

thefastingmethod_001.mp3

Megan [00:00:06] Hey, everyone, it's Megan Ramos here, and I'm joined by the incredible Dr. Nadia Pateguana. Nadia, how are you doing today?

Nadia [00:00:14] I'm great, Megan. Good to see you again.

Megan [00:00:16] Hanging in there, over there in Lisbon?

Nadia [00:00:19] Yeah, not too bad. The weather's changing but, you know, everything's great.

Megan [00:00:24] The weather's starting to change here, too. It's very weird, though, because back home in Toronto, everything would be a little bit more cool so people would be decorating for, you know, all of the holiday seasons. But here it's still pretty warm, so it's really strange to drive down the street and seeing people getting their homes ready for the holidays still feels like summer time, so I am adjusting.

Nadia [00:00:49] I was about to say that, actually it's the opposite here, so people do not decorate as much in Europe as they do back home, so I kind of miss that. This is my very favorite season. And you know, I'm going to be decorating at some point.

Megan [00:01:05] Well, it's good that you're bringing that Canadian festive spirit over there to Portugal.

[00:01:12] All right, everyone, we're going to get started. This is our very first Q&A episode, meaning that we're answering your questions. So if you've got questions that you'd love for Nadia and I to answer in future podcast episodes, we'd love to hear them. Please email them into podcast@thefastingmethod.com. Again, that's podcast@thefastingmethod.com. And Nadia and I will make sure that we get to them in one of these episodes.

[00:01:39] All right, team, we're going to get started with our very first question. It says, "I've been fasting but not losing weight. Why is that?"

[00:01:49] Well, there could be a whole host of reasons here why you might not be losing weight when you're fasting. I find the most common one is that people aren't fasting enough. Usually when I see this question pop up in forums like a Facebook group, for example, people are doing 16, 18 hours of fasting or they're doing 20 hours of daily fasting. And this usually isn't enough fasting to lower insulin levels enough to enable us to lose body fat. It's usually those fasts that are 24 hours or longer that help us lose body fat. So I'm not trying to tell you here that you need to be doing extended fasts, but intermittent fasts of 24 hours on alternate days or 36, 42 hours, two or three times a week. That's going to lower your insulin levels enough to burn body fat. So if you've been doing these shorter fasts, you might want to mix it up and do some of these longer extended fasts.

[00:02:48] Another reason why you might not be losing weight is because you're snacking on your eating days. And we see this all the time at The Fasting Method. People are doing those 36 or 48 hours of fasting, but their eating days, they have these large eating windows of about eight hours where they're literally eating for that eight-hour period. And

most people don't think that this is a problem because they're doing their fasting. And when they're eating, they're not eating refined and processed junk foods; they're eating things like nuts or cheese or olives in between their meals. But it's still problematic. So most individuals understand that eating a meal or eating foods that causes our blood sugar levels to spike will cause our insulin levels to spike. So this is why so many people elect to go on these low carb or ketogenic diet, ketogenic diet's a very low carbohydrate diet. And when you're doing that, that's great. So if you have a disease of too much insulin, by going low carb or keto and changing your eating patterns, you're not going to be adding more fuel to the fire. But people don't realize that the constant stimulus of insulin throughout the day, well, that also leads to the development of insulin resistance. So if you're eating for eight hours nonstop, you're literally producing insulin for eight hours nonstop. And that chronic stimulus also leads to the development of insulin resistance. So if you're snacking on your eating days, you're essentially undoing a lot of the good work that you're achieving on your fasting days. So I'm not telling you that you shouldn't eat these foods that you snack on. You might want to reevaluate some of them for food sensitivities, but you can't eat them in between your meals. So, if you want to have those nuts, add them to your meal. If you want to have that cheese, add them to your meal. Just minimize the number of times that you are going to be producing insulin on your eating days. So, not only do we want to avoid spiking insulin levels, we want to minimize the number of times we are producing insulin throughout the day.

[00:05:00] And then this circles into sort of the third explanation as to perhaps why you're not losing weight: is our fasting training wheels. Now, at The Fasting Method, there's no right or wrong way to fast. There is no clean or dirty way to fast. That's all garbage, and I hate seeing these labels out there on social media because it just attaches so much shame to fasting and that's not the case. These training wheels, like adding a bit of fat to your tea or coffee or having some bone broth, well, they're training wheels. They're just that. You should use them if you need them, but not if you don't. So maybe another way or another metaphor that's better than training wheels is crutches. So you've sprained ankle and you want to get from point A to point B. Well, you're going to get to point B a lot faster if you actually use crutches. But if your ankles are just fine, if you use the crutches, it's going to slow you down because you can walk from point A to point B faster without them. So when you look at these fasting training wheels, these things like heavy cream, which is the BIG one that causes the MOST issues amongst our fasting friends. If you're using it, when you need it, that is going to serve you. But if you're using it for comfort, or because you just really enjoy it, it's probably going to slow down your progress. So what we do is we ask people that we work with to actually measure out how much cream they're having too on their fasting days. And they're having like half a cup or a whole cup of like heavy cream in their tea or coffee. And that's just a lot of cream to be having on their fasting days. You got to remember, we're trying to burn our own body fat during the fasts, not the fat that we're adding into our tea or coffee. So it's good to evaluate our use of these training wheels. Are we using them because we need them? Or are we using them for comfort? And if we're using them for comfort, can we perhaps scale back on them or eliminate them to help get out of any plateaus? And, an important note that ties my second point about not snacking to the third point about these fasting training wheels is that, you can also end up snacking on your fasting days with these training wheels by having that cup of broth and drinking it over a four or five hour period where you have to reheat at multiple times or letting that morning coffee go for several hours. You want to sit down, you want to drink your fasting fluid, you want to enjoy it free from distraction, and you want to finish it in a timely fashion. You know, within 30 to 45 minutes, finish your coffee, finish your broth, and then carry on with your fast. You don't want to be sipping on these

throughout the day, and these are the largest areas where I see people getting stuck. What about you, Nadia?

Nadia [00:07:55] Well, to be honest, Megan, I don't think I have any more points to add. Those for sure, in my experience, have been the four points that I think people need to address and are struggling with. Can I just add something in? So interesting, your last point about how we often tend to nurse our bone broth or our coffee for a long period of time. Those of us that are mothers, we know not to do that with our babies. You're supposed to feed in a timely fashion and then latch off, right? Do you know that my experience, Megan, only in North America do people nurse their coffee. In Europe, and other places that I've been and lived and travelled to, people drink their coffee. That's why they drink espressos: it's a shot. They just guzzle it down and they walk away; and they don't put anything in their coffee either, which of course, is a benefit. But if you are going to use some training wheels (which we absolutely support for when needed) then keep that in mind, OK? Don't nurse that cream or whatever it is that you're putting or using as a training wheel for a long period of time, all right? You really do have to keep it to a short period of time and then walk away for enough time so that your insulin drops, as Megan said.

Megan [00:09:10] All right. Question number two Nadia, I'm going to throw this one over to you. Do I have to do keto in order to fast?

Nadia [00:09:19] That's a great question. You know, Megan, you know, I think this is a really, one of my favorite questions to answer, because I think it depends. That's going to be my answer. It really depends on your individual choice. It depends on what works for you. I'll tell you that, in my journey, I didn't want to do keto in order to heal and in order to fast. I didn't think I needed to, and I really didn't think that I wanted to. And so I actually started with a more real-food, paleo-like diet. My problem is that I could not stick to my eating windows with paleo and a more moderate, low-carb diet. I ended up grazing and snacking a lot more. So what I found was that keto for me, at least during my initial phase of my journey and my healing phase of my journey, was so much easier. It wasn't, as people might think, that it was too restrictive, it really wasn't. The fact that it was more simple and I could walk away feeling more satisfied. It made it easier for me to fast. But I do know that people all over the world that we work with in many different cultures, many different countries have a totally different diet and they are able to just eat and walk away. And that is the epitome of intermittent fasting, right? Is this idea of full meals, no snacking. So I don't think you have to do keto, but I do think it might be a lot more helpful for some parts of your journey. It might make fasting easier, at least at first, as you're getting used to time-restricted-eating windows and full meals and not snacking. How about you, Megan?

Megan [00:10:50] You know it's one of those chicken or the egg questions, right? And what comes first or what serves people first? And I wholeheartedly agree with your "it depends," because I've seen people really sort of feel like they're crashing and burning with fasting. Not that they are, but they're definitely feeling like it, and addressing their diet first and getting rid of a lot of that refined and processed junk, making sure they're getting in plenty of healthy, natural fats to help satiate them, definitely seen that really improve their fasting journey. And then there's someone like me. I never ate well. Oh my gosh. Like, there is no real surprise, at 27, when I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. And then, you know, I just had no skills when it came to the, I still don't have skills when it came to the, kitchen and everybody jokes that there's a reason why I'm a non-eating expert because I do set a lot of kitchen fires, but I just didn't know what to do, and it was so stressful to radically change my diet. So I just started not eating, because I found that

easier and I went from eating like garbage three times a day, to once a day, to once every other day, to once a week, to every couple of weeks, and so on and so forth. And you know, I eventually got to this place where I'm really proud of my diet and have been for several years now. But it was a real journey for me, and I had a lot of messy relationships with food. I didn't realize how much the people in my family used food to help nurture me. I didn't realize that some of these refined and processed carbs, they weren't just food items that I like to eat, you know, they were my best friend. You know, they helped me when I was sad, and they celebrated with me when I was happy and successful, and they were there hanging out with me when I was bored. So I had a lot of behavioral stuff to navigate and, everyone, we're going to bring on our colleague, Dr. Terri Lance, in a few episodes from now because she helps people like me unravel the stickiness with our relationship with food and our habits around it. So it was, it was tough, and I don't know if I would have gotten to a spot with my diet in a timely fashion to really slow down my disease process. So it was good that I started fasting. I'll say, you know, once I got into a good rhythm of my fasting and eating, it all felt pretty effortless. And in the clinic, we had some people that definitely thrive from doing their diet first, and some people just didn't want to change their diet. And it is true you can really fast with any diet. Can you optimize your health with any diet? Now that's another story. You can't do that with any diet. You can't still live on junk food and the standard North American diet and expect, you know, to be sort of invincible to modern disease because you're fasting. That's not how it works. So, yeah, I agree. I think you need to try it out, like Nadia said, and you see is, is the fasting OK, or should you take some time and focus on your diet first?

Nadia [00:13:56] My only word of caution here, especially when it comes to the keto diet, quote-unquote, is at this point, we have to be really cautious because not everything that's termed or defined as "keto" is necessarily healthy, in our definition of what healthy is, is not necessarily a whole real, unprocessed food is what I mean. So you have to be really cautious because I know that whenever I got it, because I was keto for so long, whenever I got into the keto products out there, I had a really hard time. Again, my gauge is always whether I can walk away from a meal feeling satisfied or if I leave feeling very craving stuff and grazing. So I found that, when I tried a more moderate low-carb diet, I had too much fruit and I couldn't stop eating the fruit or, you know, the nuts or whatever it was at the end of the meal that I just couldn't stop eating. So a keto diet, because it's more, of course, strict lower carb, it made it easier because I had less of those foods that I wanted to snack and graze on, and I felt a lot more satiated. I actually began to like food once I went keto. So that's another thing. I mean, so we can do an episode on that alone when it comes to my poor eating because I didn't like food, I only liked junk, like you Megan. So, you know, the first time I enjoyed meat and vegetables was only after I went keto, my palate changed completely. So just be cautious with the keto products out there, especially the ones that are full of flavors and full of artificial sugars and whatnot. That did not work for me; it still doesn't.

Megan [00:15:29] Yeah, you really got to stick to the food from the farm and from the sea. And, when we go grocery shopping, that's the only food that we have; it comes from the sea, comes from a farm, you know, whether it's a plant or an animal, and even getting deep into regenerative farming now to make sure there's more nutrient-rich food that we're getting. But usually if it comes in a box, a can or a jar or bag, it's not the best food. Now, every now and then, of course, you're going to find sardines in a tin or organic, extra virgin olive oil in a bottle. So there's like exceptions to that, but usually, if it's in one of those containers, it's not real food. So if you're eating something of substance, you really want to make sure it's from the land or the sea. And it's incredible when you do eat a real,

whole-food meal, you do feel satiated and it makes it a lot easier to carry on until that next meal.

[00:16:26] Oh, Nadia, the next question I have, I think, might be the bane of my existence.

Nadia [00:16:33] I agree.

Megan [00:16:34] Yeah, but it is, "Does 'blank' break a fast?" So what are some common things that these "blanks" are? Olives, cheese, nuts, dill pickles, all here. A piece of bacon: this is a common one too. Does having a piece of bacon break a fast? All right, let's get back to these fasting fluids. So true fasting fluids are going to be water: can be flat, mineral, carbonated - I'm drinking carbonated water myself right now. It can be hot, warm, cold; you can go really wild with mixing up your temperatures, the types of water that you're having, you can get really exotic with that, but water is your primary fasting fluid. And then you can have some herbal teas or green tea. Black tea's fine and you can have coffee, so long as coffee doesn't give you an intense cortisol response, meaning that about an hour or two hours after you have coffee, you don't feel really hungry and your blood sugar levels haven't skyrocketed. So every now and then, someone sees their blood sugar levels shoot up, you know, 30, 40 points after a cup of coffee, and they feel like they could eat the drywall. But if that's not you, then these are your prime fasting fluids. And another one that doesn't get so much love is sugar-free pickle juice. You can make it at home, or you can simply drink out of the jar so long as the ingredients are OK, but it's essentially just salty, salty, vinegar water. And these are the fasting fluids. Fasting aids and fasting training wheels would be any fat that you add to any of these fluids, or something like bone broth or a low-carb, vegetable broth.

[00:18:22] So that's a round up of these fasting fluids and training wheels that you can have. But every now and then people ask us, you know, can I have this slice of avocado or a slice of bacon or a couple of olives? And the answer is, it also sort of does depend. Now, if you're doing shorter, fasts, like 24 hours of fasting, if you need an aid to get through it at the start, you absolutely should, but it's something that you want to kick to the curb. So say you're brand new to the gym. You can't walk into the gym and expect to do the same weight-training session as a bodybuilder. It's just not going to happen, right? You're not there, but you can work your way up to be there. So maybe on your first day at the gym, you can only lift 15-pound dumbbells, you know, to do your bicep curls, and that might be really tough. And maybe you need some support from a coach there to help you figure out your form and get going. But, over time, those 15-pound dumbbells, they're going to start to feel pretty light. And before you know it, the next thing you'll be doing with consistent practice is by doing bicep curls or something like 50-pound dumbbells. Forget those 15s. So when we are actively trying to grow our fasting muscle, because fasting is so much like a muscle when it comes to training and going to the gym, those 24 hours might be tough. So if you need some bone broth or if you need a little bit of an aid to help boost you, do it, use it. But once it becomes easy, then you gotta drop it. It's time to go up to the next level of intensity. So you know, at the gym, if you're lifting a weight that's just too easy that you're never going to grow your muscle. You need to put some mild stress on your body in order to grow muscle, and it's the same thing here for getting healthier with fasting, we need to put some mild stress on our system. So if you need the fasting aids and you're still finding it to be stressful, the fasting aids will help support you. But if it's not, then you should kick them to the curb if it's not stressful. Now, when it comes to these things, like a piece of bacon, for example, or a slice of avocado, these very keto foods, these very full, like high-fat food items. The answer is it also sort of does depend. Are you doing a five-day

fast, for example? And if day three, you're having a terrible day on day three, but one piece of bacon is going to help you get through day three and make it two day four or day five of your fast, then it's better to use a little bit of a crutch to help you get through that one sticky moment on day three, because you'll get to day four, day five of a fast. It's the same thing for people who feel like they need bone broth at 24 hours to get to 36 hours, and they don't give themselves permission to have that bone broth, so they just break their fast. Well why wouldn't you just have the cup of bone broth at 24 hours and get in another solid like 12 or 16 hours of fasting to hit the 36 or 42 hour mark? You're much better off having that cup of broth and doing another 12 or 16 hours of fasting, than you are just cutting your fast off at 24 hours because you're trying to avoid things altogether. Now I tend to avoid solids when I do extended fasts, but I do about four extended fasts a year for disease prevention. I typically travel a lot, now that's starting to happen again. We eat out, so there's hidden fats: they'll throw vegetable oil on the grill that they put your grass-fed steak on. So you're always getting in, you know, some of these inflammatory items or just time-zone jumping, all of this stuff leads to inflammation and throws off our circadian rhythm. So I do these fasts quarterly and sometimes they're smooth sailing, and sometimes, you know, on day three or day two, I might need like a tablespoon of coconut oil just to get me through that hump or period, so I can continue on to do my five-day fasts. And there's nothing wrong with that, because if it's giving you a little bit of something, the bare minimum amount to help you do a lot more fasting, then it's worthwhile. But I think, you know, dosage really makes the poison here. So having a pound of bacon or, not that you would, but going to town on a jar of coconut oil, that's not what you're looking to do. But if something, if you can take the bare minimum dosage of something, to help you get through and do another 12 hours or another few days of fasting, whatever your goal is, then I think you should use it. Nadia, what are your thoughts here?

Nadia [00:23:06] Well, I agree with you, this is one of those questions that is the hardest to answer, but at the same time, to me, it's quite simple, right? It isn't so much about whether something breaks a fast or not. It's about whether or not that thing is going to help you fast longer. So it's not only for me about, you know, are you having a pound of the bacon, but it's how often are you needing it? So if you have a little bit of bacon - you try it out guys - if you have, you know, just one piece of bacon and you're able to fast for 24 hours after that or, you know, get to that 36 that you've been trying to do, then great, it works for you, and don't worry about what I say or what anybody else says. But, if you're having something like cream, for example, which I find is something that's very common, people will put cream in their coffee, but then all they want to do again, as we said before, is nurse it for four hours or have it two, three, four times a day. Then that particular thing, not only does it break your fast because you're having it a million times during the day, but it's not helping your fast. So I think ultimately for me, whether something is a fasting aid or not, is whether it's actually helping you to fast longer after you have it without anything else. And that's ultimately how I would judge whether something is, if it's OK to have that olive or not. If you can have that olive and walk away and be able to fast for a whole lot longer, then that's perfectly fine. What I find is that most people, like Megan said, the solid things don't actually make your fasting easier. They get your digestive juices going, so of course you then start to feel hungrier and your body expects to eat. So those are not, usually for most people, those solid foods, whether it's an olive or a piece of bacon or a piece of avocado or cheese is usually not a great one for people because, like Megan said, it has a huge insulin response in most of us. So all it's going to do is it's going to get your body in storage mode and you're going to, instead of fat burning mode, so it's going to lower your energy and you're going to get hungrier and hungrier as each minute passes. So those are not great fasting aids. Something like a nice pure fat like coconut oil or a little bit of butter

in your coffee or tea, that might just give you a solid good fuel for the next, I don't know, hours, right? Because after that, you won't feel like having a second or third. For sure, I mean, most people don't have more than one of these coffees or teas. You don't even finish it usually. And same with bone broth I think, unless you're nursing it, which is again, that's a whole other issue.

Megan [00:25:37] Thanks, Nadia. Oh, this one. All right, this is...

Nadia [00:25:42] I'll take this one.

Megan [00:25:43] This is the perfect question for our sexual-health expert here. Nadia, do men lose weight faster than women?

Nadia [00:25:53] That's a great question. I think ultimately, ladies and gentlemen, what you want to know is, would life be so unfair that men would lose so much more weight than women? It's not whether they lose it quicker or in a more linear fashion, you know, ultimately do men lose more weight than women, and are we women just, you know, it's doom and gloom for us? I definitely don't think that, and I think our program and our success stories speak louder than any words that I could tell you guys. I do think that men, usually at the beginning, lose weight in a more linear fashion, meaning that they are like, you know, they lose two three, maybe four, sometimes more pounds per week and then lose it continuously, especially at the beginning. We find this quite a bit, and that's because, of course, men and women hormonally are different, right? And many women also can lose weight in this continuous fashion, but it depends on so many factors. Most women don't lose weight in a linear fashion and continuously, because you're either cyclical, so you're premenopausal, right? So if you still have a cycle, if you still have a period. And for that reason, because our hormones switch about halfway through our cycle, half of your cycle there's one hormone that's dominant and the other half of your cycle, there's another. So there's a part of your cycle where you lose weight more easily and quickly, and there's another part of your cycle where you tend to store more and you have more retention. This is why women don't lose weight as quickly and in a linear fashion as men do. But if you know this, if we understand this and luckily for us, we now are beginning to understand this a lot better, we can help women with fasting according to their menstrual cycle. So there's about half of the month where you lose a lot of weight, probably more weight than your partner if you're comparing yourself to a man, right? And then there's a part of your cycle where you likely will not lose as much weight. And we can play with our fasting schedules to make this work out better. And then we have women that are either post-menopausal or maybe younger women that don't have a period at all because they have conditions like PCOS and they're very, very insulin resistant. So then at the beginning, they don't lose weight or they're not losing that much weight. But we work with these women as well. We understand this. We understand why some post-menopausal women don't lose weight right away or why women with PCOS might not lose weight right away. This is where we come in with some therapeutic eating and some therapeutic fasting to help support. The other thing I'd like to say about this is it depends also how we are gauging, how we are measuring our weight loss because really what we want is not to lose weight, what we want is to change our body composition. We want to burn fat and build muscle and maybe put some healthy density on our bones. So, again, it isn't about the weight per se, it's about your body composition. You might not be losing weight at all, but yet you might be burning a ton of fat and building a bit of muscle. And so you want to make sure that you are using different measures. When we talk about body composition quite a bit, Megan and I, Megan has written about this in our blog posts, I

know I've talked about it quite a bit in my women-and-fasting groups as well. What do you think, Megan?

Megan [00:29:04] Absolutely. I don't think I've anything to add to that. That's why you are our top expert on this subject here, and we're going to do a whole episode very soon, dedicated especially to women and fasting. Because we've got, us ladies, you know, we've got so much power to lose body fat just like our male counterparts. But we've got different ebbs and flows. And, if we learn how to optimize those ebbs and flows, we can get just as incredible results. Whether you're 25, 55, 75, we've seen this across the board, so we're going to do a deeper dive into this soon. But, the bottom line is, if we can figure out how to optimize fasting for our physiology, male or female, we can really make fasting work for us.

[00:29:54] All right, the last question, oh, we're tackling all of my hot subjects here in today's session. Question number five, "How much salt do I need?" I wish there was a drum roll. [drum roll] Salt is a really hot topic. Why are you struggling with your fast so much? Probably because you're not getting enough salt. How much salt should you have then? And this is a complicated question. So, if you have severe insulin resistance and you're retaining a lot of water, you're going to end up retaining quite a bit of electrolytes too. So you might not need any sodium. You might not need any sodium at all. And then you'll join communities like ours and you hear everyone's taking one and a half teaspoons of salt or five grams of sodium a day, and you're kind of at a loss. Do I need to have that? And there's such a huge spectrum here determining how much salt you actually need during your fasts. I could probably do a whole episode on salt. We should get that in the books, too. But if you have pretty gnarly insulin resistance, then you're not going to need so much salt. So it's really about listening to these signals that your body is giving you during your fast. Are you feeling tired and fatigued, especially in the afternoon? Do you have that four o'clock ravenous hunger happening? Do you have brain fog? Are you starting to experience cramps? These are all signs that you probably do need to supplement with some salt. So I find the initial journey with a patient in the clinic, or someone that we work with online, is that, at the start, they're pretty diabetic, they've got, you know, higher insulin levels, they've got to lose some weight. They might not really need salt for the first couple of weeks. But in the first couple of weeks, the insulin comes down. Again, two weeks, back when we had the clinic, we were taking a lot of people off of insulin in those two weeks. So huge physical changes are happening right off the bat from your fasting. So at the start, probably don't need to be mindful about it but then what happens throughout your journey is you start to experience tiredness, fatigue, ravenous hunger, especially in the afternoon. And these are signs that you need to start salting your body a little bit. And we want to focus on salt because salt is that gateway electrolyte. Or I should say sodium rather is that gateway electrolyte. If you maintain healthy sodium levels, you're going to maintain or do a better job preserving magnesium levels. Now, most people with insulin resistance are deficient in magnesium as well. But if you maintain sodium, you're giving your body a better shot at retaining the magnesium. And then, by doing that, you're going to start to protect all of the other electrolytes, like potassium, for example, calcium, phosphorus. So we want to make sure that we are getting in adequate sodium. So, at this point, when you start to experience these symptoms, it's best to go low and slow with the salt, having a pinch of it in your morning water or adding a pinch of it to your morning coffee. That's another fun fact about coffee: in lots of places abroad, outside of North America, will actually add a pinch of salt to coffee to cut the bitterness of it, rather than adding in copious quantities of creamers to their coffee to make it more palatable. So you can try adding a pinch in the morning and then maybe every few hours throughout the day. And then people find that, as their insulin levels start to come down even more and as

they start to increase their physical activity. Because this happens to everybody, you're finally feeling good again. You're going to be more active even if it's just doing chores at home, you're going to be more active. I once had a patient who couldn't even go into the grocery store with his wife when he was diabetic, to coming off insulin in a month, to totally reversing his diabetes within a year, to shoveling ten driveways in the wintertime because he had so much energy. So we just become more active. And then, as we become more active, we will likely be more symptomatic of needing salt. So some of the pro athletes that we've worked with, I find, need even up to the equivalent of a tablespoon worth of salt throughout the day. And salt's something that you can't take all at once because it's going to leave you feeling awful: you'll get palpitations, you'll bloat up, you'll feel fatigued. So salt's one of those things where you should take a little bit of it often throughout the day, but what that looks like is going to depend on where you are in your journey, and of course other health complications that you have. So, before you start adding more salt into your routine, you should really get checked out by a functional health care practitioner to see if it's safe for you to consume sodium. About 18% of the population is truly salt sensitive, so that's something to be mindful of too. The majority of us aren't. And unfortunately, the salt got blamed for what the sugar did to our bodies. Once we start improving our health, then we can start tolerating salt again, but there is still a small handful of people out there that are salt sensitive, so it's always good to get checked out by a functional health care practitioner. And then just one last note about salt, is that how much you need is going to change with the seasons too. So I live in a fairly moderate climate now, although we do distinctively have a warmer season and a cooler season and, in the warmer season when you get up to the low 100s in Fahrenheit, so there is a lot more perspiring. But, even somewhere like back home in Toronto, we'd see these huge swings in temperature throughout the year minus 40 Celsius, which is the same in Fahrenheit, or then we'd see it 40 Celsius or 108 Fahrenheit in the summertime. And during these big swings in temperatures, people find that they do need a little bit more sodium. So summer and winter we're more likely to perspire more, we need more sodium than the spring and the fall time. And I do think we could do a whole episode on this, so maybe we will get one of our hot topics will be on salt. But Nadia, do you have anything to add to that before we wrap up today's episode?

Nadia [00:36:16] I definitely agree. I think salt and magnesium need a whole episode. Let's just put that in the books right there. I think that's, I think it's because of the fear of this very small group of people that maybe have a sensitivity to salt that and maybe because, like you said, salt has been blamed for what sugar did. I read a post of someone we know, Megan, quite well, I think this week or last week, he posted something about why we fear salt so much. And really, it's salt retention is the problem. It's not salt itself that's the problem, right? That we always are scared. People always ask, you know, should I take salt if I have high blood pressure? The problem is not the salt, it's the salt retention. And so that's, you know, that's again, an insulin problem, insulin resistance problem. We need to get rid of the insulin resistance. I think that it's, you know, if we could keep it really simple, which it's not so not simple when it comes to talking about salt, right? But if we could keep it really simple, we would just think about it this way. When you eat, right, on your eating days. Let's say you're doing alternate-day fasting. On your eating days, you're having two or three meals, depending on what you're eating day looks like and maybe more, unfortunately, if you're still snacking and grazing. And so think about how much salt you're consuming on an eating day, whether you have high blood pressure or not. You're likely consuming about a teaspoon of salt. Even people, and I've only worked with a handful of people that were on a true salt-restricted diet by their cardiologists or kidney specialists. Even those people that are put on a salt restricted diet, they're consuming

about three quarters of a teaspoon of salt a day in their diet on an eating day, right? So when you're fasting, you're not eating at all. So let's think about it this way: if you're consuming about a teaspoon of salt on your eating day, it's very likely that you probably need about that much on your fasting day. And now here's an added reason: is that when you're fasting, your insulin is dropping, or at least that's what we hope is happening, right? That's what we want to happen, we want to lower those insulin levels. And then your body goes into fat burning and release mode. And when you go into release mode, you dehydrate, right? Because you release a little bit of fluid and in that fluid, you're releasing not only water, but your electrolytes. And as Megan said, salt is the gateway electrolyte. It's the, it's the one electrolyte that's going to keep all your other electrolytes in balance so you don't want to lose too much salt. So, if on your eating days you're having about a teaspoon, but on your fasting days you're not eating at all and you're losing a bit of water in salt, then it's probably a good idea to consider adding that back in on your fasting days. And maybe we can talk about how to do that appropriately next time.

Megan [00:38:50] Thanks, Nadia. All right, everybody, that's a wrap for today's episode. Thank you so much for joining Nadia and I today. If you have any comments or would like to give us any feedback, please make sure to leave us a comment on the iTunes. We'd love to know how we can make the show better because we're just getting started. But your feedback, we want to make this podcast what you guys want to hear. And of course, if you like our podcasts, make sure to subscribe and we will be here every week with new information on fasting and some of our top nutritional strategies. All right, everyone, thank you, and we'll talk to you next time. Happy fasting.