

# Fasting

*All in all, fasting is one of the best practices for maintaining physical, mental and spiritual health. I highly recommend it.*

Fasting is an effective and safe way to get rid of toxins which build up over time in the body. Fasting can be helpful in any illness by giving the body the rest it needs to recover. Naturally, the body periodically tries to rid itself from toxins and releases them from the tissues. As a result you may suffer from headaches, diarrhoea, or depression. With fasting you can help your body to detoxify itself and move through this cycle with greater speed and fewer symptoms. The energy needed to digest food can be used to support immune function, cell growth, and eliminatory processes. By fasting regularly you give all of your organs a rest and this way reverse the aging process and live a longer and healthier life. After fasting, you should take some lemon water with a bit of salt. This drink helps to flush the digestive system, eliminating waste material that might otherwise remain in the body if you didn't fast.

Fasting can help you to heal with great speed, cleanse your liver, kidneys, and colon, purify your blood, help you to loose excess weight and puffiness, flush out toxins, clear the eyes and tongue, and cleanse the breath.

Fasting is one of the secrets of long life. Your body, and your digestive organs in particular, are required to work and work without any vacation. You know that you require rest from your work from time to time. In the same way, your digestive system needs a rest from time to time.

Periodic fasting provides the rest for your digestive system. It allows your digestive system to recuperate from the rough treatment that you may have given it by overeating or eating the wrong foods or eating at the wrong time.

The basic system of yogic fasting, practised every 15<sup>th</sup> day, has a duration from sunrise to sunrise. You begin at sunrise on the fasting day and eat nothing. *If your body is strong you can also refrain from drinking anything.* On the next day, you can break the fast with lemon water and then with fruit and other suitable food.

Some people think that fasting is difficult. If you prepare yourself for fasting it is not difficult. Prepare yourself physically by taking enough food and also plenty of liquids the day before. Prepare yourself mentally by deciding the night before fasting: "Tomorrow is fasting day, and I am not going to eat anything." If you take this mental determination prior to the fasting day, you will not be hungry during the fasting day. If you don't make a prior determination, during the fasting day you will start to think "Maybe I should eat, and fast another day!" *Decide beforehand and you will be able to complete your fast.*



# *Fasting*

## **Benefits of fasting:**

Detoxification is the foremost argument presented by advocates of fasting. Detoxification is a normal body process of eliminating or neutralizing toxins through the colon, liver, kidneys, lungs, lymph glands, and skin.

A second prescribed benefit of fasting is the healing process that begins in the body during a fast. During a fast energy is diverted away from the digestive system due to its lack of use and towards the metabolism and immune system. When you fast you allow your system to rest and rehabilitate itself. It allows your body time to flush out toxic matter that has built up over the years. It actually revives and rejuvenates the millions of cells in your body. It improves circulation, stamina and strength. In addition, there is a reduction in core body temperature. This is a direct result of the slower metabolic rate and general bodily functions.

Fasting also gives you a chance to save some time and use that time for spiritual pursuits. In order to eat, you may have to spend time shopping, cooking, cleaning and of course eating. If you fast, you can use that time to do meditation, to read or some other valuable pursuit.

Finally, the most scientifically proven advantage to fasting is the feeling of rejuvenation and extended life expectancy. Part of this phenomenon is caused by a number of the benefits mentioned above. A slower metabolic rate, more efficient protein production, an improved immune system, and the increased production of hormones contributes to this long-term benefit of fasting.

A study was performed on earthworms that demonstrated the extension of life due to fasting. The experiment was performed in the 1930s by isolating one worm and putting it on a cycle of fasting and feeding. The isolated worm outlasted its relatives by 19 generations, while still maintaining its youthful physiological traits. The worm was able to survive on its own tissue for months. Once the size of the worm began to decrease, the scientists would resume feeding it at which point it showed great vigour and energy. The life-span extension of these worms was the equivalent of keeping a man alive for 600 to 700 years.

In conclusion, it seems that there are many reasons to consider fasting as a benefit to one's health. The body rids itself of the toxins that have built up in our fat stores throughout the years. The body heals itself, repairs all the damaged organs during a fast. And finally there is good evidence to show that regulated fasting contributes to longer life.

There are still many doctors today who deny all of these points and claim that fasting is detrimental to one's health and have 'evidence' to back their statements. The idea of depriving a body of what society has come to view as so essential to our survival in order



# *Fasting*

to heal continues to be a topic of controversy. After all, in the absence of all the advanced technology of today how could the Yogi have known what was good for us!

**Use what talent you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best. *Henry Van Dyke***

