

Mayo Clinic minute: Intermittent fasting facts

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proper amount of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean protein.

"So, bottom line, fasting may not be for everyone," Bryant says. "But it is worth taking a look at your individual diet, your lifestyle, your behaviors and seeing if there can be any improvements that can be made to reach your weight goals."

And talk to your [health care provider](#) before beginning any type of fasting weight-loss plan.

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Intermittent fasting is cutting yourself off from any food or beverages, other than water, for a certain amount of time. Some fasting is for religious reasons, while others fast for weight loss. But is it a healthy way to lose weight?

"We're hearing a lot more about [intermittent fasting](#), and it essentially means the voluntary abstinence of food or beverage for a prolonged period of time," says Mikel Bryant, a Mayo Clinic dietitian.

Bryant says, while fasting can be a tool that helps some people with [weight loss](#), "it's not necessarily the entire answer to everybody's problem. Our body needs a given amount of nutrients every day."

Denying your body of calories for an extended period of time isn't recommended for anyone who's physically active, pregnant, under 18 or has certain [medical conditions](#), such as diabetes.

She says, if you're considering fasting as a weight-loss tool, make sure that, when you do eat, you're taking in quality, healthy ingredients, such as the

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