



Lesson 5: Intermittent Fasting Strategies

Hi everyone, it's Megan Ramos. Welcome to day five of our Fasting Masterclass. In today's lesson, I'm going to discuss intermittent fasting strategies. Please note that I'm not going to be discussing OMAD or one meal a day in today's lesson. It's not because I've forgotten about it, it's because I have a lot to share on the subject and we're going to dedicate an entire lesson to the concept of one meal a day or OMAD, and how to make sure that you're doing it right. Just hang tight, that will be available in the next day or two for your review.

Now, the fasting methods intermittent fasting protocols are the 24, 36, 42, and 48 hour protocols. The 24, 36, and 42 hour protocols are typically done three times a week. You can choose all three times to be 24s, 36s, or 42s, or you can mix them up in various combinations, which is doing two 42s, two 24s, and then 36, really in any combination. The 48 hour fasts are typically done twice a week. We'll do a deep dive starting now. Let's look at the 24 hour fast. The 24 hour fast again can be done three times a week. This is where you fast from dinner to dinner often skipping breakfast and lunch, so two consecutive meals.

Most people would fast say from Sunday at dinner until Monday at dinnertime, skipping breakfast and lunch on Monday. They're still having one meal on their fasting days at the 24 hour mark. There's not one day of the week where you're going or foregoing food entirely. On your fasting days you are having one meal, and on your eating days you're having two or three meals depending on your preference. That is the difference with the 24 hour fast compared to the other fasting protocols I'm going to discuss.

Now, with the 24 hour fast, people often do it from dinner to dinner. And this is because dinner is just such a staple in our culture here, especially in North America. Dinnertime is when families come together and discuss how their day was and plan together as a family and just connect in general. While that's perfectly okay to do your fast from dinner to dinner, some people actually thrive a lot more doing your fast from lunch to lunch. If that actually fits into your lifestyle, I would recommend you try fasting from lunch to lunch for your 24 hour fast.

Now, this has several advantages. First of all, it really helps set your circadian rhythm up very nicely. We're designed to have our biggest meal at the lunch hour, so this will help promote better sleep, better heart rate variability, better heart rate in general. So there's a lot of

advantages of doing your lunch meal instead of doing your dinner meal for the 24 hour fast. Also, when people do 24 hours of fasting and they eat their lunch, they don't struggle with that four to six o'clock eating window because they're providing their body with more hydration earlier on in the day.

People who eat lunch compared to dinner actually are a lot less driven to snack late at night. And that's due to the circadian rhythm sending benefits of the 24 hour fast when you're doing it from lunch to lunch instead of dinner to dinner. It's actually people who have dinner, who want to eat a few hours later before bed, rather than people who eat lunch. Those who eat lunch find it actually quite easy to pass through the evening time. It's a strange fact, but it's true.

Something to play around with, if you can fit it into your lifestyle. It's different for everybody, I myself with the way my life is currently, well, dinner as a staple in our household, it has to be unless we're doing special extended fasting or longer intermittent fasts here right now. But I think of all of the other good things for my health. During the day, I wear my blue light blocking glasses, I get outside and I get sun first thing in the morning, I'm good with my physical routine, I eat very well for my physiology. So I'm doing a lot of other wonderful things for my body and that is helping me optimize my metabolic health. So I don't necessarily feel bad for doing breakfast to breakfast fasting, or having dinner almost every day, that's okay. Don't feel bad if you can't do lunch to lunch, everybody. Now, every now and then someone does like doing breakfast to breakfast 24 hour fast, I notice people who have more physical jobs actually thrive better doing breakfast to breakfast fasting. So that's okay too, if that works for your schedule.

Now, let's jump into the 36 and 42 hour fasting protocols. The 36 and the 42 hour protocols are almost identical. You fast for an entire day, followed by eating for an entire day, followed by fasting for an entire day, then eating for an entire day. So people would typically fast all day Monday, Wednesday and Friday, for example and then they would eat Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The only difference is with the 36 and 42s, is with the 36 hour fast you're eating breakfast, lunch and dinner, and with the 42 hour fast you're just eating lunch and dinner on those eating days. So Monday, Wednesday, Friday you fast, and Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday you eat. With a 36 hour fast, you're eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and with a 42 hour fast you're eating lunch and dinner.

Don't rush to scribble all of this down. This protocol or these protocols are all laid out in picture form with explanations in your Getting Started Guide, as well as an intermittent fasting protocol guide in the video and resources section on your main dashboard page at thefastingmethod.com. Don't rush to try to draw this all out everyone. The 36 hour fast, we'll hone in that just for a quick example. So Sunday you would eat breakfast, lunch and dinner, you'd start your fast Sunday after dinner, you would fast all day Monday, skipping three consecutive meals, and then you would break your fast Tuesday at breakfast and eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Tuesday, then you

would fast Wednesday, breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Thursday, you'd fast Friday, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday.

With the 42 hour fast, it's the exact same thing, but you're not having breakfast or having lunch. So Sunday you'd have lunch and dinner, Monday you'd fast, Tuesday you'd have lunch and dinner, Wednesday you'd fast, Thursday, you'd have lunch and dinner, Friday you would fast, Saturday you'd have lunch and dinner. So it's just skipping that breakfast meal, which so many of us strive or enjoyed doing because we're just not hungry in the morning. We feel pressured to eat, but we don't need to eat in the morning. So if you don't want to, you can skip your breakfast and extend your fast, that's perfectly okay. Now the 36 and the 42 hour fast are often done three times a week as well, but you can really mix up your combination of doing the fasting protocols to get in your three fasts a week.

What I love to do, what worked out very well for me is I started off doing 24 hour fast three times a week. And boy, that was challenging at first. But six weeks in, I started to plateau a bit and I didn't really find the 24 hour fast to be very difficult. So I said, "Okay, let's play around with three 42 hour fasts, because I never liked breakfast anyways." So I jumped in, I started doing three 42 hour fast and after a few weeks, I just found it to be really challenging on Fridays. Either my body was super worn out physically at the end of the week, or there is some social commitment and I just felt I wanted to cave like three out of four Fridays a month. So I said, "Okay, you can forgo Fridays, even when you still need to show up for your fast three times a week. What can you do to make this work?"

Well, 24 hour fast would still work quite well. I don't have time for breakfast and I often don't have time for lunch on Friday as it is. So my schedule is pretty conducive to me doing some form of fasting on Friday, but it's at evening time where my body is feeling burnt out or I have a family or a friend commitment. So I said, "Okay, let my base fasting strategy be two 42 hour fast and a 24 hour fast." And I would often use a 24 hour fast on Friday, but every now and then I would move it to Monday or to Wednesday, and I would shift around my 42 hour fast if there was some sort of either a birthday or work dinner or other type of commitment throughout the workweek. And that enabled me to be consistent with my fasting. And in six months I lost all kinds of body fat and I reversed some major illnesses. So what a win by giving myself that flexibility, I was able to be consistent, which is so important. It's something we're definitely going to dive into later on during this course.

What I mentioned just now was a base passing protocol, and what does that mean? The base fasting protocol is where you're getting great results, you're seeing continued results on a weekly basis, it's fitting into your lifestyle and it's something you're able to do about 80% of the time. That's your base fasting protocol. Anytime you can fast more than that, that's great. That I'll just bust through some plateaus and get some deeper health benefits, and they're going to be time that we have the fast less. Life's too chaotic, there's traveling, there's holidays, there's just your

body feeling burnt out, you'll have poor sleep, stress, anxiety, work, life, everything starts to pile up and those weeks you do 24 hours instead of more aggressive intermittent fast. So 80% of the time you strive to do your base fasting protocol and the other 20%, you either fast more or you fast less just depending on life circumstances and your goals. So it's important to give ourselves this flexibility in order to stay consistent with our fasting.

Now let's talk about the 48 hour fasting protocol. I'd mentioned earlier that this is typically done twice a week. People will often do one at the start of the week and at the end of the week. So for example, someone might eat lunch and dinner on Sunday, start their fast on Sunday, fast Monday, fast Tuesday until dinnertime. So they fast from Sunday dinner until Tuesday dinner. Most people eat on Wednesday, start their fast Wednesday night, fast Thursday, and then break their fast on Friday at dinner. So you're fasting from Sunday to Tuesday night, and you're fasting from Wednesday to Friday night, and then Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday you're eating as usual, two or three meals depending on your dietary protocol.

A lot of people like the 48 hour fast because you're only missing two dinners a week with family, or if you're the cook at home it is only two dinners that you're trying to cook through instead of three, while you're fasting with you doing the other protocols. So it is a lot easier for people who are cooking for others or who will have to eat with others to do two 48 hour fasts a week, rather than three 24, 36, 42 hour fasts a week and various combinations. So I do really like this protocol for many individuals. Now people will say, "But Hey Megan, like the math of that doesn't add up, doesn't sound right. Because three 42 hour fast, well that sounds like a lot more fasting than two 48." Total hours of fasting are different, but when you're doing the 48 hour fast you're actually getting six extra hours in deep fat burning.

So for people who have struggled to get [intermittent 00:12:31] fat burning and often plateau with the 42 hour fast, we'll switch them from three 42 to two 48s. And because they're getting an extra total 12 hours of deeper fat burning, they actually see more results. So going from three 42s to two 48s can often help people break through plateaus. Overall I do think for most people they're pretty equivocal because did you get this deeper fat burning, even though it's less total hours of fasting? Overall, I think they're pretty equivocal, but sometimes the 48s will actually help people break through plateaus, even though they're doing more total hours of fasting a week in the other styles.

So just something to keep in mind. Now, the other shorter base of fast and extended fast, we're going to get to later in this series. Let's talk about what these protocols are. Who they work best for now? We've already talked about the 48 hour protocols being a good plateau, a troubleshooter, or also being great for those who have families at home or the cooks at home. But let's talk about in general, where do these fast fall? Sometimes people receive exceptional fat loss and just crazy improvements in their metabolic markers doing the 24 hour fast. But I will tell you after working with tons of thousands of individuals doing the 24 hour fast three times a

week as your base fast, it rarely is enough. So every now and then you get this individual and they have these unicorn-like results doing the three 24 hour fasts a week, and you'll hear them post and share on social media. And it can often leave people feeling upset because they are doing three 24 hour fast a week and they're not getting anywhere near the results.

I want to remind you and let you know and encourage you that, the three 24 hour fast a week, they really don't work for most. And certainly the 36 or 42 and the 48 hour fast that help both women and men with hormonal deficiencies and progesterone, estrogen, testosterone, and those type 2 diabetes, fatty liver disease, PCOS symptoms, just advanced metabolic syndromes in general. It's really the 36, 42 and 48s that you need to be striving to do as the majority of your fast for your base fasting protocol. That doesn't mean that weeks of 24 hour fast don't count or throwing in 24 hour fast don't count, you absolutely are going to have a time and place where you need to do 24 hour fast to stay consistent, and that's okay.

I shall help you lean towards your goals, but they're often just not enough to push you strong enough into the direction of your goals. As a longer intermittent fast that you really need to be striving to make up the bulk of your base fasting protocol. So please keep that in mind, do not feel discouraged if you've been doing 24 hour fast and you're not getting the results that you saw someone in a Facebook group get. They don't necessarily work for many people.

Now, 24-hour fast is a great place to start. Like I said, I actually stayed in a 24 hour fast for about six weeks. At the start they felt impossible. Oh my goodness, I thought I was going to die the first couple of weeks in 24 hours of fasting. But like anything, if you practice it consistently it will get easier. And by six weeks I had mastered the 24 hours of fasting so much so that most of the time it almost felt too easy. And that is when my body or what we call our fasting muscle was ready and prime to do longer fast.

So we do look at fasting like a muscle. If you've never fasted before or haven't done much fasting, it's not realistic to think that you can jump into two 48 hour fast. You've got to prime your fasting muscle and do some conditioning. It's just like never going to the gym, and then suddenly going to the gym and wanting to do a bodybuilder weight training program. If your body's not conditioned for it, you're not going to be able to do it without injury. So you've got to start off doing some conditioning work and then over time you'll reach your goal of doing more weight training. And that's the same thing with fasting. Start off with one protocol that feels comfortable and then work your way up.

Now people often talk about 14, 16 and 18 hours of intermittent fasting. And we don't consider them to be intermittent fasting protocols here at the fasting method, but we do find them to be great stepping stones and great strategies for people to still strive to get in that much fasting on their eating days. So what I would do if someone was very nervous about fasting is I would start off with 14 hours. The 14 hour fasts you're eating breakfast, lunch and dinner, you're trying to

eat your dinner a little bit earlier, or your breakfast a little bit later, and you're canning out snacking. And then from 14 hours, we would cut out one meal, whether it's breakfast or dinner, and we would get in the 16 or 18 hour fast by just eating lunch and dinner or breakfast and lunch. And we would try to do that daily until that became easy. And then we would start jumping into those 24 hours of fasting.