

# Intermittent Fasting



## What is intermittent fasting (IF)?

Involves restricting eating times rather than types or amounts of food eaten.<sup>1</sup>  
The idea is when you are not fasting, you can eat whatever you want.

Followed by 13% of Americans recently surveyed, usually for weight loss purposes.<sup>2</sup>

## 3 types of intermittent fasting<sup>1</sup>

### The 5:2 Diet

Regularly eating 5 days per week and fasting (or mostly fasting) on the other 2 days

#### Effectiveness:

Can lead to weight loss due to the average 20-25% calorie reduction often experienced

### Alternative Day Fasting (ADF)

or alternative-day modified fasting

Switching back-and-forth between days of fasting (or mostly fasting) and feeding

#### Effectiveness:

Any weight loss is related to calorie reduction. "Big eaters" generally don't lose weight because they often make up their calories on their feeding days

### Time-Restricted Feeding (TRF)

Limits eating to a reduced window of time, typically <10 hours per day

(example: if you eat breakfast at 9:00 a.m., you need to stop eating at 7:00 p.m. to maintain a 10 hour fast window).

#### Effectiveness:

Appears to be the easiest method to maintain, so it could potentially be the most effective for weight loss and/or maintenance

## What does the science say?<sup>1,3-5</sup>



**Any weight loss is largely due to the decrease in calories during the fasting period.**

However, overall effectiveness is not different from other low-calorie diet plans.

### Scientific evidence is lacking

Many studies are on small groups of people or limited to animals (not generalizable) and for very short periods (long-term effects not known).

More research is needed regarding potential negative side effective, such as risk for nutrient deficiencies.

## Bottom line

Intermittent fasting is not currently a recommended treatment for weight loss or any other health condition.

Different diets can work better for different people, but the key is how well you follow the diet and how easy it is to maintain those habits long term.

### References

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