

Hi, everyone. Welcome to lesson 11. So, today, we're going to be talking about some important topics. And I know a lot of you probably have a lot of questions about this. So, let's get started. If you have questions, please remember to send them to masterclass@thefastingmethod.com. We still have one Q&A session. And this might be the time where you have some questions to ask regarding this particular lesson. If you don't get a chance to ask those questions in the Q&A session, please go into the formed thread for this masterclass and make sure to tag me and ask me your questions. So I know many of you ladies have heard that women should not fast for a various number of reasons and that fasting is actually bad for your hormones. Is there any truth in this? Of course, at this point, I think you fully understand fasting's role in both your metabolic health and your reproductive health.

Understanding that fasting has such a positive impact on lowering or insulin levels to an optimal state has such a significant impact on our reproductive health and function has such a significant impact, of course, in our overall life and how we feel in general, even our mood. Then, of course, it doesn't seem to make any sense that fasting would be bad for women because it's bad for your hormones. However, there are particular times in our lives where fasting is not recommended. Children should not fast because of course they're still in a growing state. When should women not fast? Well, you know, of course, that many of the women that I work with come to me because they're lucky to get pregnant, and lucky for me and them, it happens quite often. And so I highly advise that if you are one of these women and when you get pregnant because you will get pregnant if that's your goal and intent, that you look for proper nutritional support. Is it appropriate for you to stick to TRE or to create a strong holding pattern for when you're pregnant?

Well, that's a good question. And one that I recommend you address with whoever is helping you with your pregnancy and with your nutrition during pregnancy. The same thing goes for those of you that are breastfeeding. During that very important period of time in your life where you're helping to grow your baby, you should really focus on having full meals, satiating, rich nourishing meals, and you'll need the appropriate nutritional counseling from an expert. There are some other times in our lives that we've learned that fasting can seem and feel and actually is counterproductive. A very common phase of our lives where you may have to halt your extended fasting for a while or even your alternate day fasting for a little while is if you're going through a particularly stressful period of time. And now, stress can be both emotional and physical. So, imagine that you're going through something serious, your stress levels are higher than usual and you can feel that your cortisol levels, your adrenaline and all the other hormones that our adrenal glands produce are higher than usual and a bit of overdrive.

Nobody needs to tell you whether or not your cortisol levels and your stress levels are higher than usual. I know that you can feel it, even yesterday during one of my wonderful meetings in our community, somebody shared that they were going through a really stressful time with their children, with their grown children. And it was very, very emotional. This person obviously recognized and realized how stressed she felt. If you're feeling more stressed than usual, the ideal situation is to probably look at TRE and a strong holding pattern like we talked about in the last lesson. Please note that every time you fast and your insulin levels get lower and lower and lower, your body counteracts this by producing some counterregulatory hormone. And this is a good thing. It gives you that added energy, that fight or flight response to go into this "hunting mode" as I often call it.

But if you are already in an acute stress situation where your stress levels are already very high and your cortisol levels are already very high, fasting too long is going to add a bit of too much fuel to that fire. And it's not going to make you feel good. You're going to feel extremely agitated. You might have even more trouble sleeping so that is the reason physiologically why fasting, even though it's not bad for your hormones, why fasting is going to put you in a higher than normal stress state. And if you are already in a stressful situation where you're having a hard time addressing your cortisol levels and your adrenal hormones, it is not a good idea to fast past a certain point. So, most people will find that fasting for up to 20, 24 hours feels perfectly fine. And so again, your holding pattern for that period of time might look like one meal a day.

And so if that's the mode that you're in and if you're comfortable having one meal a day during that more stressful period of time, then that's perfectly fine, but don't try to fast past the point where you feel extremely agitated and where you're actually feeling worse. Another very common state that people have often realized and we've realized that fasting might be counterproductive is when you're sick. Your body is going through physical stress. So that might be a serious illness, that might be a flu or something a little bit more mild. You may or may not feel well if you fast. And some people feel perfectly well if they fast. I, in fact, feel better. Some people actually fast because they're ill because of certain illnesses like diabetes and fasting actually improves that condition. Remember that when you're in a physical or emotional stressful situation, your adrenal glands tend to produce a little bit more of these stress hormones like cortisol.

And so if your cortisol levels start to go up, fasting a little longer might put you into this state of agitation or you just don't feel well at all. So if you don't feel well while you're fasting, this is the number one rule of fasting. You always break fast. So, what do you do instead? Well, you implement a comfortable holding pattern. I definitely don't recommend that when you have a cold or a flu that you're grazing and snacking all day long, especially because the act of doing that and raising your insulin all day long is going to put you in a higher inflammatory state. And if your inflammation goes up while you have one of these acute illnesses, it actually makes you feel worse and it takes longer to heal. So, snacking and grazing, having honey in your tea a million times a day, or having cough drops with sugar or sweeteners might not be the way to go either.

So, please be aware of that. Maybe if you need to take some of these things, you bring them into your TRE windows. Overnight fasts do not seem to be recommended for periods of acute stress, whether it's emotional stress or physical stress. I don't think fasting is bad for your thyroid. And I know that a lot of people have said this. This is, in my opinion, a very big myth. You could probably tell that I have a line here. I've had my thyroid removed, unfortunately, because I had a tumor. And so once I had my thyroid removed, it was actually not too long ago. And I had already been fasting for a very long time. And I was put on thyroid medications, except for at the very beginning when I was addressing my thyroid dose and I had to adjust my thyroid dose, and that's what I want to talk to you about today. I've never had any issues with fasting.

As long as I prepare for a fast and then I do it properly, I can do overnight fasts. I have done numerous three to five-day fasts. Many of our clients fast, even though they have Hashimoto's or they have hypothyroid, as long as your thyroid levels are stable and monitored and you're in an optimal thyroid level with your current medication, fasting feels just fine. And most people do

very, very well. You will likely notice that you fast without any concerns. And when people are losing weight, your thyroid levels might need to be adjusted. What I mean is that imagine you start our program and you weigh 250 pounds and you're on a particular dose of thyroid medication, let's say you're at the optimal dose for your current thyroid status and your current weight and you start intermittent fasting.

Remember your thyroid dose is appropriate, your thyroid levels are controlled and at an optimal level, you start intermittent fasting and/or a lower-carb diet and you start losing weight and for a few months you feel great and you lose a ton of weight, and all of a sudden you start to not feel great, you start to feel agitated when you fast, and then you go and visit your doctor and you realize that your thyroid levels have gone out of whack. And this happens quite a bit. You've lost a ton of weight. You need a new dose. That dose, that 150 microgram or whatever dose of thyroid medication that you were taking is no longer appropriate for your current weight, for your current metabolic health, even before you go to your doctor, if you're fasting and not feeling well and you're looking to investigate why, you should implement a holding pattern, your TRE, you go and visit your doctor.

You do some blood work and you find out if your thyroid levels have gone out of whack. And if your medicine needs to be adjusted. This happens quite often. You don't do longer fasts. Even if your doctor has changed your medication but you're now going to have to wait to check again to see if your thyroid levels adjust, it is not recommended that you do the overnight fast during this period of time. So, what do you do instead? You implement your nice, strong holding pattern in your TRE. I know many of you're going to say, "Well, that's frustrating because I want to lose more weight." Well, I understand but remember that nobody's weight loss journey is linear. There are times in our lives, and this is one of those times where extended fasting is not recommended. So, this is one of those times where a holding pattern really is a leap forward.

It's what you should be doing. But rest assured that as soon as you adjust those levels and you feel comfortable again, but you do need confirmation of that, then you will be able to go back to doing some more extended fasting while feeling well and not having to worry about your thyroid. You may need to adjust your thyroid medication again in a few months. And when that happens, you'll know what to do. If you're interested in adrenal health and if you're worried about your adrenal health, what this means is that not that you're going through an acute stressful situation like I just talked about a little while ago, but that you're constantly feeling under stress. You have a lot of anxiety maybe or your cortisol levels always feel like they're higher than they should be. Or maybe you're somebody that's concerned that because you had such high cortisol levels for a long period of time that maybe now your adrenal glands that produce these hormones have burnt out and you're not producing the appropriate levels of stress hormones.

Can you fast if this is happening? I do encourage you if you are concerned to look this up, to do a little bit of research regarding adrenal health. There are some health experts out there that can help you with this. Unfortunately, I've heard more times than not people say that when they speak with their family doctor about this, it's often dismissed. Adrenal health is sort of on a spectrum. Within our conventional medicine system, unless you are at one extreme or the other of adrenal health, then there aren't really conventional tests that will help you determine where you are in the middle of that. So, what I mean is unless you have a clinical adrenal concern, so if it's something subclinical, your doctor might not be able to help you. So, you may have to look,



look for maybe a functional medical doctor to help you look at that or a naturopath to help you look at your adrenal levels if you want to look a little further.

I know that there are some tests that you can do at home. You can order them online if you're going through that discovery period and if you're looking at the appropriate health experts to help you. And within our community, if you do a little bit of a search in our forum, you will find that people have often talked about getting their adrenals checked and what tests they've done and what help they have gotten from different practitioners. And so there's a place there for you to get some support if needed for both thyroid and adrenal care. Let's say you're going through this discovery period and you're wondering, "Should I fast or should I not fast?" Anytime you are unsure or you don't feel well while you're fasting, I highly recommend that during that discovery period, you implement a good, strong holding pattern.

Whether that means one meal a day or two meals a day or even three meals a day for that period of time where you're going through these investigations. Unfortunately, what you might find is if your adrenal health is not in check, if you are not managing your cortisol levels appropriately, whether it be through Lisa's cortisol lowering techniques that I've recommended or maybe you need some supplementation of some sort to support your adrenal. If you do try to do long or fast, even the alternate day or the extended fast, you might find that you don't feel well while you're fasting and/or you might not lose weight while fasting.

And this is why stress management is one of my pillars. And maybe you don't have an adrenal concern per se. Maybe you don't need to have your adrenals tested but maybe, you need to focus on lowering cortisol for a while so that you can start implementing alternate day fasting and extended fasting for weight loss. In the meantime, and until you're at a better stress management state, it would be a really good idea and advisable to implement a strong holding pattern. I will see you tomorrow for lesson 12, where we will talk about elimination diets. Take care, everyone.