

'Thine Health Shall Spring Forth Speedily'

Scientists have discovered that a three-day fast of water only completely reboots your immune system. This study by researchers from the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles was published in the journal "Cell Stem Cell" in a June 2014.

Fasting appears to shift stem cells of the immune system from a dormant state to an active state of self-renewal. The following links explore this fascinating research: A three day fast reboots the immune system—the original "Cell Stem Cell" article is available [here](#), or [here](#) for an editorial on it. Here is an easy-to-read article which includes information on how a three-day fast protected cancer patients from toxic chemo effects.

Jesus did a 40-day fast. The Bible says that Jesus was in the wilderness "for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry" (Luke 4:2).

In rare biblical cases they fasted both water and food for three days (Israelites in Esther 4:16 and Nineveh in Jonah 3:7).

Some would consider Daniel's diet, where he restricted certain foods from his diet, to be a partial fast. The Bible does not specifically say Daniel was fasting so that is a license that some are taking.

Common sense tells us fasting is good: When children are sick, they don't want to eat; when animals get sick, they don't eat; when we get sick, we don't care to eat. So learn to listen to what your body is telling you and honor what it is saying.

Why does fasting heal? Fasting constitutes a house cleaning. It is God's design for ridding the body of 'diseased tissues,' excess calories and accumulations of waste and toxins. Drinking only water means you are not taking in any foods which contain toxins, so the job of the normal cleansing of these toxins is removed from your body. Since your body does not need to work on digesting foods, energy can be shifted to cleansing and rebuilding, which scientists have proven is exactly what happens when you fast.

Scientific Research Galore

Go to the PubMed Website, which is where you find many medical researched studies posted concerning the health benefits of fasting:

- PubMed – article search on the words “fasting cancer” (5000 plus results)
- PubMed – article search on the words “fasting immune system” (1500 plus results)

Abbreviated summaries of some of the posted research on PubMed

A Periodic Diet that Mimics Fasting Promotes Multi-System Regeneration, Enhanced Cognitive Performance, and Health Span

This research was done with mice. It consisted of four days on a diet that mimics fasting followed by a normal diet. Cycles that began with middle aged mice extended longevity, lowered visceral fat, reduced cancer incidence and skin lesions, rejuvenated the immune system, and retarded bone mineral density loss. Three cycles decreased risk biomarkers for aging, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer without major adverse effects. This provides support for the use of intermittent fasting to promote health span.

Tumor Progression and Regression with Periodic Fasting and Refeeding

Tumor-bearing mice were subjected to fasting and then normal feeding cycles. Some mice experienced one day of fasting followed by six days of normal feeding. Other mice had two days of fasting followed by five days of normal feeding. A third group of tumor-ridden mice were used as controls.

Periodic modified fasting groups exhibited tumor growth arrest with tendency towards regression; including complete regression of tumors for about half of them. All who were on the fasting cycle survived the 4 month study, with the group fasting 2 days a week performing best. The control group, in contrast, showed continuous tumor progression and only 35 percent survived.

The Impact of Religious Fasting on Human Health

Fasting is defined as a partial or total abstention from all foods, or a select abstention from prohibited foods. The three most commonly studied fasts are calorie restriction, alternate-day fasting, and dietary restriction.

Calorie Restriction – The reduction of calorie intake by a certain percentage (typically 1/3). It has been demonstrated to improve health and increase longevity.

Alternate-day fasting –Alternating 24-hour periods between fast period (restricted food or no food) followed by normal eating. Shown to extend lifespan, retard or altogether prevent the development of many morbidities, including: cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, cancers, and diabetes.

Dietary Restriction – Is a reduction of one or more components of dietary intake. Meat protein restriction increases maximum lifespan by roughly 20 percent.

One example of dietary restriction is the Daniel Diet – Daniel ate vegetables/pulse and water for 10 days (Dan.1:8-14). Daniel also did a 21-day period of mourning, during which time he ate a vegan diet, which has been reported to yield health-

enhancing properties (Dan. 10:2,3). To test the health benefits of the Daniel Diet within a laboratory-based setting, they took men and women of varying age (20-62 yrs) and had them complete a 21-day Daniel “fast.”

Their Summary: Our initial investigation of the Daniel Fast noted favorable effects on several health-related outcomes, including: blood pressure, blood lipids, insulin sensitivity, and biomarkers of oxidative stress.

Dr. William L. Esser ran a fasting clinic where he personally treated 30,000 people with fasting. He found 92 percent improved or totally recovered from diseases in 31 medically diagnosed categories of diseases. Psychiatrist Dr. Allan Cott used fasting to treat schizophrenics patients, and found success in 60 percent of the cases.

John Wesley required his pastors to fast two days a week until 3:00 in the afternoon.

Some of My Experiences With Fasting

My naturopath Dr. Prytula put me on a 10-day water fast which starved out parasites I had picked up ministering overseas, which had been giving me severe problems. It worked! We have done fasts of 1,7, 10 and 21 days. I have done a 3-day fast of no water or food.

Spiritual Benefits of Fasting

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, ... Then shall thy light break

forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer” (Is. 58:6-9, KJV).

In our 20s, Patti and I did a 40-day partial fast. We included juices, milk, and water. We were seeking a breakthrough in the release of miracle working power. We had recently become charismatic in theology, and wanted to practically see the power of God flowing through our hands. During the last five days of this fast, we went to Roswell Cancer Hospital in Buffalo and prayed for a young man with hundreds of tumors in his body, and only days to live, as he could not keep food down, and his bed sores would not heal up.

Well, immediately he began keeping food down, his sores began healing and his tumors shrunk. Within a few months he was out of the hospital walking the streets of our home city.

This convinced me healing was real and I became a full-fledged charismatic – plus I lost 25 pounds. Another amazing personal healing I experienced is described here. I started with the ten-day Master Cleanse which I followed up with a three-day fast.

Some Specifics About Fasting

- The fasting process spares the essential tissues (e.g. vital organs) while utilizing non-essential tissue (e.g. fat) for fuel.
- Fasting is different from starvation, which is when the body utilizes essential tissue for fuel.
- First 3-10 days the body is shifting metabolic processes from assimilation of food to elimination of backlog of toxic stored materials so you often feel low energy, hunger and detox symptoms.
- Then you experience an increase in energy, clear-

headedness, and a sense of well-being.

- Hunger normally passes after three days.
- You can fast to prevent disease, to maintain optimum health, for physical healing, or for spiritual breakthroughs.

Q. Should I fast periodically?

A. Yes. "WHEN you fast..." (Matt. 6:16-18).

Q. Who should not fast?

A. PREGNANT/OR BREAST-FEEDING WOMEN AND if you have questions, talk with a naturopath, and start slow and easy. You can begin with a partial fast.

Q. What if I experience lower back pain (or other pains) during or after the fast?

A. The lower back is the location of your kidneys, so they are likely suffering overload as toxins are leaving your body. In the case of lower back pain, it would be wise to support your kidneys with more water during the fast and add Uva Ursi and dandelion root tea during and after the fast.

These pains fall into a category called "tissue cleansing" or a "healing crisis." These are unpleasant symptoms one experiences as their body throws off toxins that have been present under the surface. Even though these can be temporarily unpleasant, in the long run they are very beneficial to your health and well-being. I have experienced several tissue cleanses as a result of fasts. {eoa}

*Excerpted from **Mark Virkler's** book, Prayers That Heal the Heart. Mark is founder and president of Christian Leadership University and co-founder of Communion With God Ministries. The co-author of more than 50 books with his wife, Patti, Mark has received a Master of Theology from Miami Christian University and a Ph.D. from Carolina Christian University.*

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