

Skipping breakfast good for weight loss

HANG on! Haven't we always been told to eat breakfast, come rain or shine? In fact I've been guilty myself of telling clients that if they don't include this daily habit, they may negatively affect their metabolisms.

But a lot of interesting research has suggested that we can gain huge benefits from going without food for brief to prolonged periods of time (14-36 hours) – called intermittent fasting.

This is something that would have naturally occurred back in the days when we had to hunt for, or gather, food. It's highly unlikely that we ate first thing in the morning.

We've been conditioned to do just that and it has the potential to play havoc with our blood sugar because it tends to occur at the same time as when our cortisol levels are naturally rising in the mornings.

Instead, we probably ate later in the day once we'd looked or hunted for food and so instinctively exercised in a

fasting state.

We have hunger-satiety systems, which produces hunger and satiety hormones. The trick to long-term weight management and low body fat appears to be in keeping the satiety hormones more dominant. There are various ways to do this, but simply put, challenging the brain reg-



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WITH TANYA WYATT

ularly with temporary hunger results in a reduction in the number of hunger hormone receptors in the brain, causing better efficiency in the satiety hormones.

In addition, when exercising on an empty stomach you're able to maximise the impact of certain cellular factors and catalysts that force the breakdown of fat and glycogen for energy, forcing your body to burn fat without sacrificing muscle mass.

I'm experimenting

with intermittent fasting at the moment to see just how effective it is.

I've been committing myself to 16-hour fasts (in other words, skipping breakfast) most mornings, as well as performing exercise in a fasted state. I've had my photo, body fat and girth measurements taken at regular intervals to record

any changes.

I've also kept a food and training diary and in just two and a half weeks, I've lost close to a large butter brick's worth of body fat! The

more body fat you have to lose, the faster the loss will occur. Starting with low body fat (mine started at 19%, which is relatively low), this loss will be much slower.

Visit our Facebook page (The Happy Body, South Africa) or website (www.thehappybody.co.za) for records so far, and a talk on this subject later this month.

I'd like to prove through this experiment other factors besides diet can impact on body fat in a positive way.