

5 Untrue Beliefs about Intermittent Fasting in Women

Intermittent fasting has become increasingly popular recently, and it involves limiting food intake for a specific period of time.

There are several benefits associated with intermittent fasting, including improved insulin sensitivity, weight loss, and reduced inflammation. However, there are many myths and misconceptions surrounding intermittent fasting, particularly in women.

In this report, we will address 5 untrue beliefs about intermittent fasting in women.

But before we investigate the details of these 5 myths, let us briefly address what's intermittent fasting -

What is Intermittent Fasting?

It's an eating pattern known as intermittent fasting that alternates between periods of fasting and eating. It is not a diet in the conventional sense since it focuses more on when to eat food than what kinds of food to eat.

Women practicing Intermittent Fasting refrain from all or some meals and beverages during the fasting times, while they ingest the required number of calories during the



eating intervals. The 16/8 technique, the 5:2 method, One-Meal-A-Day, and alternate-day fasting are a few of the numerous approaches to intermittent fasting.

Many health advantages of intermittent fasting have been demonstrated, including weight loss, increased insulin sensitivity, and a decreased risk of chronic illnesses.

Some of the benefits of intermittent fasting include:

- **Weight loss:** By lowering calorie intake and boosting fat burning, intermittent fasting can aid in weight loss. It has been proven to be successful in lowering belly fat, which has been linked to several chronic illnesses
- **Improved insulin sensitivity:** By improving insulin sensitivity, IF can lower the chances of type 2 diabetes. Also, it can help diabetics better regulate their blood sugar levels
- **Reduced inflammation:** It has been demonstrated that intermittent fasting lowers inflammatory levels in the body, which may help lower the chance of acquiring chronic diseases including cancer, heart disease, and Alzheimer's
- **Improved heart health:** Intermittent fasting can help lower blood pressure, reduce cholesterol levels, and improve other markers of heart health
- **Increased lifespan:** Intermittent fasting has been seen to increase the life span of certain animals and it also lowers the chance of developing age-related disorders Helps to shed off excess fat and lose weight



Here are some statistics to back up the claim:

- According to a survey conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of The Meatless Farm, 42% of women who have tried intermittent fasting say it has improved their overall health
- A 2020 study published in JAMA Internal Medicine found that women who practiced intermittent fasting for 12 months lost an average of 2.7 pounds more than women who did not
- A 2021 study published in Nutrients found that intermittent fasting can improve insulin sensitivity and reduce inflammation in women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a common hormonal disorder that can cause infertility
- A 2021 research paper published in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics found that women who practiced intermittent fasting had lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol and higher levels of HDL (good) cholesterol than women who did not.

Despite having all these advantages, Intermittent fasting (IF) is the center of several misconceptions or untrue beliefs. And most of these are especially regarding women practicing IF.

It's time to bust all those myths.



5 Common and Widely Spread Untrue Beliefs about Intermittent Fasting in Women

Untrue Belief #1: Intermittent Fasting Is Not Safe for Women

This is the most common misconception about intermittent fasting in women. The fact is that it is not entirely accurate. While intermittent fasting may not be suitable for all women, there is no proof to suggest that it is inherently unsafe for women.

In fact, several studies have suggested that intermittent fasting can be just as safe and effective for women as it is for men. A review of 40 studies on intermittent fasting found that it was safe and well-tolerated in women, with no adverse effects on menstrual cycles or reproductive hormones.

However, it is important to note that intermittent fasting can have different effects on women depending on their unique circumstances. For example, women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should not engage in intermittent fasting as it may not provide the necessary nutrients for the baby's growth and development.

Additionally, women who have a history of disordered eating or who are prone to binge eating may not benefit from intermittent fasting, as it could exacerbate these behaviors.



Overall, while intermittent fasting can be safe for women, it is important to consult with a healthcare provider before starting any new diet or exercise regimen. Women should also listen to their bodies and adjust their fasting schedules accordingly to ensure that they are getting the necessary nutrients and staying healthy.

Untrue Belief #2: Metabolism in Women Slows Down Due to Intermittent Fasting

This is absolutely not true, and in fact, some studies have shown that IF can actually increase metabolic rate.

Metabolism is the process by which the body converts food into energy. It includes various chemical reactions that occur within the body to maintain essential functions such as breathing, digestion, and circulation. The basal metabolic rate (BMR) is the number of calories the body burns at rest to maintain these functions.

There is some concern that intermittent fasting can slow down metabolism by reducing the number of calories consumed during the fasting period. However, studies have shown that this is not the case. On the contrary, many studies show intermittent fasting can actually increase metabolic rate.

One study published in the International Journal of Obesity stated that alternate-day fasting, a type of intermittent fasting, increased metabolic rate by 3.6% over a 22-day period. Another study published in the Journal of Translational Medicine revealed that intermittent fasting raised metabolic rate by 3.6-14%.



It is important to note that these studies were conducted on both men and women, and no evidence suggests that IF has a greater effect on men than women. In short, the belief that intermittent fasting slows down metabolism in women is untrue.

In fact, intermittent fasting can actually increase metabolic rate and may help women achieve their weight loss goals. However, as with any dietary change, it is important to consult with a healthcare professional before starting an intermittent fasting regimen, especially for women with certain medical conditions.

Untrue Belief #3: Intermittent Fasting Causes Women to Lose Muscle Mass

This is not entirely true, as the effect of intermittent fasting on muscle mass depends on various factors such as diet, exercise, and the specific type of intermittent fasting being followed.

In fact, several studies have shown that intermittent fasting can preserve muscle mass while promoting fat loss. This is because, during periods of fasting, the body turns to its fat stores for energy instead of breaking down muscle protein.

Additionally, some studies have suggested that intermittent fasting can stimulate the production of human growth hormone (HGH), which can help preserve muscle mass.

However, it is important to note that if an individual is not consuming enough calories or protein during the eating periods, they may experience muscle loss. To prevent this, it is crucial to maintain a balanced diet with adequate amounts of



protein and other nutrients. Additionally, incorporating resistance training exercises into a workout routine can help maintain and even build muscle mass.

Overall, the idea that intermittent fasting causes women to lose muscle mass is not necessarily true. In fact, when done properly with a balanced diet and exercise regimen, intermittent fasting can promote fat loss while preserving muscle mass.

Untrue Belief #4: Women Should Only Do Intermittent Fasting for Short Periods of Time

This belief is untrue because the duration of intermittent fasting can vary based on individual needs and goals. While some people may only do intermittent fasting for short periods of time, others may do it for longer periods with no negative effects. The key is to listen to your body and adjust your fasting schedule accordingly.

Research has shown that intermittent fasting can be safe and effective for women when done correctly. However, it is important to note that women may need to modify their fasting schedules to account for hormonal fluctuations throughout the menstrual cycle. For example, some women may find it helpful to adjust their fasting schedule during their period or during the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle.

It is also important to maintain a balanced diet during the eating periods to ensure that the body is getting all the necessary nutrients. Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have certain medical conditions should visit their doctor before starting intermittent fasting.



Overall, the duration of intermittent fasting should be determined based on individual needs and goals and should be done under the guidance of a healthcare professional when necessary.

Untrue Belief #5: Intermittent Fasting is Not Ultimately Effective for Women

This is a common misconception that intermittent fasting is not effective for women and that women should not try it due to potential negative effects on their hormones and fertility.

However, there is no evidence to suggest that intermittent fasting is any less effective for women than it is for men. Many studies have shown that women can benefit from intermittent fasting just as much as men and that it can be a safe and effective way to lose weight and improve overall health.

One concern that has been raised is that intermittent fasting may disrupt women's hormones, particularly if they have irregular periods or are going through menopause. However, there is no evidence to support this claim. In reality, few studies have revealed that IF may have positive effects on hormone levels in women, particularly when it comes to insulin and leptin, which are hormones that are involved in metabolism and appetite control.

Another concern is that intermittent fasting may impact women's fertility. While some animal studies have suggested that calorie restriction can lead to a reduction in fertility, there is no evidence to suggest that intermittent fasting has the same effect in humans. Additionally, studies have also suggested that IF may improve



fertility in women who have polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a condition that can cause infertility.

While intermittent fasting can be safe and beneficial for women, it is crucial to remember that not everyone should do it. Before beginning an intermittent fasting program, women who are pregnant, nursing, or who have specific medical conditions should speak with their doctor. To make sure the body gets all the nutrients it needs, it's crucial to maintain a balanced diet throughout mealtimes.

Overall, intermittent fasting can be a safe and effective way for women to improve their overall health and well-being. Also, there is no evidence to suggest that it is any less effective for women than it is for men.

When Should Women Avoid Intermittent Fasting?

Intermittent fasting (IF) can be a beneficial dietary strategy for many women, but it may not be suitable for everyone.

Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or trying to conceive should avoid IF because it can impact the nutrition and energy levels required for a healthy pregnancy and lactation.

Women with a history of disordered eating habits or an unhealthy relationship with food should also approach IF with caution. The restrictive nature of IF may trigger feelings of deprivation or guilt and exacerbate disordered eating patterns.



Women with a history of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) or diabetes should speak with their healthcare provider before trying IF, as it may affect their blood sugar levels.

Overall, it is recommended that women interested in trying IF should speak with a healthcare professional or registered dietitian to determine if it is a safe and suitable option for their individual health needs and goals.

