



## HEALTH MYTHS

# Busting the myth of breakfast time

### Skipping first meal and intermittent fasting the way to go

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**S**TILL believe that breakfast is the most important meal of the day? After discovering how effective intermittent fasting was, local nutritionist Tanya Wyatt now instructs her clients that in order to lose weight they must stop eating breakfast. "I made the same mistake for years," said Wyatt, who runs the Happy Body lifestyle consultancy from South End, yesterday, regarding how effectively intermittent fasting worked for her.

"I did a lot of reading about the subject and I realised that leaving an extended period between meals can be highly beneficial," she said.

"Research shows that intermittent fasting [going without food for 14-36 hours] coupled with exercise forces the breakdown of fat and glycogen [liver 'sugar'], helping your body burn fat without sacrificing muscle mass.

"I did an experiment late last year which incorporated this method of eating/exercise. After

just two months of intermittent fasting with exercise I lost a kilogram in weight, 29% body fat and 5cm around my waist.

"When looking at these results, bear in mind that my margins were small to start with as my body fat was relatively low, so one could expect even more im-

provement in muscle mass".

Wyatt explained that she did not eat from dinner (at the latest 8pm) until lunch the following day and made sure she exercised before she had lunch.

"I did this five to seven times a week and exercised between four and five times weekly from 20 to 40 minutes," she said.

Wyatt said that the principle is also in keeping with the paleo diet. "In ancient times we would have had to go out to hunt and gather before we ate," she said.

Wyatt added that it took eight hours for the gut to empty and exercising on an empty stomach would mean the body could tap into excess fat reserves.

"So to stay lean it would be important that it is not how much you eat but when," she said, adding the whole approach would of course not work if the eight hours between lunch and dinner was filled with fast food and sweets.

Wyatt added that as an additional benefit the body releases the growth hormone when hungry and this would also promote leanness. "Also, if you do this often you would feel fuller for much longer when you eat."



**PUT DOWN THAT SPOON . . . and step away from the cereal bowl**

pressive results if starting with a higher body fat.

"I also didn't lose much weight because I was engaged in resis-

training activities and was therefore building muscle mass".