

Is intermittent fasting a quick fix?

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One of the latest diet trends is intermittent fasting. There are two common approaches to fasting. One is to eat few calories on certain days and then eat normally the rest of the time. The other involves eating only

during certain hours and skipping meals for the rest of each day. In this Mayo Clinic Minute, Dr. Donald Hensrud, director of the Mayo Clinic Healthy Living Program, explains the potential benefits and risks to intermittent fasting.

When it comes to cutting yourself off from food for a certain amount of time, Dr. Hensrud says there can be safety concerns if it's not done correctly.

"It's a slippery slope. I've actually seen malnutrition in people who have taken caloric restrictions too far because they're trying to live longer. Yet it causes malnutrition, which is counterproductive," Dr. Hensrud explains.

However, he says recent research suggests there may be some benefits when [intermittent fasting](#) is done the right way, at least in the short term.

"And I need to emphasize that, as opposed to just decreasing overall [calories](#), if we fast for a while, there are certain processes in the body that can relieve inflammation, and it may have other benefits," says Dr. Hensrud.

More studies are needed to see how this method affects people long term. Dr. Hensrud says the big takeaway for anyone wanting to try intermittent [fasting](#): Consult with your [health care provider](#) first.

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