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LOSE WEIGHT - REVERSE DISEASE - LIVE LONGER

A Healthy Society With Limited Medical Costs is Possible



Diseases that plague our modern society are reversible if sufficient dietary and environmental stresses are removed from the picture. A good physician can help people recover their health by helping them discover and eradicate all possible impediments to healing.

This new knowledge of nutrition; reversing disease through nutritional medicine and preventing cancer through diet, is the most powerful artillery we have to fight and win the war on cancer and other degenerative illnesses that have taken over our country. Ninety percent of cancers can be stopped before they even start. If just half of the billions of dollars spent on cancer research was spent on educating the public on how to avoid disease, we would have had a powerful reduction in the incidents of most chronic diseases. Millions of lives would have been saved from cancer.

Instead, our government spends over 50 billion dollars on price supports for the dairy, beef and veal industry 1. These dollars are given to farmers to artificially reduce the cost of crops used to feed cows and are also used to advertise and keep the prices down on dairy, fowl and meat. **Fruits and vegetables grown primarily for human consumption are specifically excluded from USDA price supports.** Out of one pocket we pay billions of our tax dollars to support expensive disease causing foods. The other pocket pays for medical bills that are too high because of a population consuming too much of these rich, disease causing foods.

Because of animal agriculture's powerful lobbyists, these price supports are not even considered wasteful. Worse than wasteful, by keeping fatty foods artificially cheaper we actually are paying to make our society sicker and keep our health insurance costs high.

Most Americans, though aware of the change in nutritional thinking, have not made substantial changes in their food choices or lifestyles. Why? Because **most of us are physiologically addicted to food and assume it is beyond our mental ability to control it.** We are also confused, uncertain, and have an incomplete picture of how to maintain our health, so we resign ourselves to the way things are. We are unaware of what standards of health are possible for us.

If you have a chronic illness or medical problem, it is most likely you have been told there are no special diets that will help. Hopefully my book (*Fasting and Eating For Health*) will put an end to that outmoded, incorrect and dangerous position which denies you your chance to regain your health and regain control of your life.

Unfortunately, if you try to improve your diet and make changes following the guidelines you have been given from the typical dietician or physician, you will not get better. These recommendations are almost always too liberal to achieve substantial risk reduction or disease reversal. As you will see, as we discuss most of the major health problems in detail in later articles, more aggressive nutritional management of specific medical conditions can mean the difference between achieving wellness and suffering with chronic illness, taking multiple medications and then ultimately suffering a premature demise.

The economy of our society is being weighted down by an expensive and largely ineffective medical system that relies on expensive tests, treatments and last minute heroics to attempt to combat the harmful effects of a rich, disease

causing diet; a diet built on refined, processed, preserved and nutrient poor foodstuffs.

If we look at heart disease alone, over 150 billion dollars a year are spent on expensive medical procedures that attempt to remedy the effects of this rich diet. Yet we ignore the reality that heart disease can be totally prevented by a low fat, (less than 15% of total calories) plant based diet. The American Heart Association and the American Cancer society still recommend a 30% of calories from fat diet.

People are unaware that even 30% of calories from fat is an extremely high level of fat when we look at diets consumed throughout human history. When this level of fat intake is consumed, scientific studies show no improvement in heart disease. On the other hand, much lower levels of fat intake have shown that arterial blockages are easily reversible 2.

The ineffective dietary recommendations from most authorities, could be compared to telling a smoker, with lung disease, that he will be taking care of his disease if he cuts back from three packs a day to merely two. Unfortunately these American institutions are misleading the public by recommending diets with a level of fat that has been documented in the scientific literature to actually promote heart disease and cause cancer.

Understanding Health and Disease

In the last decade, great strides have been made in epidemiologic research on human nutrition which has changed the thinking of many research scientists. The ideas presented in this book are centuries old, yet increasingly supported by recently collected scientific evidence. It should not be forgotten that today's discoveries and ideas were founded on a long history of scientific effort by physician's who considered nutrition the most critical part of their practice.

As early as 400 B.C. the Greek physician Hippocrates in 400 B.C. used nutrition as his chief therapy. His favorite healing foods were barley mush, apples and dates. He paid strict attention to the dietary needs of his patients and stated,

"Who ever gives these things (food) no consideration, and is ignorant of them, how can he understand the diseases of man?"

Today the health of our society is poor, specifically because today's physicians know little of human nutrition and the power of optimal nutrition in restoring health. In fact, some of the most respected physicians in history who are remembered because of the renowned successes in the treatment of the ill, have been all but ignored by the conventional medical community which bases its entire practice on giving drugs to the sick.

Isaac Jennings M.D. (1788-1874) spent twenty years adhering to the regular drugging and bleeding practices of the time, but gradually lost confidence in those procedures and methods. He noticed that he was not helping his patients and found that they did better with fewer drugs. He decided to change his methods. Instead of furnishing his patients with drugs, he gave them placebos; pills and liquids he concocted out of bits of food and water. At the same time, he gave them advice on diet and rest. He often instructed his patient to use the "medicine" for the first week with water and no food. He told them the medicine would not be effective if they did not follow his instructions. He usually continued the plan for a few more days after their next visit. Diseases vanished, and his fame spread. People thought his "medicines" were magical and he became known as the greatest healer of his day.

Early in this century, John Tilden, M.D. (1851 -- 1940), built on the works of other pioneering physicians like Jennings and devoted his life to teaching the public how to maintain their health. He stated,

Nature returns to normal when enervating habits are given up. There are no "cures" in the sense generally understood. If one has a tobacco heart, what is the remedy? Stop the tobacco of course... What will cure? Drugs? No! Removing the cause. Every so called disease is built within the mind and body by

energating habits. A fast, rest in bed and the giving up of energating habits, mental and physical, will allow nature to eliminate the accumulated toxin; then, if energating habits are given up, and rational living habits adopted, health will come back to stay... The medical world has been looking for a remedy to cure disease, not withstanding the obvious fact that nature needs no remedy-- she only needs an opportunity to exercise her own prerogative of self-healing.

Herbert Shelton D.C. (1895 -1985) built on the works of these early medical doctors and wrote prolifically from the 1920's on, with his own self published magazines, and through his publication of 12 books on the subject of health and healing. Dr. Shelton's Health School in San Antonio, Texas improved and restored the health of over 30,000 people through fasting and natural food diets. Both my father, who twice fasted 21 days and I who fasted 46 days), were among those 30,000 patients who fasted at Dr. Shelton's Health School in Texas.

To this day, the mainstream of modern medicine, as well as the alternative healthcare movement, both fueled by a remedy mentality that dominates our society combined with the financial incentive to make profits selling cures and drugs, has generally ignored this minimalist school of healing. Until very recently, little scientific research has been done in this field.

In the last ten years, however, there has been a significant upswing in scientific investigations directed toward understanding the cause of disease. These recent discoveries, when applied to chronic ailments, will have a major impact in the medicine of the future. They are **causing a modern surge in interest in lifestyle and dietary modification to prevent and treat disease.** This resurgence of science in health care has lent credence to those "medical heretics" of the past who championed natural food diets and fasting as a means of preventing and treating disease...

Headaches and Hypoglycemia: Two Misunderstood Conditions

If you suffer from regular headaches that make you feel like your head is clamped in a vise, you are not alone. Headaches, including the migraine type are so widespread that many people consider it normal occurrence of human existence.

The National Headache Foundation says 45 million Americans suffer from chronic recurring headaches. This population spends over 4 billion a year in over- the- counter pain relievers alone, not counting prescription drugs.

Headaches are our country's number one pain problem and among the most common reasons why patients visit physicians. In fact, a recent study has shown that migraine affects 17.6 % of women and 5.7 % of men in the United States¹. In round numbers this translates to about 18 million women and 5.6 million men that suffer from serious headaches in this country.

Like many other illnesses caused largely by improper dietary practices, the incidence of these complaints in our population has been increasing. When the Center for Disease Control, National Center for Health Statistics started collecting data for evaluation beginning in 1980, their finding demonstrated nearly a 60% increase in prevalence of migraines in over a 10 year period. The majority of individuals in this comprehensive study reported that they were dissatisfied with their treatment and still suffering from headache pain. Furthermore, 80% of patients experienced attacks of such severity that the syndrome interfered with their work and ability to make a productive living.³

Headaches are a signal that something is wrong. Typically they result from retained toxins in the body. When these metabolic waste products are eliminated by correct living and fasting, people can regain their long sought after freedom from pain.

Most people suffer through their attacks using home remedies or over-the-counter medications.

When they finally consult a physician further medication is thrust their way. It is exceedingly rare that the patient will be taught that lifestyle choices of their own doing have brought this problem on themselves and removal of these inciting causes can resolve their distress.

Typically patients are encouraged to become drug dependent, forever popping pills or injecting themselves with drugs in an attempt to control their suffering. This "band-aid" approach condoned by the medical profession will never restore such patients to normalcy. It does not attempt to remove the cause.

Many pain syndromes of undetermined cause have similar biological mechanisms which lead us to feel discomfort. If you are suffering from any type of related pain, by understanding the concepts explained in this chapter you should be able to banish these symptoms from your life forever. The chronic headache patient and the migraine sufferer will be able to throw away their medications and join those of us who have never experienced such agony.

The Road Back To A Healthy Heart: The Natural Way

Cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure can be safely reversed without medications, angioplasty, or bypass surgery

The gradual clogging, hardening and damage done to the interior walls of our blood vessels is the primary cause of heart attacks and strokes. This process of atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries, also results in poor circulation to the extremities, the brain and the organs. Ailments such as senile dementia, leg pain (intermittent claudication) and even erectile impotence have their origin in atherosclerosis.

Yet, by means of appropriate dietary approaches, heart disease, blood vessel blockages and high blood pressure can all be prevented and reversed after they occur. As with other debilitating problems, these diseases are commonly the result of the traditional American high fat, high protein, high refined food diet that is ill adapted to the

needs of our species. The accumulation of fatty plaque on the inner wall of our blood vessels begins early in childhood and progresses gradually through life due to the foolish modern day dietary practices.

High blood pressure is the result of blood vessels that are relatively inelastic due to deposits of plaque. Fatty plaque causes blood vessels to become stiff and weak. Such stiffened vessels lose their elasticity and are more likely to tear or rupture from high blood pressure thereby causing a stroke or heart attack. Taking medication to lower blood pressure does nothing to reverse or remove the atherosclerotic blood vessel disease.

Half of the population over 65 years old has high blood pressure. It is the leading reason for prescription medication in the country today 1. However, in numerous countries where the diet is not rich in fats and protein, and much higher in fiber and fresh produce, high blood pressure is virtually non-existent 2 3. Atherosclerotic disease of the blood vessels and heart also only occurs in parts of the world where high fat and high protein diets are consumed but heart attacks are virtually unknown in societies following natural plant based diets 4 5.

As this chapter will later attest, through fasting, followed by an appropriate diet, the people of this country will have a choice that can enable them to discard their hypertensive medication and live in good health....

Recovery from Diabetes Through Optimal Nutrition

One in twenty people have diabetes in this country. Diabetes, our seventh leading cause of death, is also a nutritionally related disease, one that is both preventable and reversible through nutritional methods. In contrast to many other chronic diseases diabetes is increasing in prevalence in the United States.

There are basically two types of diabetes, Type I or childhood onset diabetes and Type II or adult onset diabetes. In type I, which generally occurs earlier in life, children incur damage to the

pancreas, the organ that produces and secretes insulin, so they have an insulin deficiency. In type II, the individual still produces near-normal levels of insulin, however the body is resistant to it, so the level of blood sugar, or glucose, rises.

The end result is the same in both types of the disease; the individual has a high glucose level in the blood.

Both types of diabetes accelerate the aging of our bodies. Having diabetes greatly accelerates the development of atherosclerosis or cardiovascular disease. Diabetes also ages and destroys the kidney and other body systems. Forty thousand amputations per year are due to complications of diabetes. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in adults. It is also the leading cause of kidney failure.

Diabetics, regardless of the type, have abnormal blood lipids, meaning they have higher levels of triglycerides, and lower levels of HDL (the "good" cholesterol) than the general population. The over-production of triglycerides in particular is probably related to the increased flux of glucose and fatty acid substrates to the liver. Unfortunately, at any given cholesterol or triglyceride level diabetics have a much higher risk of coronary heart disease, compared to the non diabetic population.

The high glucose level in the blood, in both types of diabetes, damages the body. The high glucose level in conjunction with blood lipids inevitably causes a significant acceleration of the atherosclerotic process, hardening and narrowing the blood vessels.

Atherosclerosis accounts for 80% of all diabetic deaths. Diabetics have more than 400% higher incidence of heart attack than non diabetics. One third of all patients with insulin dependent diabetes die of heart attacks before age 50.

Diabetics must be aware they can protect themselves from becoming part of these morbid statistics. This outcome occurs because **diabetics are typically given the wrong recommendation**

by the professionals caring for them. Optimal nutrition can change this.

Any dietary recommendations designed for diabetics you would expect by simple logic to at least attempt to reduce the risk of a heart attack, stroke or other cardiovascular event. Unfortunately this is not the case. In fact, the typical dietary recommendations suggested to diabetics by their doctors and dieticians actually has been shown by multiple studies to allow the advancement of atherosclerosis in normal patients, let alone the diabetic.

Autoimmune Disease

A patient's wife wrote,

"My husband has been seeking medical help for the past two and a half years for rheumatoid arthritis. He was going for blood tests every two to six weeks. He was using Azulfadine, Prednisone and Methotrexate along with other prescribed drugs. He was about to begin gold shots when he changed physicians. Thank God he did! He would not die from the arthritis, but from the side effects of the treatments. After three months Dr. Fuhrman has my husband off all drugs." The patient added, "Six months ago I prayed I would die, now I'm ready to live again." (Mr. and Mrs. Priatt)

From the Priatt's unsolicited remarks one can see why I am so enthusiastic about this method of treatment. **I have consistently watched my patients recover from what they have been told are incurable illnesses.**

There are over 100 clinical syndromes labeled as autoimmune diseases. Those discussed in this chapter are serious medical illnesses. They cause pain, suffering and early death. Drugs, the present day treatments, have extremely serious side effects. As a matter of fact, the toxic effects of

the drugs can be worse than the diseases themselves. It is not uncommon that patients are unable to tolerate the medication prescribed by their physician.

The good news is that in the majority of cases these diseases respond predictably to fasting and plant based diets. To get optimal results, these diets must be modified for the particular needs of each patient.

It is also predictable that, in spite of well done scientific investigations, and the clinical experience of many physicians, this effective nutritional treatment of autoimmune disease is generally ignored. This is unfortunate, because **optimal nutrition alone can prevent the suffering of millions.**

It is important to note that even though a particular autoimmune disease is not discussed in this article, this does not mean it will not be helped or alleviated by this approach. Other autoimmune illnesses that I will not discuss, but do typically respond to this type of treatment include: Hashimoto's thyroiditis, nephritis, Sjogren's syndrome, connective tissue disorders and others. Even disease not generally classified as autoimmune actually improves with the same approach because of the same or similar mechanisms that are outlined in this chapter. These include asthma, allergic disorders like urticaria, rhinitis, and various dermatologic disorders like eczema, dermatitis herpatiformis and more...

Chronic Medical Conditions Respond To Fasting

This is the first time I have felt well since my honeymoon. I finally have control and insight as to my own body. I feel young and beautiful again. Thank you Dr. Fuhrman.

--S. Margolis

The physicians who regularly utilize therapeutic fasting in their practice see so many remarkable recoveries, that getting well

is the expected, the normal condition. This is because nature heals when given the opportunity.

Still, in spite of these studies on fasting and plant based diets, the world largely ignores this treatment because it is contrary to the present system of medical practice. Doctors would completely have to remodel their entire approach to health and disease and rheumatologists and other **physicians treating patients would simply have to admit that most of what they do is not needed or useful.** This is not going to happen soon. We must expect powerful opposition to the method of care presented here.

Clearly, more and more scientific articles will be published about the benefits of therapeutic fasting with each passing year. However, it may be many years before studies are published about fasting for each and every disease for which it can be successfully utilized.

The only question with most chronic conditions is whether the patient would choose this method of care. Those who do are excited about the results obtained and very glad to have avoided surgery or a lifetime of drug use.

Uterine Fibroids

In Cheryl's case (my first case of uterine fibroids), we knew that prior to the fast the tumor she had was getting larger with more severe bleeding for years. When she fasted, I watched the tumor shrink by 78% after two weeks of the fast, even I was surprised how effective fasting was for this condition. Many physicians encouraged her to have it surgically removed. Instead Cheryl chose to fast.

Pelvic ultrasounds done by a radiologist both before and after the fast, documented the cubic size of the tumor and the exact percent of shrinkage that occurred. Measurements of her fibroid tumor was 473.6 cubic centimeters before the 14 day fast and 105.8 cubic centimeters after. Her problems with excessive bleeding had ended. Of additional note was that this patient also had

rosacea, a chronic distressing skin condition with extreme redness around the nose and cheeks that disappeared with fasting and did not return.

More than half a million women have hysterectomies each year. Many of these experience depression, painful intercourse, and urinary problems after surgery. Fasting not only allows the fibroid to shrink, but it often sets into motion a process where the fibroid is able to continue shrinking after the fast. The pain and pressure from fibroids and the excessive bleeding predictably responds to this method of care. Avoiding unnecessary surgery is precisely why many patients choose to undergo a therapeutic fast.

Fasting is effective for a large variety of ailments

I was fortunate enough to be exposed to this method of care when I was very young. I was able to observe its usefulness over the years on thousands of people. Today, there are a mere handful of physicians practicing this approach in the country. But, many patients with grave conditions seek this type of help after all other approaches have failed. First though they embarked on another journey, spending years searching and spending huge sums of money seeing all the top specialists in the field. They have tried various drugging treatments, yet still became worse.

They hadn't yet come to the understanding that drugs do not remove the cause of disease, so they were given more and more toxic substances to ingest by well-meaning physicians. While these drugs were consumed in the hope to lessen the worsening symptoms, the causes of disease continued to press on with their nefarious influence allowing the disease to progress and worsen. **Then, they often spent many more thousands of dollars on alternative practitioners and were given more "cures" to no avail.** Finally, after years of searching, these determined but still suffering individuals were told there is a method of care based on human physiology and that they decide to try as a last resort.

Unlike other methods they have tried, this method is not based on giving cures because to expect a cure or remedy to undo years of wrong living and self-abuse would be the same as believing in magic. Neither magic, nor getting something for nothing, works in the health and disease care arena. We cannot suspend the laws of cause and effect by ingesting medicinal substances. Instead, **this mode of healing is based on unchanging biological laws that insist the cause of disease be removed.**

After hearing about a natural food diet and therapeutic fasting, individuals may enthusiastically give it a try and get well. It is also possible that they may become excited about the sensibility of this approach and the prospect of finally recovering their health, but then go home to their friends and family and become discouraged after being told that they would be crazy for attempting such an "outrageous" treatment. They might have even called a few doctors they know only to be told that fasting is risky, dangerous and stupid.

It continually amazes me how "expert" opinions can be given on something with which someone has had no experience, knows nothing about, and has never read research on. I once had an occasion to speak to one such well meaning physician who was furiously against fasting. I told him I had read, and was thoroughly familiar with over 500 medical journal articles on therapeutic fasting, that I had spent years collecting. I inquired as to which ones he was familiar with, which helped him reach his opinion. His answer was that he had not read one of them. He actually had zero knowledge about the subject and began to ask me questions. He was consumed with the same vague fears and questions the typical layman would have. Though still having doubts, after our conversation he admitted he gave his opinion too hastily, and had much more to learn.

Most physicians who have knowledge and expertise in therapeutic fasting will advise fasting for those wishing to maintain their body in optimal health and to extend life. **It is not merely for the sick.** Many of these physicians, including myself, have personally undertaken long fasts, and may

do so periodically. For example Dr. Alec Burton, an osteopathic physician who has fasted over 10,000 patients, undergoes a two week fast every few years for the long term health benefits that accrue from the rejuvenating effects of the fast. I too, plan to undergo another fast in the near future even though I am in excellent health.

The point I am making is that as opposed to performing unnecessary and dangerous medical interventions such as open heart bypass surgery, fasting improves one's health, rather than insults it with a dangerous drug or potentially deadly surgery. If it does not lead to a complete recovery of a certain condition, **you will not hurt yourself by a fast; you will actually have improved your health.**

Diseases like acne and eczema, tinnitus (chronic noise in the ears) vertigo, fibromyalgia, glaucoma, cervical dysplasia, chronic neck and back pain, polymyalgia rheumatica, and many others are helped by fasting. Even cases of deafness have resolved while fasting for some other conditions, surprising both the patient and the doctor when the hearing returned.

Fasting is useful for a variety of other chronic ailments because the beneficial effects of the fast are not disease specific. Physicians who have utilized this approach have recorded cases of all description that have benefited patients or brought about recoveries from conditions that patients have been suffering needlessly with for years. Besides all the diseases that have already been mentioned one should assume that in the vast majority of chronic medical conditions **this approach may give the disease sufferer the best chance to achieve a complete recovery and avoid a lifetime of suffering or medical treatments.**

Sometimes when people try to make major dietary changes without the benefit of fasting they become frustrated. **Beneficial changes that can take months or years with careful eating happen quickly if a fast is utilized.** The once a person begins to realize the health potential available to them and can see the results quickly they are more likely to become committed to a

lifetime of healthful living.

The withdrawal symptoms of drug addictions such as alcohol, cocaine, nicotine and caffeine are resolved quickly while fasting. Most people are amazed at how easy it is to quit smoking while fasting. Those who have fasted begin to respect their body in a new way that enables them to take better care of themselves in the future.

People often start getting the warning signs of chronic disease when they are young. Generally, they go to their physicians with frequent infections as children. As teenagers they develop acne and more allergies, often taking drugs to suppress symptoms. Years later, they gradually become medically dependent; having to take medications for the rest of their lives. Fifty percent of our population over the age of 60 is on some medication.

If our children were taught from a young age that disease is not inevitable and not to be expected, and we build good health into our lives and merit our ill health, we will have a chance to have a healthy society.

My book illustrates and emphasizes a powerful philosophy, a revolutionary way of thinking about health and disease. It is not merely about fasting, it is realizing that we have lifetime responsibility to maintain our health and if we protect our families and our children from the causes of ill health we will prevent needless suffering down the road...

The International Association of Professional Hygienists

The IAPH, an organization of primary care doctors specializing in the application of therapeutic fasting, offers certification for its members in fasting supervision. The members of this organization include licensed medical doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors, and naturopaths.

Certification for fasting supervision does not occur unless the doctor has undergone at least a 6 month approved residency with a certified professional to gain experience in therapeutic fasting.

A list of certified members of the IAPH can be requested through their organization at:

IAPH
c/o Mark Huberman
4620 Euclid Blvd.,
Youngstown, OH 44512
USA

Why Require Professional Supervision?

Fasting is such a safe therapeutic intervention that many lay people argue that daily supervision by a physician is not necessary. Although it is true that fasting is both natural and safe, all prolonged fasts must be supervised by a physician with expertise and knowledge. Fasting should not be undertaken by patients on their own. It is important for a physician to dissuade a person who wants to undertake a prolonged fast without proper supervision.

A physician must monitor the fast to guarantee the safety of the patient. It is important to make sure the fast is terminated before an individual begins to develop low levels of electrolytes or other essential nutrients. Most patients can fast safely for 30 days or more, but rarely others, even after 10-15 days of fasting, may develop low levels of potassium and have to terminate the fast.

It is reasonable for an otherwise healthy individual to fast for two or three days without medical supervision when they have an acute illness and decreased appetite. This commonly occurs. Even then, if unusual symptoms develop such as vomiting, and there is the possibility of dehydration, medical intervention should be sought immediately.

The Biochemistry of Fasting

Fasting is not "starvation" and the terms should not be used interchangeably. The fasting period represents the time one can safely abstain from food and typically varies among individuals based on tissue reserves and body weight. When a person abstains from all food and drink except

water, the body utilizes non-essential tissues like adipose tissue, digestive enzymes and muscle tissue for fuel. Only when fasting is sustained and the non-essential tissue stores become inadequate to fuel the metabolic needs of the body, does the body begin to metabolize essential tissues (e.g., vital organs) and starvation occurs. However, even a thin individual has sufficient reserves to fast for approximately 40 days and not experience symptoms of starvation.

What To Expect On Your First Fast

In a fast we can observe the body gleefully going about getting rid of the toxins and wastes accumulated for years with the greatest capability and intelligence, all on its own.

Dr. William Esser

Who Should Fast

Everyone should fast. I am convinced that periodic fasting will prolong life. I am not speaking of a day or two of frequent short fasts, instead an occasional internal cleaning of 10 to 15 days should be embarked on every 5 to 10 years. **In the field of longevity research, nothing else has much solid, scientific documentation to support it, as does fasting and an natural-food based diet.**

If you are suffering with any chronic disease, fasting makes even more sense. Fasting should not be used only as a last resort. It should be employed as the first mode of treatment before a physician starts you on medication for almost any chronic condition. If one can fast early in the disease process before years of steroids and other toxic drugs complicate the condition, it will be much easier to get well.

It is exciting to watch what a fast can do, because the power of the body to heal itself is wonderful to observe. This is especially striking because, as a physician, almost no self-healing is seen in patients treated conventionally. They either get worse or their symptoms are palliated with drugs,

while their health gradually deteriorates. The fast allows for self-healing.

Fasting is really not that exciting when you do it. The vast majority of people feel not much different than when they are eating. Many people do not even feel significant hunger. When one does feel hunger toward the end of the first day, it disappears in the next day or two.

The usual response I see is, "I can't believe I can feel so strong and well when I haven't eaten for 15 days." This is the norm. When I did my 46 day fast the only real complaint I had was boredom. Of course, I felt weak toward the end of such a long fast and had to rest in bed most of the day, but I actually attended my college classes full time and felt great during the first ten days of my fast.

Humans have been fasting for more than 50,000 years, long before the modern day doctors began embracing a drug approach to treating disease. It's hard to understand how people developed such a misconception about and fear of fasting. Perhaps it is because many people feel so rotten when they skip just one meal, so they expect to feel that much worse if they skip so many more. The reality is, when you don't eat for a longer period of time, this discomfort quickly subsides and you actually feel better and better.

It is true that many people, because of their rich diets, can suffer withdrawal symptoms from the effects of their self abuse and poor dietary practices. Some may get headaches or experience hunger cramps when they don't eat; but these symptoms always end rapidly during the fast. As soon as the body gets the idea it is really fasting, the person feels better quickly. These mild symptoms of hunger or a mild headache are found to be exceptionally rare after the first day and practically non-existent after day two of the fast. As rare as these are, when a person does get withdrawal symptoms early in the fast, it is good they are getting them. This shows how much they really needed to fast. People who are most in need of a fast for detoxification purposes are those that feel the most discomfort with not eating. This should not stop anyone from fasting. So often I hear, "Oh I could not fast, I feel so miserable

even if I skip one meal!" or, "I could not fast, I am hypoglycemic and if I don't eat I feel like I would die." These are exactly the people who most need to fast. They need to clean out all the wastes in their bodies that are causing these symptoms. One good fast followed by a health supporting diet will banish such recurrent complaints forever.

Almost nobody in America knows the meaning of the word hunger. In this country we mistakenly call the withdrawal symptoms from our rich diet "hunger". Stomach cramping is not hunger; a headache is not hunger. When truly healthy individuals who have been on natural, plant-based diets and have avoided the typical disease causing American diet-style fast, they never experience cramping in the stomach nor any other abdominal symptoms. Nor do they experience headaches when they skip a few meals. True hunger is solely a mouth and throat sensation and it is felt in the same area as thirst. No discomfort accompanies it. In fact, it makes food more enjoyable when we eat when we are truly hungry.

It is truly exciting to eat after feeling hungry with that pleasurable drawing in the throat; then the food really tastes great. Unfortunately, almost all Americans are so overfed and actually sub clinically ill from the typical modern diet, that they have never experienced true hunger in their life and probably never will. The reason people mistake withdrawal symptoms, such as abdominal cramping and headaches for hunger is because they experience these symptoms way before the sensation of true hunger appears. Many individuals who fast, later report after eating again, that they finally understand the feeling of real hunger. They report it is great to now know when there is a real physiological need for food and to be able to listen to their bodies.

In any case, all these symptoms related to initially stopping food, whether you call them hunger or not, will not trouble you during the fast. They fade away as the body produces more ketones early in the fast as you begin to enter this metabolic phase unique to fasting.

Please don't make the mistake of grouping any unusual practice that is "something like" fasting on

pure water to the real thing. For instance, protein-sparing modified fasts are very dangerous.

Fasting while taking diuretics and caffeinated beverages is also dangerous. Don't confuse the dangers of improperly conducted fasts, with one that is correctly monitored and properly concluded after a safe length.

WARNING:

The Information in these articles are not intended to replace medical advice or treatment. Question about symptoms, specific dietary needs and medications, general or specific, should be discussed with your physician. The information in this article is for informational purposes only, and is not medical advice or a substitute for a physician's consultation and/or examination.

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