

## General Guidelines on Fasting

Fasting can be a time of spiritual and physical cleansing and rejuvenation. As with any major change in diet, it is best to enter into a time of fasting safely and carefully to ensure that you get the most out of your fast.

It is important to realize that everyone may not be able to fast from food. During times of fasting, the body goes into a period of intense detoxification and restructuring. If you are someone with chronic health problems or if you are on prescription medications, you should work carefully with a healthcare practitioner to see if you are eligible for a fast. Those with kidney problems or blood sugar difficulties such as diabetes or hypoglycemia should be especially careful when considering a fast. If fasting from food is not an option for you right now, you could plan a time of “fasting” from things such as the following: processed foods, television, or thinking negative thoughts.

If you are in good health and would like to try fasting from food, the following recommendations may be helpful in preparing your fast:

- When planning your fast, try to choose a time when your schedule will allow for rest, gentle exercise, reading, and quiet meditation. Fasting is most effective when you can slow down your pace and focus on your fast. For this reason, some people plan to fast over a weekend or will take off several days of work. Others may continue to work but will schedule times for personal rejuvenation such as taking a walk outside mid-day or getting a massage.
- For several days prior to fasting, avoid processed foods such as canned food, frozen meals, or any food with artificial additives. During this time, eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables and drink enough pure water to keep your urine light yellow. You may also want to avoid heavy foods such as meat and dairy products.
- Before undertaking a fast, be sure that your bowels are moving regularly at least once daily. This is very important for reducing the negative symptoms of detoxification that occur while fasting. If you become constipated prior to or during a fast, safe laxatives such as herbal laxative teas, magnesium, or vitamin C may be used (follow the instructions on the package for dosing on any of these items). Enemas or colonics may also be helpful.

The recipe below may be used as an alternative to a water-only fast:

- 1 cup of fresh lemon juice
- ½ cup of Grade B maple syrup
- ½ tsp Celtic salt
- ¼ tsp cayenne powder (or to taste)

Put all the above into an empty gallon jug or divide into 2 glass half-gallon jars and fill with 1 gallon of purified water. Cover and shake to mix. This recipe makes 1 gallon. Drink at least 64 ounces (1/2 gallon) of this throughout the day, more if desired. Some people find it easiest to drink this mixture in 8-12 ounce portions at regular mealtimes (breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snack times). You may also drink additional water if desired.

Pay careful attention to your body during your fast. If at any time during your fast you feel unwell, please eat a light meal such as 1 cup of brown rice, vegetables, or a protein shake. Most healthy people can safely fast for at least 1 and up to 5 continuous days. If you wish to fast longer than this, please work under the supervision of a healthcare practitioner. When breaking your fast, start with bland food such as raw or lightly steamed vegetables, fruits, sprouts, and grains. Be sure to chew the foods very well, and eat small portions at first since your body needs time to become accustomed to eating solid food again.

### **Additional References**

Fasting and Eating For Health by Joel Fuhrman

The Master Cleanse by Stanley Burroughs