

Nutrition Connection

The latest news and events from the [Kendall Reagan Nutrition Center](#) at Colorado State University

Exploring Intermittent Fasting

Intermittent fasting continues to be a trendy topic, promoted by numerous books as the ultimate path to healing and weight loss. Fasting is defined as the voluntary avoidance of food and drink for long periods of time. People have practiced various forms of fasting in accordance with their religious and cultural beliefs for centuries, and some cultures still adhere to strict fasting practices for these reasons. Other individuals consider fasting an eating style to achieve weight loss and other health benefits.



Intermittent fasting typically involves avoiding or drastically restricting calories on one or two days per week while eating normally on other days. Different types of fasting one may encounter include:

Alternate-day fasting	Alternating days of consuming no calorie-containing foods or beverages with days spent enjoying food & drink at one's pleasure.
Modified fasting regimens	Energy restriction of 20-25% of one's needs for 2 nonconsecutive days a week and eating at one's pleasure the other 5 days.
Time-restricted fasting	Consumption of food and beverages during certain time windows throughout the day. One limits the amount of time with access to food. Time windows usually involve sleep.
Religious practice fasting	Wide variety done for religious and spiritual purposes. For example, during the holy month of Ramadan where there is no consumption from dawn to sunset.

Potential Problems With Fasting

Fasting, aside from leading to feelings of increased hunger, can also cause individuals to feel irritable, cold, tired or fatigued. These side effects make fasting unsustainable for many people. Also, studies of populations that practice fasting for religious reasons have shown that much of the weight lost during a fast is regained shortly after the fasting period. In addition, fasting can be problematic for those with hypoglycemia or anyone taking heart or diabetes medications.

What Scientific Studies Show

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics compiled a review of studies on the effects of various fasting patterns on the health and weight of rodents and humans. While studies of rodents showed possible improvements in health related to decreased risk for obesity, fatty liver disease, diabetes, and cancer, there is little scientific evidence that intermittent fasting leads to sustainable weight loss or a reduction in factors linked to chronic disease in humans.

Circadian Rhythm: The Body's Clock

Instead of fasting for health or weight loss, consider eating and drinking less toward the end of the day. The human body functions differently during the day than it does at night. Many bodily processes (including digestion) slow when it is dark and/or cold outside and speed back up when it is lighter and warmer. Both human and animal studies have shown that eating in accordance with our body's internal clock may be a better approach to a healthful eating lifestyle - consuming the majority of your daily calories early in the day may lead to greater and more sustainable health benefits and weight loss.

Bottom Line

There is little data to support regular adoption of intermittent fasting. While there is data in mice, the evidence in humans is minimal, and what is there does not demonstrate significant benefits of the practice. Does this mean you should never practice it? Of course not. That can happen in the normal course of our lives. In fact, occasional fasting falls in line with a practice that we talk about often in the KRNC: Normal Eating.

What is Normal Eating? To quote Ellyn Satter, MS, RDN, and recognized authority on nutrition for families:

Normal eating is going to the table hungry and eating until you are satisfied....Normal eating is being able to give some thought to your food selection so you get nutritious food, but not being so wary and restrictive that you miss out on enjoyable food.... In short, normal eating is flexible. It varies in response to your hunger, your schedule, your proximity to food, and your feelings.
-Ellyn Satter



Farro Risotto With Basil Pesto

Total time: 40 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients

- ◆ 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ◆ 1 medium shallot, diced
- ◆ 1 cup farro
- ◆ 1/2 cup white wine
- ◆ 1 quart low-sodium liquid stock
- ◆ 1/2 cup basil pesto
- ◆ Salt
- ◆ 1/2 cup small tomatoes, quartered
- ◆ 2 eggs, cooked sunny side up or poached (optional)
- ◆ Freshly grated cheese for serving (optional)



Directions

1. Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat until surface glistens.
2. While the pan is heating, heat stock in a separate pot until lightly simmering (not boiling). Let this stay hot.
3. Once oil is hot, add diced shallot to oil. Cook until fragrant and clear without browning.
4. Add farro to the pan with the shallots and stir to coat with oil. Cook for 2-3 minutes to gently toast the farro.
5. Add white wine. Stir constantly until most of the wine has been absorbed.
6. Add one ladle of stock to the farro. Stir constantly until the farro has absorbed the stock. Continue this method until all the stock has been absorbed and the farro is chewy. Try not to overcook.
7. Remove from heat and stir in pesto. Add small amount of salt if needed. Top with tomatoes and fresh cracked pepper. If desired, add eggs and cheese before serving.

Serves 4

Adapted from Elizabeth Evelyn, author of the blog "Local Milk"

Nutritional Information/ Amount per serving (includes eggs and cheese)

Calories: 461	Protein: 19 g
Total Fat: 21.2 g	Total Carbohydrates: 42.3 g
Saturated Fat: 4.8 g	Dietary Fiber: 4.2 g
Cholesterol: 98 mg	Sodium: 520 mg

Get Healthy with KRNC in 2017!

REACH AND MAINTAIN YOUR OPTIMAL WEIGHT THIS YEAR

Our 'Healthy You: Weight Management and Mindful Eating' program will help you set goals, change behaviors, and learn the nutrition and fitness tips you need for a new and improved lifestyle!

Now with two options:

1. Self-Paced Program at no cost with participation in research study

We are constantly striving to improve and update the successful, research-based Healthy You program. Help us help you by participating in our latest research study and receive program materials and two body composition analyses!

To qualify, you must:

- Be between the ages of 18-80
- Have a BMI ≥ 25 kg/m²
- Not be pregnant or breastfeeding

You will be required to meet with a nutrition coach at CSU twice for measurements and questionnaires.

As a benefit to you, you will receive a self-paced workbook that you can do in the comfort of your home or office, a \$75 value, and two body composition analyses (a \$50 value).

To enroll, contact KRNC at 970-491-8615 or email rebecca.blumberg@colostate.edu.

2. Interactive Program

- **Thursdays, January 14 - February 18, 2017 from 5:30-7 pm.**
- Location: Gifford Building on the CSU campus
- \$100, includes snacks and weekly incentives (only \$60 for CSU employees)
- Get the benefit of social support and experienced teacher interaction!

Register online at <http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu/programs-services/healthy-you-interactive.aspx>

NATIONAL DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

KRNC is part of CDC's nationwide effort to prevent diabetes. If you have Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Insurance, you may qualify for this innovative program at no cost; otherwise just \$330 for a full year. Call for more information: (970) 491-8615 (or checkout our website). Starts on **Tuesday, January 19, 2017 from 6-7 pm.**



VEGAN VALENTINE'S DATE NIGHT

Our popular cooking class for you and your favorite partner turns vegan but even meat eaters will love these recipes. **Friday, February 10 from 6-8 pm.** You will prepare delicious dishes with our guidance, learning cooking and nutrition while having fun! Cost of just \$75 per couple includes printed recipes and a full meal. Register online at <http://www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu/classes/date-night.aspx>

Other upcoming date night cooking classes:



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April 7: Spanish Tapas
May 5: Cinco de Mayo

