



The Fast Diet: The Simple Secret of Intermittent Fasting: Lose Weight, Stay Healthy, Live Longer

Michael Mosley , Mimi Spencer

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The #1 New York Times bestseller!

Is it possible to eat normally, five days a week, and become slimmer and healthier as a result?

Simple answer: yes. You just limit your calorie intake for two nonconsecutive days each week—500 calories for women, 600 for men. You'll lose weight quickly and effortlessly with the FastDiet.

Scientific trials of intermittent fasters have shown that it will not only help the pounds fly off, but also reduce your risk of a range of diseases from diabetes to cardiovascular disease and even cancer. “The scientific evidence is strong that intermittent fasting can improve health,” says Dr. Mark Mattson, Chief of the Laboratory of Neurosciences, National Institute on Aging, and Professor of Neuroscience, Johns Hopkins University.

This book brings together the results of new, groundbreaking research to create a dietary program that can be incorporated into your busy daily life, featuring:

- Forty 500- and 600-calorie meals that are quick and easy to make
- 8 pages of photos that show you what a typical “fasting meal” looks like
- The cutting-edge science behind the program
- A calorie counter that makes dieting easy
- And much more.

Far from being just another fad, the FastDiet is a radical new way of thinking about food, a lifestyle choice that could transform your health. This is your indispensable guide to simple and effective weight loss, without fuss or the need to endlessly deprive yourself.

The Fast Diet: The Simple Secret of Intermittent Fasting: Lose Weight, Stay Healthy, Live Longer Details

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From Reader Review The Fast Diet: The Simple Secret of Intermittent Fasting: Lose Weight, Stay Healthy, Live Longer for online ebook

Joan says

The diet and book are both based on personal experiences of doctor and science journalist, Michael Mosley. He produced a BBC documentary titled *Eat, Fast and Live Longer*, which prompted our interest in the diet. The diet is relatively easy to follow and effective. Unfortunately, the book makes it sound much more complicated than it is. (Short review: skip the book; watch the documentary).

The premise of the diet is that fasting 2 days a week creates multiple health benefits: weight loss, reduced risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and possibly even cancer. Besides calorie restriction, the diet also makes a person more aware of true hunger pangs versus emotional eating.

Dr. Mosley's definition of a fast is actually quite generous — 500 calories/day for women, 600 for men. Dieters fast for two nonconsecutive days each week, and are free to eat as they please on the remaining 5 days.

My timing of reading this book -- after having watched the documentary and been on the diet for about a month -- was ideal. This book did teach new ideas (watching high glycemic foods more closely, for example), but it provided little more information than the documentary (i.e. a person doesn't have to reference both). The menus are so-so: many I might try, others use ingredients that I personally don't have in my pantry (pickled ginger?)

Rachel says

I'm a total convert to intermittent fasting. I can't really call it a diet. It's more like a lifestyle change. I plan to do it for the rest of my life. I started it seven weeks ago and have dropped 6+ pounds. In that time I've eaten goodies like molten chocolate cake, cheesecake, apple crisp, & my favorite burger & fries, to name a few. (Those weren't the norm, I mostly chose very healthy foods, but just giving examples of things I still got to enjoy! Basically anything.)

Approaches to intermittent fasting are totally varied. Mosley uses the 5:2 approach. The beauty is that you can tailor it to your lifestyle. Don't fast on the weekends or on vacation or business lunches. Fast for fewer days if you are at your target weight, work in a few more days if you are obese.

The profound beauty of this lifestyle is that not only will you lose weight if you need to, you will see long-term benefits in cholesterol, blood pressure, insulin sensitivity (this is HUGE for type II), and studies indicate very possible benefits for cancer and inflammatory diseases such as Alzheimer's. Your BMI will go down (this is more important than just weight), your overall appetite will decrease, and you will actually crave healthier food (per their studies, and also what I've noticed these past few weeks). It is bringing you back to how your body evolved to eat.

I love this. I feel so much more alive, lean, energetic. I exercise on my fast days (as well as my "feed" days).

I don't have a conflicted relationship with food; instead, I get to enjoy every bite I DO eat, and I look forward to my days off when I can fast and enjoy the clarity & simplicity that comes with that. I could go on & on about how strongly I feel about this (and believe me, my friends will tell you I have).

If I had to chose books that had changed my life in the past decade, this would be one of the top three. The entertaining British slang is just a bonus. ;)

Elyse says

This is another Book that I have read, and I own. It's part of my library collection of health, diet, and cookbooks that I've collected over the years starting back when I was a Kinesiology major in college with a minor in nutrition.

The book was recommended to me today..

I agree with the philosophy and practices in this book. Makes good sense. I've followed it many times.

I've also had days of eating ice cream and or carrot cake too..,

So don't kid yourself - no saint here!

However we really do eat fresh food - and avoid fried foods and trans fat's. We eat home much more than eating and restaurants. But on occasion we go to dinner with friends, or I go to lunch with a friend. Not too much though.

Food is to be enjoyed as anything else in life!

And sometimes Fasting -partial days - of fasting feels terrific.

Andrea Marley says

Starting today ! I watched this documentary a couple months ago and have thought about it off and on since. My fiancé brought home the book from the library and the reasons to start are overwhelming. In fact, the book was prompted by the popularity of the program. We are both TOFI (Thin on the outside and fat on the inside) , or skinny fat, or tiny with round bellies, or lucky trolls; anyways, READ THIS BOOK!

Natalie says

My weight can go up and down and over the last 18 months I managed to put on 2 stone, despite exercising regularly during term time, sometimes running up to 33k a week. Though I know it's what I eat that has got me this way.

I have also been sluggish and my skin (and scalp) has broken out in spots and I have tried every lotion and potion (even changing my contraception). Feeling that I needed to do more, I deep down knew it was what I was eating and a proper diet would help.

Having allergies to Wheat and not eating meat, I deluded myself that I was eating healthy, though I can still

find junk food and quick fixes and I was eating whenever I thought I was hungry and I not surprising, I put on weight.

I changing my exercise in January and I have been doing the 30 Day shred most mornings and wanted a good diet to go with it (and not wanting tp pay out on expensive diets or clubs).

I found this book in Tesco, not seeing the Horizon programme; I went on it solely because it sounds manageable.

Two days out of seven, you cut down your calorie intake to 500 for women and 600 for men. Every other day, you can eat what you like. I started doing this a few weeks ago and though I don't have scales, I measured my waist and I have already lost 2 inches off my waist.

The way I have done this is; I cut my calories on Mon and Thursday, though I can be flexible, if I know I'm meeting friends, I will change the day. I usually have my entire calorie intake in one go as my evening meal with the family. I found that by splitting the meals in the morning and dinner, I was starving by lunch time and having them just a dinner time was a lot better managed!

The book contains meal ideas and a calorie table at the back. It is measuring and weighing you calories, but it's for only two days!

The idea is to give your liver a break to detox; if we keep eating, the liver is constantly working and not getting a break, hence health problems and obesity!

Since starting I have noticed that my skin is getting better, I feel more energetic and I am in control. I even find that on my normal eating days, I am aware of what I eat and have started to be quiet sensible.

Sometimes I have had a can of soup and a bowl of salad of my choice (and even under the 500 cals, I can struggle to eat this in one sitting) and through the days I also drink lots too, keep me ticking over. I drink nettle, herbal and fruit tea and water (hot and cold), which is also good, as I didn't always remember to drink plenty before this book!

The longer I continue to do this diet the easier it seems to be, as at first it can be a battle of wills! Just keep busy and plan your day wisely!

If I am offered naughty treats or a slice of cake, I can happily put it away and enjoy it the next day when I am not fasting.

This is a great lifestyle change and I can see myself doing this for the rest of my life and I would recommend anyone (who can) to give it a try!

Brenda says

With this fasting diet offering to lower the risk of various diseases, including dementia, heart disease, diabetes and cancer plus making weight loss easier it sounds too good to be true...right? But this book is well worth a read if you are interested in becoming healthier and living longer. It seems to be a simple thing to follow, and it certainly doesn't seem like the usual conventional diets or fad diets destined to fail.

Tested by various medical people as something which works, I will give it a try - I definitely want to stay healthy:)

Scott says

I don't normally write reviews about health/diet books but the ideas in this book have really worked much better than I expected. I started the diet about two months ago and I have dropped about 30 lbs. When I started I was 207 lbs (I tend to fluctuate between 205 and 215), my dream weight was 180 lbs, and today I weighed in at 176.1 lbs on the gym scale.

Now I must confess that I tweaked the system to speed up the weight loss. First, on the fast days I only eat between 50 to 200 calories (not the 600 allowed for men). I also do heavy cardio on the fast days (sometimes up to two hours) and lighter cardio on my feast days. Now that I am at my ideal weight I'll probably lighten up the workouts and eat the full 600 calories on the fast days (or only fast once a week). Losing weight this fast is probably not safe or healthy, but it's what I did. I think that following the diet more strictly would also have brought results, just slower.

I really like this diet since 5 days a week I can eat whatever I want (within reason) and frankly I am just not willing to give up chocolate, chicken wings, chips and salsa, and beer. I've tried other systems (such as "I Can Do This Diet") without any real or lasting effects (normal yo-yo effects). But this one worked for me.

Amyiw says

Very much like the Horizon program on BBC or also shown on PBS here in the U.S.. I saw it about a year ago. I like the idea of this, just got to stick to it. It is a non-consecutive fasting program for better health and weight lost. Men get 600 calories on fast days and women get 500. Many choose Monday and Thursday but others move them around, and some do alternate day fast, ADF, which is every other day, 3 to 4 days a week. I like how he points to many studies, then we get the personal experiences. I know he used himself as a guinea pig a tried different types of fasting and showed the benefits to himself.

My only real complaint is that all the personal were of people loosing 10-20 pounds and not the 50-80 pounds, or more, that a truly overweight person needs to loose. Hearing how so many people loose 20 pounds on this diet doesn't inspire them as much as they need a bigger goal and hear about people in their situation. From about 5'3" to 6'3" there is a 30-40 pound division where people transition from overweight to obese. They talk about obesity and how it is increasing, being more than 1/3 of the population today, add in the overweight and you get 3/4 of men in the U.S.A.. All of the personal stories here were less than that 30+ weight loss, so not the 1/3 of the population this should be targeted. Is it that it doesn't work as well for the extreme? They say that if you weigh more there should be greater results and better health benefits, I just wish they put some of those anecdotal personal stories as motivation, just a 60 pound story would have done.

OK this is targeted as a change of life eating pattern and not so much a diet, which I totally get. It is for health benefits first as even when you get to your weight goal, they say to continue to follow the pattern for

life, with a 6-1 fast while maintaining weight. This seems like an easier life changing goal than many of the restrictive diets. They just seem like an impossible forever. It has to be a life style change. This seems like a doable change.

pausetowonder says

First off, I've never been on a diet in my life.

I've been a vegetarian for 25 years and eat a healthy varied diet with lots of whole grains, vegetables, dried legumes, etc. but since moving to Paris have been eating way too much in the pastry department.

Like everyone else reviewing this, I saw the BBC Horizon program "Eat, Fast and Live Longer" (search YouTube - it keeps getting posted there) and was really impressed. This book gives details of the science and recommendations on how to manage the fasting. I've been doing it for a month and feel much lighter and have a better relationship to hunger and portion size. This is a great way to reset and remind your body that less is more. (Dovetails nicely with mindfulness.)

My only complaint is that the recipes are all high protein even though in the science section, that's mentioned as being harmful. The reason they give is that for only two days a week, it won't be a problem and that protein helps dull your appetite. Well, whole grains and heaps of steamed veg do that as well and it's a lot healthier.

The only thing I didn't like about the book was the section by Ms Spencer -- truly appallingly writing. Read for the info, not the literary merit!

Michele says

I watched the Horizon program last year and started the 5:2 soon after. I felt the benefits (lost just under 13lb, had clearer skin etc) but decided to give myself a week off over Christmas. I had started to get headaches on my fast days but instead of drinking more water (which I have never been good at), I gave in. The week turned into 3 months and whilst my weight is not back to where it was before, it was creeping up. I bought Dr Mosley's book just after Christmas and have finally got around to reminding myself how much sense this 'diet' makes. The book is an easy read with references to trials and papers if you want to look into them further. I'm on day 2 of this weeks 'fast' and have had a lovely breakfast of strawberries, blueberries, melon, raspberries, yoghurt and a sprinkling of bran. My dinner will consist of a piece of salmon (wrapped in foil and baked in the oven) with a few mushrooms and loads of green beans - really tasty and filling. The book has menu ideas for men (600 cal) and women (500 cal) and also a handy calorie counter. I will be using some of the menu ideas to add variety to the fast days. The book has reinvigorated and inspired me to have another go (and perhaps add a squeeze of lime to the water).

Nigeyb says

The first, and probably last, diet book I'll ever read. Most diets don't work, or when they do the loss is only temporary. We all know that. So why did I bother to read this? And why am I persuaded that it might be a

different and important new approach to health and well-being?

I was given this book by my parents-in-law who had found it very helpful. Another friend has also successfully followed the 5:2 approach for about six months. I was curious because, as a man in his early fifties who eats healthily and is fairly active, for the first time in my life I am finding it harder to shift the post-Christmas paunch. Usually upping the running and exercise has resulted in fairly easily weight loss. Not any more it seems.

What is most startling about this book is that weight loss is only a part of the story. The real dividends are around longer term health and which include a reduced risk of heart disease, dementia, cancer and diabetes. The evidence is compelling and persuasive. The other attractive aspect is that the 5:2 approach means that the participant only has to exercise will power for two days out of five and can eat normally on the other days.

Basically, the theory goes that our bodies are designed to adapt to periods without food and, during periods when the body receives fewer calories, it goes into repair mode resulting in various beneficial changes. The authors advocate eating normally for five days a week, and cutting calories for two days a week (500 for women, and 600 for men). The book explores all the current scientific evidence, busting a few myths in the process, and also recognises that everyone is different and therefore suggests various strategies.

The book is short and very readable and it has inspired me to try it out. Many people have made this a permanent change. The book concludes with twenty pages of short testimonials from people who have found it helpful, including some medical practitioners reporting on their patients. The book is well worth reading if only to inform yourself about some fascinating science that appears to have significant and important health benefits.

EDIT (written on 13 Feb 2014):

Following my review above I started the 5:2 diet on 13th January 2014. One of the most instructive things about restricting calories for two days per week is the realisation that hunger pangs do not necessarily signal an essential need to eat. Far from it. By resisting the pangs and enduring the minor discomfort, I discover that they go away. That's not to say it is easy but having got into a routine I now know it just requires a bit of will power. The knowledge that the following day will be unrestricted is also very helpful. I also abstain from alcohol on the restricted calorie days and, since starting the diet, I have stopped eating between meals, except for fruit if I feel peckish, and I am generally eating more vegetables. Here's my results...

Monday 13th Jan 80.1 kg (12.6 stone) (BMI 22.67)

Monday 20th Jan 78.1 kg (12.3 stone) (BMI 22.11)

Monday 27th Jan 77 kg (12.1 stone) (BMI 21.8)

Monday 3rd Feb 76 kg (11.9 stone) (BMI 21.51)

Monday 10th Feb 75 kg (11.8 stone) (BMI 21.23)

(BMI: 18.5-24.9 = healthy weight)

I am amazed at the success of this diet and will probably move to just one restricted calorie day a week having got to my target weight. Michael Mosley suggests this is the best way to maintain a healthy weight rather than to continue to lose weight. I will probably continue to abstain from alcohol for two days per week.

After trying different permutations I discovered that not eating breakfast, then having some porridge for

lunch with blueberries, followed by a bowl of steamed or roasted vegetables and some tofu (usually with a bit of Balsamic vinegar) is a good way to stay under 600 calories on the two restricted calorie days - with plenty of water and hot drinks to ward off any hunger pangs.

EDIT (written on 27 Jan 2015):

By the end of March 2014 I was down to 70 kg (11 stone) and I switched from fasting for two days a week to one day a week. I stayed at around this weight for most of 2014. Over Christmas 2014 I ate more and my weight went back up to 77 kg (12 stone) so, at the time of writing, I am back to doing two days fasting.

I am also experimenting with not eating breakfast and waiting until lunchtime ever day for my first calories of the day. After a week and a half this already feels quite normal. Whilst I wake up feeling in the mood to eat, once I've drunk some water and a couple of cups of coffee, the hunger pangs quickly disappear and I don't feel hungry until around midday. I also feel very energetic, focussed and productive. Since making these changes I am almost back to 70 kg (11 stone) which I perceive to be my ideal weight for optimum health.

Anita says

The ironies of the library hold system. I'm reading this at the same time as *The Dinner*.

As all diet books, lots of anecdotal experiences, a lot of time showing scientific evidence--although in this case there has been very little done. I read an article earlier in Harpers Magazine ("Starving Your Way to Vigor: The Benefits of An Empty Stomach," Steve Hendricks), that had a lot more history and science in it. It will be interesting to see if there will be some scientific studies done to bolster these claims. An interesting plan. I am especially intrigued by the health benefits of hormesis. By putting stress on your cells, you make them stronger. Yes, I did learn a new vocabulary word. I may even try this.

Donna says

I watched the Horizon programme during the summer and was intrigued by the concept of this approach to health and weight loss. Then I just happened to catch Michael Moseley on morning TV, talking about this book based on his findings during that programme. I came home and ordered it straight away.

The book gives a very good, jargon free explanation of why and how intermittent fasting works. It doesn't go into too much scientific stuff so is ideal for anyone to read and understand. The benefits seem to be really good. Essentially it would be considered a way of eating in order to lose weight, but even if you are happy with your weight the other benefits are heart health, better long term memory, lower risk of cancer and Type 2 diabetes. It's all good.

It does advise that Type 1 diabetics (I am one) should not do intermittent fasting but as I use an insulin pump rather than injections I can get away with it. I have only done one day so far to see how it would affect my blood sugars. I managed to keep them very steady until last thing before bed when they dipped too low and I ended up eating some biscuits. But I shall persevere!

On a "fasting day" you are restricted to 500 (women/ 600 (men) calories per day, for 2 days a week, but on the other days you can just eat what you like. So you don't have to get into the mindset of having to think about calories for 365 days of the year. If you are used to eating a lot, 500 calories can seem like a small

amount of food, but remember - the next day you can eat what you like.

The book contains sample menus for 10 days, and a calorie counter. It also has testimonials from people who started the plan after watching the programme and they have all made great progress.

Give it a go, it makes so much more sense than all the other "faddy diets".

Deb says

Finally a diet I can do. Down ten lbs in two weeks and it's easy. Ridiculously easy. LOVE!

Will says

This is more than a diet, and you can easily start it after reading the first few pages. The book describes intermittent fasting, and it describes in full detail the beneficial effects it can have on your body. What drew most of my attention was improved brain function. After trying it a while I discovered it really works. I sleep better and I can concentrate more at work. After my last blood work, the doctor said my blood was completely normal other than my cholesterol being too low. He cut my prescription for statins in half. Of course, my weight has fallen, too. My BMI is back under 25. This book is well documented and describes scientific studies that are complete and which ones are still underway. It does have several recipes in case you don't already know how to prepare healthy meals, although some of the ingredients are difficult to find. You only have to partial fast two days a week. Although the author says you can eat anything else the rest of the time, you get faster results sticking to healthy meals. This really worked well for me.
