

What to Consider Before Starting a Fasting Regimen

This worksheet is divided into two sections: considerations before, and considerations during, a fasting regimen

Some General Tips

- If you have a chronic illness, be sure to consult with your medical team prior to beginning a fasting regimen.
- Consider eating most of your food during the daylight hours, and limiting energy intake in the evening.
- Be mindful of diet quality. Aim for fruits, vegetables, lean protein sources, healthy fats, and adequate water intake. Keep in mind a predominantly plant-based diet is recommended for cancer prevention.
- Consult with a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) if you need additional support.
- Consider why you are fasting. Fasting has not been shown to be effective for long-term weight loss. Please see our Fasting eBook or [webinar](#) to learn more about the risks and benefits of fasting.

Answer these questions to help you make an informed decision before engaging in a fasting regimen. To respond “yes” to any of these questions, check the box. If you check any of the boxes, you may want to reconsider whether fasting is right for you, and/or if appropriate, discuss with your healthcare team:

- ☐ **Do I have medical conditions that would make fasting dangerous for me?** (Diabetes taking insulin, pregnant, breastfeeding, underweight, malnourished, under age of 18, significant disordered eating behaviors, or an eating disorder)

- ☐ **Would fasting be difficult to fit into my lifestyle?** (Consider how fasting may impact your social life, family life, exercise routine, and work schedule. Think about what regimen(s) may work best for you, such as Time Restricted Eating approaches, or other approaches to fasting. Please see our fasting eBook and [webinar](#) to learn more about the different fasting approaches.)
- ☐ **Might fasting have a negative impact on me physically, mentally, or emotionally?**
- ☐ **Would I make sure that I am meeting my nutritional needs if I were to implement a fasting regimen?** (Nutritional needs refers to eating enough macronutrients such as carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, and micronutrients which include vitamins and minerals.)

If you have a diagnosis of cancer (historically or currently), ask yourself these questions as well:

- ☐ **Do I have concerns about weight loss or inadequate nutrition intake from fasting?**
- ☐ **Does my cancer team have concerns about me fasting?**

Things to Consider While Engaging in a Fasting Regimen

Answer these questions while engaging in a fasting regimen to help you assess how fasting may be impacting your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. To respond “yes” to any of these questions, check the box. If you check any of the boxes, you may want to reconsider whether fasting is right for you, and/or if appropriate, discuss with your healthcare team:

- ☐ **Is fasting adversely affecting my lifestyle?** (such as work performance, exercise routine, quality time with family and friends, and so forth)
- ☐ **Is fasting having a negative effect on how I feel about or view my body?**
- ☐ **When I am unable to follow my fasting routine, do I feel guilt, shame, depressed, or stressed? Do I feel like I’m breaking a “rule”? Do I become self-critical?**
- ☐ **Do I feel guilt, shame, or self-judgment when I eat during the eating window?**

- ☐ **Am I experiencing food cravings or an increased desire to eat as a result of fasting?**
- ☐ **Am I overeating during the eating window at meals or snacks?**
- ☐ **Am I experiencing any of the following: Excessive hunger, reduced fullness, irritability, or difficulty concentrating?**
- ☐ **Am I preoccupied with food or with maintaining the fast?**
- ☐ **Has fasting had a negative impact on my pleasure and satisfaction from meals and snacks?**

If you have a diagnosis of cancer (historically or currently), ask yourself these questions as well:

- ☐ **While fasting, do I feel undernourished, faint, or weak?**
- ☐ **Is my cancer team concerned about my fasting regimen?**