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[00:00:06] Before we get started with today's episode, I would like to quickly read you our podcast disclaimer.

[00:00:13] This podcast is for educational purposes only, and it is not a substitute for professional care by a doctor or other qualified medical professional. You should always speak with your physician or other healthcare professionals before doing any fasting, changing your diet in any way, taking or adjusting any medications or supplements, or adopting any treatment plan for a health problem.

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[00:01:13] All right. And now we'll get started with today's episode. Hi, everyone. It's Megan Ramos here with another Bitesize episode of The Fasting Method podcast. Today, I'm going to be answering the question, "Does having X, Y, or Z (or maybe Z, depending on what country you're in) break a fast?"

[00:01:38] When it comes to fasting training wheels, the advice is you should use them if you need them and not if you don't, and you should try to use the minimum that you need to get through your fast. Now, I do want to say if you are using plentiful fasting training wheels and you're getting great results, there's no need to stop utilizing them. If it's not broken, don't fix it. But there's a lot of people out there that are terrified, in general, of using any fasting training wheels, and they find themselves constantly cutting their fasts short or suffering, and then breaking their fasts with inappropriate foods at inappropriate times of the day, like right before bed, for example, when we don't want to be eating. You should always use a training meal if you need it and not if you don't, but you've got to ask yourself, "Am I using this for comfort or am I using it because I physically need it?"

[00:02:43] Not every fast is going to be easy. Some fasts are a lot easier than others, and some fasts are really difficult for what appears to be no rhyme or reason. Those of you who are the most successful with this way of life, you adapt. If you're having a really easy fasting day, you minimize or you eliminate the use of fasting training wheels. If you're having a more difficult fasting day, you don't blame yourself, you don't get mad at yourself, you don't discount your fasts. You use the training wheels and you keep on going because it's so much better to have some training wheels and complete your fasts than it is to not do your fasts at all. It's a really important mindset to have when you're trying to achieve health goals through fasting, and it's one of the most complicated things we see in forums like on Facebook, for example - people just not giving themselves permission to use them if you need them. And we should embrace them if we need them. There's no such thing as a clean or dirty fast. And if you've been using that language, that's fine, but let's change the narrative on it. You use them if you need them and not if you don't. Give yourself permission.

[00:04:08] I can't tell you the number of 24-hour fasts that I started that ended up being something wild like three days. And I can't tell you the number of three-day fasts I started that ended up being 24 hours. Life doesn't always go as planned. Your mind might have one desire for fasting. The body might have different desires for what it needs at that

particular time. So you've got to compromise between the two. Use them if you need them and not if you don't need them.

[00:04:41] In general, it is better to lean into something like fat, if that helps. Sometimes you might need a bit of protein. Sometimes using things like chia seeds or psyllium husks can get you through the fast. But I'll tell you, it's a lot better at the 24-hour mark to have some chia seeds, some bone broth, a little bit of fat, and carry on your fast for 36 or 42 hours. Most people don't think they'll experience the cellular recycling phenomenon called autophagy if they have any fasting training wheels. And I can tell you we have had a ton of patients that we saw in Toronto, or a ton of clients that we work with online, who have lost an abundance of body fat. We're talking well over 100 pounds through later in life (post-menopausal women, for example, men in their sixties and seventies who are losing over 150 pounds) and they don't have excess skin issues. We can observe that autophagy is happening in a lot of these individuals. They're doing 36-hour, 42-hour fasts regularly, they're having a cup of coffee a day with a bit of fat, they're having a cup of broth a day when they need it and they're experiencing this phenomenal skin loss (connective tissue breakdown) through autophagy. So there's a tremendous amount of deep cellular healing happening when we give ourselves some tools to help us reach our total fasting goals and do so consistently.

[00:06:19] Now, of course, having something like protein definitely kicks you out of this physiological phenomenon called autophagy, but when we're doing a longer fast, whether it be 36 hours or 72 hours, we very easily and rapidly get back into this desired physiological state. So it's so much better for us to have something if we need it and then carry on to reach our goals. And sometimes people ask about having a little bit more solids, things like, "Can I have a slice of bacon?" "Can I have a dill pickle?" "Can I have an olive?" And so many of you have heard Dr. Jason Fung say this time and time again, "Of course, if you need it. It's better to have a little bit and then carry on the fast." So it's better to have a slice of avocado, two or three olives, that pickle, that piece of bacon, and carry on the fast. You just need to know your limitations when it comes to these solid foods. I, myself, could not stop at one piece of bacon at all. I find it very appetite-stimulating. We have one mentor on our team who can absolutely do that. I think she's a true superhero because I can't even fathom it. But there are other things. I could have an olive and I could stop at one olive. Or I could have a dill pickle and I could stop at one dill pickle. And I certainly can stop at one slice of avocado. So you need to know yourself and what works for you. But if you are at, say, 42 hours of a 72-hour fast and a little bit of a dill pickle gets you to 72 hours, well, that is a win. It's a little bit of a modified fast, sure, but is a win. And there's still a tremendous amount of autophagy happening, as well as the primary reason why we're fasting in the first place - to reverse our insulin resistance.

[00:08:20] All right, everyone, I hope that answers your questions on fasting training wheels and we'll see you back next week with another episode. Bye for now.