



@insulinresistancerox

FREE EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

Intermittent Fasting, Done Safely

A pharmacist's guide to starting gently, choosing the right approach, and knowing when not to fast.

Fasting was part of how I lowered my own insulin. But it isn't right for everyone, and how you start matters. This guide covers the basics, the safety checks, and a gentle way to begin.

Free Guide

By **Shade Alabi, Pharmacist** · Educational only. Not medical advice.





What Is Intermittent Fasting?

Intermittent fasting means eating within a set window and going longer stretches without food. After hours without eating, your body uses up its stored sugar and starts burning fat for fuel. This is called **metabolic switching**.¹

Common approaches

GENTLEST START

12:12

Fast 12 hours, eat within 12. Often just finishing dinner earlier and skipping late snacks.

NEXT STEP

14:10

Fast 14 hours, eat within 10 hours. A natural step up once 12:12 feels easy.

MOST POPULAR

16:8

Fast 16 hours, eat within an 8-hour window each day.¹

MORE ADVANCED

18:6

Fast 18 hours, eat within a 6-hour window. Best tried once 16:8 feels comfortable.¹

Longer isn't better

Fasts of 24–72 hours are not necessarily more effective and may be dangerous.¹ Only try them under the supervision of your doctor, especially if you have pre-existing conditions.

Give it time

It can take 2–4 weeks for your body to adjust. Hunger and irritability are common at first and usually ease.¹



Is Fasting Safe for You?

Do not fast if you are:

- Pregnant or breastfeeding¹
- Recovering from recent surgery
- Taking prescription medicines or living with a chronic health condition, unless your doctor approves
- Under 18¹
- Living with or recovering from an eating disorder¹
- Underweight

Talk to your doctor first if you take:

- **Insulin or sulfonylureas** (such as glipizide or glimepiride). Fasting raises the risk of low blood sugar, and doses often need to change.²
- **SGLT2 inhibitors, water pills or blood pressure medicines.** Fasting can lead to dehydration and dizziness.²
- **Any medicine you take with food**, or if you have a chronic health condition.

PHARMACIST NOTE

Never change or skip a medicine to fast without talking to your prescriber. Your plan should fit your medicines, not the other way around.

Stop and eat if you feel:

Shaky, sweaty, dizzy, faint, confused or unusually weak. Check your blood sugar if you can, and get medical help if symptoms don't improve.



@insulinresistancerox

How to Start Gently

1. Start with 12:12

Try it for a week. If you feel well, add an hour to your fast every few days.

2. Drink well

Water and zero-calorie drinks like black coffee and plain tea are fine while fasting.¹ Sugar, milk and cream count as food.

3. Eat well in your window

Build meals around protein, fiber, vegetables and healthy fats, Mediterranean-style. Don't make up for the fast with large, high-calorie or high-carbohydrate meals.¹

4. Listen to your body

Unusual anxiety, headaches or nausea are signs to pause and listen to your body.¹

5. Flex for life

Shorten or skip a fast on busy, stressful or poorly slept days. Consistency beats intensity.

6. Track how you feel

Notice energy, sleep and hunger, and recheck your labs with your doctor. My free **Lab Checklist** helps.

Educational only. Not medical advice. Check with your doctor before starting intermittent fasting, especially if you take medicines or have a health condition. Follow **@insulinresistancerox** for real CGM data, real food and simple habits.

REFERENCES

1. Johns Hopkins Medicine. Intermittent fasting: what is it, and how does it work? Accessed October 16, 2026. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/intermittent-fasting-what-is-it-and-how-does-it-work>
2. Grajower MM, Horne BD. Clinical management of intermittent fasting in patients with diabetes mellitus. *Nutrients*. 2019;11(4):873. doi: 10.3390/nu11040873