

# ***INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PRAYER ALAMANCE COUNTY***

## ***Fasting Information***

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***...But the days will come when the Bridegroom will be taken away from them  
And then they will fast...-Matt 9:15***

### **How to physically prepare for a fast that extends more than two days**

- Prepare your body for the fast and prevent constipation during and after the fast by eating certain preventative foods at least two days beforehand (even longer before an extended fast), such; fresh fruit and raw vegetables, fruit or vegetable juices, oatmeal, etc.
- Eat smaller meals a few days prior to the fast
- Avoid high-fat and sugary foods before the fast as well

### **Helpful hints during a fast**

- Drink plenty of non-tap water (drinking at least half of your body weight in ounces of water per day is a good rule of thumb whether you are fasting or not.) Distilled water is most beneficial, but filtered and purified water also works well.
- It is wise to abstain from strong stimulants, such as caffeinated and sugary drinks during a fast, including artificial sweeteners found in diet drinks. Avoid soy protein drinks, which have been known to cause health problems during a fast.
- If juice fasting, drink raw fruit juices such as apple, grape and pineapple, which are excellent sources of necessary natural sugar to stabilize blood sugar and keep energy levels up. Orange and grapefruit juice are good as well, but these are not recommended for arthritis or allergy sufferers. Monitor juice acidity carefully as it can cause canker sores (mouth ulcers). Raw vegetable juices such as carrot, celery, beet, or green vegetable combinations are excellent as well. If available, purchase fruit and vegetable juices without any added sugars. Some benefits to drinking raw vegetable juice is that it does not stimulate digestion (hunger) and it maintains all of its enzymes and nutritional values.
- Expect some physical discomforts because of the detoxification process, especially on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day. You may have fleeting hunger pains or dizziness. Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches, but is part of the detoxification process. Physical annoyances may also include weariness, tiredness, and sleepiness.
- During a fast, there are four major physical areas going through a detoxification process:
  - o The bowels/colon/large intestines- during a fast of 3 days or more, taking an herbal laxative or an enema before bedtime will help eliminate solid waste products; these can cause headaches and sluggishness if left in the body during a fast. This should be done early during the fast and then intermittently throughout the fast. During detoxification, the body deposits its toxins into the intestines. If you do not take a laxative or enema the toxins can hurt your intestines or be reabsorbed into the bloodstream, making you feel nauseous.
  - o The kidneys-Drinking fruit juices, vegetable juices, broth and water will remove many toxins via the kidneys.
  - o The lungs- if strength permits, walk half an hour during the day to help cleanse the lungs.
  - o The skin- Since one third of the waste products eliminated during a fast are removed via the skin, bathing adequately is essential.

### **How to successfully break a fast**

- Break your fast gradually. At this point you will need to exercise watchful self-control. Break your fast on a meal that is light and easy to digest. (i.e. a pound of grapes, a shredded apple, watermelon, or steamed vegetables).
- When breaking a fast of ten days or more, the break-in period should be extended one day for every four days of fasting.

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- A fast of three days or more should never be broken by eating a normal meal (animal proteins, bread, sugar, dairy, processed foods) because heavy foods put a severe strain and shock on the digestive organs, which have been resting throughout the fast. Eating too heavily after a fast can produce serious discomfort (stomach cramps, nausea, and weakness) and can nullify the physical benefits of fasting; it can also cause serious irreversible complications.
- After breaking an extended fast, continue drinking fruit or vegetable juices because the stomach is continuing to detoxify.
- During any fast exceeding two days, your stomach will shrink. Do not over-expand it again by overeating. If you have been prone to eat too heavily, guard against going back to this habit. If you train yourself to eat lightly, your stomach will adjust itself accordingly.
- While continuing to drink fruit or vegetable juices, add the following:
  - o First-third day after the fast (increase amount of days for extended fast)- Eat fruits and raw/steamed vegetables only. Example meals for the first few days are: 1 lb of fruit, baked or boiled potato, steamed vegetables or a vegetable only salad without an oil based dressing. Avoid bananas for the first few days; they have no juice in them and they can easily cause constipation.
  - o Thereafter- You may return to heavier foods.
- Take extra care in breaking a water fast. Begin with drinking fruit or vegetable juices and gradually ease into eating fruits and steamed vegetables.
- It is important after a fast to begin to discern between real hunger and cravings so you do not feed your cravings.

## **Having trouble?**

- If you have a diagnosed illness and/or are taking prescription medicines, fasting should only be done under the direct supervision of a health practitioner.
- Some people have trouble fasting and become extremely hungry, dizzy and nauseous because they have undiagnosed low blood sugar, so they should drink fruit and vegetable juices to help keep the blood sugar stable during short fasts. If the juice is too much sugar for your system, dilute it 50% with water or drink a 'green drink' (made by juicing carrots, celery, spinach and parsley).
- If you are having digestive trouble after breaking a fast (ie. Diarrhea) mix a cup of unsweetened apple sauce with a cup of cooked brown rice, this will stop the diarrhea. Also, consider taking digestive enzymes to aid your stomachs digestive transition.

Years of incorrect fasting can cause permanent physical damage to your body. These negative effects are not typically felt at a young age, they will accumulate after years of fasting. Increasing your understanding and taking care of your body while both fasting and eating will ensure your ability to live the fasted lifestyle for many years to come.

## **Some Resources**

- *Hunger for God*, by John Piper
- *The Rewards of Fasting*, by Mike Bickle and Dana Candler
- [www.billbright.com/howtofast](http://www.billbright.com/howtofast)

## **Disclaimer**

This information only reflects the limited opinions, experience, and suggestions of the International House of Prayer Alamance County missions base. This information is provided for informational purposes only and is not meant to substitute the advice provided by your doctor or health care professional. These tips have been found helpful and successful, but they do not guarantee your fasting to be without difficulties. We urge you to do your own research, talk with professionals and experienced fasters and continually ask the Lord for increased wisdom and discernment concerning fasting and healthy living for yourself.