popular health and fitness trends. People are using it to lose weight, improve their health and simplify their lifestyles. Many studies show that it can have powerful effects on your body and brain and may even help you live longer.

Intermittent fasting (IF) is an eating pattern that cycles between periods of fasting and eating. It doesn't specify which foods you should eat but rather when you should eat them. In this respect, it's not a diet in the conventional sense but more accurately described as an eating pattern.

Common intermittent fasting methods involve daily 16-hour fasts or fasting for 24 hours, twice per week. Fasting has been a practice throughout human evolution. Ancient hunter-gatherers didn't have supermarkets, refrigerators, or food available year-round. Sometimes they couldn't find anything to eat. As a result, humans evolved to be able to function without food for extended periods of time.

There are several different ways of doing intermittent fasting – all of which involve splitting the day or week into eating and fasting periods. During the fasting periods, you eat either very little or nothing at all. These are the most popular methods:

- **The 16/8 method:** It involves skipping breakfast and restricting your daily eating period to 8 hours, such as 1–9 p.m. Then you fast for 16 hours in between.
- **The 5:2 diet:** With this method, you consume only 500–600 calories on two non-consecutive days of the week, but eat normally the other 5 days.

By reducing your calorie intake, all these methods should cause weight loss if you don't compensate by eating much more during the eating periods i.e., creating a calorie deficit.

Many people find the 16/8 method to be the simplest, most sustainable, and easiest to stick to. It's also the most popular. Tip – You can use your sleep period as part of the fast. So, if you stop eating at 7pm you can start again at 11am.

There are many free apps out there to try which set timers for you to start your fast. You can even play around with the splits so if 16/8 is too much to start, why not start with 14/10 for example.