Welcome to the “IF” Revolution!

Here to get you started on the ways of the “IF Life”, I’ve decided to give away the first several chapters of the 2 Meal Solution (3rd revision) as I also launch the newest revision (4th) on Amazon for Kindle.

Inside you will see the primary reasons why I and so many others eat the way we do and why you may not need to stress or worry about eating all the time.

How you go about your eating lifestyle is your choice of course, I'm just here to try and give you some insight into what is going on along the way.

Hope you enjoy the information presented inside!

In Health,

Mike O'Donnell, BS CPT
www.theiflife.com
2 Meal Solution - Preview

Mike O’Donnell

The IF Life
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To sum up, use any information at your own risk!

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I Never Wanted a Big Breakfast
Since I was a kid I never really wanted a big breakfast (how many kids do you know that run off to school without eating anything?). Of course back then I would probably have something because my parents would “make me” eat it (Yuck, I know). It usually consisted of heavy meals such as a stack of pancakes. Sadly much of those school days were spent struggling to stay awake until lunch time.

As I got older and was on my own I would eat whatever time I was really hungry later on in the morning. I really never ate when I woke up as it was usually hours later, and even then it was pretty light (maybe some fruit and a couple eggs). It just seemed right and I had enough energy to get me till the next meal whenever that was.

Making My Own Schedule
Eating according to all the “socially programmed” hours of 8am, Noon and 6pm never felt right . I instead just adopted whatever schedule worked for me. Which mostly meant late light breakfasts (including sometimes not eat anything in the AM at all besides coffee), another smaller meal in the mid afternoon and then finally the larger meal at night.
Is Breakfast REALLY the most Important Meal of the Day?
While my natural instincts were always not craving a lot (or any) food in the morning, it seems the message out there today is that we need a large breakfast in order to help us lose weight and have energy. Why is that?

Energy without Breakfast? Say It Ain't So!

"The no-breakfast plan with me proved a matter of life unto life. With my morning coffee there were forenoons of the highest physical energy, the clearest condition of mind, and the acutest sense of everything enjoyable."

Source: The No Breakfast Plan, Dr E.H. Dewey, 1900

Many of the so-called “studies” (sadly usually funded by companies who sell breakfast foods...shocking isn't it?) touting a benefit to eating a large breakfast for weight loss will really show under closer scrutiny, that there can be a benefit...but only if eating in the morning will prevent a person from overeating later on.

Seems like common sense right? But seems people have taken that as some official eating dogma about the only way to be healthy (and the media jumped on it full force too). It is still all about total calorie intake over the day after all, not necessarily what hour of the day it is done.
Big Breakfast...and I Need a Big Nap!

As for energy, the ironic part is that most always you will feel tired after any big meal. Digestion takes a lot of energy and blood flow, and you may have trouble just staying awake and focused. Kind of defeats the purpose of “fueling up” for the day if it wipes you out.

You will not see many (if any) societies in the past that would start their day with a heavy breakfast (unless it was at mid-late morning after working since early sunrise and now had time to “rest and digest” after their meal). It just wasn't done!

Besides, did you know that you are more primed to be burning fat in the morning?

**Morning Survival Mechanisms**

“During the morning hours, when digestion is fully completed (while you are on an empty stomach), a primal survival mechanism, known as fight or flight reaction to stress, is triggered, maximizing your body’s capacity to generate energy, be alert, resist fatigue and resist stress.

This highly geared survival mode is primarily dominated by part of the autonomic nervous system known as the SNS (sympathetic nervous system). At that state, the body is in its most energy-producing phase and that’s when most energy comes from fat burning. All that happens when you do not eat the typical morning meal.

If however you follow what "normal guys" do and eat your morning bagel and cereal and egg & bacon, you'll most likely shut down the above energy producing system.”

Source: “Diet Fallacy #1. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day”. Dragondoor.com, Ori Hofmekler, author of The Warrior Diet
The Most Important Meal is...a Tie!
What you can take from all this is that breakfast is no more important than lunch or dinner when your total daily calories are still in check. If skipping breakfast only leads you to uncontrollable binge eating (excess calories), then having something to eat in the AM will work better for you.

For many others, we are fine with little to nothing until later on and can still be under control. This allows you to actually eat more in tune with what your body is signaling or needing. The freedom to eat on your own terms, not according to what any “revolutionary study” or some “expert/authority” deems to be right.

Most of the time, they are just selling something anyways in the process. Modern marketing and press releases seem to have combined to convince the public to act a certain way.

I would rather just find what works for me and ignore the rest...wouldn't you?
Chapter 1
Meals and Calories

Meals in Ancient Times
Believe it or not, you will be hard pressed to find any older/ancient civilizations that were based around a big (if any) breakfast. People back then would do most of their labor/work first thing in the morning, saving their first real meal till more around what is more commonly known as “lunch time”. Eating a big meal first thing in the AM before doing daily work was not something they saw as a good idea (and for good reason).

Strength and Vitality of Ancient Greeks

"Barely two centuries ago, the first meal of the day in England was taken about noon. Breakfast was an unrecognized meal and it originated in the practice of ladies taking an early dish of chocolate before rising. The ancient Greeks--the finest of people, physically and mentally, that ever lived--ate but two meals a day."

Source: The Hygienic System; Dr Shelton, 1935
“The Greeks did not just eat to live, on the contrary from earliest times
dining had enormous social importance. In addition, most of the dialogues
of Plato were written during the dining and the symposium. The basic Greek
diet was both frugal and monotonous. Ancient Athenians ate two meals a
day - a light lunch, known as Ariston and dinner known as Deipnon, their
main meal.”

Source: Greek Heritage, The American Quarterly of Greek Culture; C G.
Janus, 1963

In fact, some of the past societies that we cherish for their health, vigor,
wisdom/philosophy, athletic ability, strength, and many other things did not favor
eating breakfast.

Even if they occasionally did eat in the morning, it was nothing more than some
olives, figs, fruit or even homemade bread dipped in wine/ale. The largest meal was
always at the end of a hard day, to relax and celebrate for hours with friends, family,
or whoever was around. Dinner was more socially important, than just another time
to eat.

What if Calories Matter over Longer Periods, Not Hours
Here’s a little secret about calories that you will not really hear In any mainstream
weight loss book/article/conversation, that it doesn’t really “urgently” matter what
you eat per meal.

It’s the long-term calorie load effect over days and weeks that determines how
much you really burn and store as fat in the long run (and, of course, the state of
your metabolism).

So what does that mean? It means trying to have exact calorie mini-meals
proportioned out 6x a day and the same calorie intake daily is a very
complicated/confusing way to eat (but it makes for a great industry in selling stuff).
How about you just focus on the bigger picture and know that higher calorie days can be offset with lower calorie days? How about instead you see that by selecting some days to be lower in calories you can have more flexibility on the other days and how you eat? How about we get back some of the freedom that all those diets have taken away and find a solution for a lifetime?

**All Day is Harder to control Total Calories**

If I gave you all day to eat from the time you woke up till when you went to bed, chances are you will eat a combination of meals and snacks all day long (like most people). This is where the hidden damage of the “snacking” mentality that most “diets” push can come in. All those little calories DO add up.

Pretty soon after a whole day of “snacking” (and the increased hunger that comes from snacking, especially on processed foods/snacks) you may have taken in way too many calories and in the process given all the wrong hormonal responses.

Unless you have total control and know exact calories (which is very time consuming and complicated) this can easily happen. Sometimes all it takes is one little snack or flavored coffee drink that can put your calorie total over for the day and keep you from burning more fat than you are storing.

**Condensing Eating Makes Calorie Control Easier**

So, how do you combat these tendencies and take back control? Simple, on certain
days just condense down the eating window and only eat between certain hours.

Not so complicated is it? These are windows that you can easily control for long term weight loss/maintenance. By following some simple rules you can eliminate calorie counting and still be able to lose weight. You will also not have to feel deprived of anything, as what you eat is still up to you!

This is the true power of using this kind of eating lifestyle presented in this report. It is flexible, enjoyable and can fit your individual tastes and enjoyment! As we are all individualistic in our tastes, likes, schedules and therefore our approach should also be flexible enough to keep consistency for long term results.

Success comes in being able to make it work for you!

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**Eat to Enjoy and Reward a Hard Day’s Work**

“For more than a thousand years the one meal plan was the established rule among the civilized nations inhabiting the coast-lands of the Mediterranean. The evening repast—call it supper or dinner—was a kind of domestic festival, the reward of the day's toil, an enjoyment which rich and poor refrained from marring by premature gratifications of their appetite.”

Source: *Fasting, Hydropathy and Exercise*, MacFadden; 1900
Chapter 2
Biggest Weight Loss Myth

What are You Getting Sold on?
The weight loss/diet niche is the hottest (and very profitable) industry to be in nowadays. Look around and you will see celebrities writing books about it, new pills from some special berry in Uganda or some crazy ab-contraption. It is a billion dollar market and everyone wants in on the action.

With that comes so many myths and misconceptions that have been passed down by word of mouth for so long, that it's now thought of as proven science. No one even questions the things they hear anymore.

In fact, many marketers will just continue to exploit those myths for profit knowing you won't even question them. There is one particular myth used by practically everyone nowadays. It fuels a whole complicated eating plan which companies are getting rich off, and you are getting frustrated with!

The Myth Revealed
Are you ready to hear the biggest myth/misconception that you will hear all the time in mainstream media and from people when talking about how to lose weight? You may not be ready for what I am about to say. I warned you.
Ask many trainers, nutritionists, doctors, diet gurus or your overweight neighbor and they will probably all tell you this same statement as a scientifically proven fact:

“You need to eat smaller and more frequent meals through-out the day in order to increase/speed-up your metabolism”

What is the real verdict? This statement is not 100% true!!

But how can so Many People be Wrong?
It's usually the masses that are passing along wrong information in the first place (in an attempt to seem wise to others usually). Well if this is such a well known fact, then why aren't we all slim and fit from following it?

OK to be fair, there are plenty of people who can and do lose weight by eating multiple times per day (let's say 6x a day as most modern weight loss “diets” preach). But also remember the # 1 “secret” of all diets and how they really work is being a state of calorie deficit. Whether you do that in 3, 6, or 10 meals a day. However you will see there is nothing “magical” about it when it comes to your metabolism.

I'm not saying it Doesn't Work
Don't get confused with my message about eating smaller and more meals all day long. I said above I know it “can” work (because of the calorie deficit it promotes) to eat 6x a day. Eating smaller meals, to keep overeating under control. At the end of the day you have still eaten less than normal, but just spread those calories out more often to keep the total daily number under control.

However the real question is, was it because those frequent smaller meals “magically sped up” your metabolism to burn more calories? The real answer to that assumption is a big fat NO!

Turning up the Heat
Somehow most people think if you eat more often, then you increase your metabolism with a higher “thermogenesis”. Thermogenesis is where the body expels energy in the form of heat through what it has to do (and in this case we are
talking about the energy of digesting food). But here’s the fun “sciency” part, if you eat the same DAILY amount of food/calories split into either 6 meals or 3 meals, isn’t that the same amount of digestive energy required overall?

Isn’t 1500 calories still 1500 calories at the end of the day whether you split it 6 times or 3 times? So how is there any real advantage to splitting it up all day long into smaller more frequent meals when the calorie load is the same? Well according to plenty of research (seen below), there is NO such advantage!

Science Agrees there is No Metabolic Advantage to Eating Multiple Meals

“Since the 1960s, epidemiological studies have reported an inverse relationship between frequency of eating and body weight, suggesting that a "nibbling" pattern could help to prevent obesity. This notion has later been put into question by the recognition of a high level of dietary under-reporting in overweight individuals. In addition, no difference in total daily energy expenditure has been documented as a function of daily meal number. Weight loss is not facilitated by high meal frequency. ”

“More importantly, studies using whole-body calorimetry and doubly-labeled water to assess total 24 h energy expenditure find no difference between nibbling and gorging. Finally, with the exception of a single study, there is no evidence that weight loss on hypoenergetic regimens is altered by meal frequency. We conclude that any effects of meal pattern on the regulation of body weight are likely to be mediated through effects on the food intake side of the energy balance equation.”


“To a group of 8 healthy persons a slightly hypocaloric diet with protein (13% of energy), carbohydrates (46% of energy) and fat (41% of energy) was given as one meal or as five meals in a change-over trial....Changes of body weight were statistically not significant. ..The heat production calculated by indirect calorimetry was not significantly different with either meal frequency. …The results demonstrate that the meal frequency did not influence the energy balance.”

Source: “Thermogenesis in humans after varying meal time frequency”; Wolfram G, Kirchgessner M, Mallor HL, Hollomey S.

“In the short-term, meal frequency and a period of fasting have no major impact on energy intake or expenditure but energy expenditure is delayed with a lower meal frequency compared with a higher meal frequency.”


There have been reports of an inverse relationship between meal frequency (MF) and adiposity. It has been postulated that this may be explained by favorable effects of increased MF on appetite control and possibly on gut peptides as well...However, there were NS (no significant) differences between the low- and high-MF groups for adiposity indices, appetite measurements or gut peptides (peptide YY and ghrelin) either before or
after the intervention. We conclude that increasing MF does not promote greater body weight loss under the conditions described in the present study.

Source: “Increased meal frequency does not promote greater weight loss in subjects who were prescribed an 8-week equi-energetic energy-restricted diet.”, Cameron JD, Cyr MJ, Doucet E. Br J Nutr. 2009 Nov 30:1-4.

The Body Knows What it is Doing

Even with all that information above, some people will still stress that eating more often is superior in some way for fat burning. However even with really low meal frequency the body still knows how to self regulate over the long run (which is a fact often left out, as it doesn't help sell any diet plans or supplements).

One study (Stote KS et al 2007) compared just 3 meals/day to 1 meal/day on body-weight regulation mechanisms over the long run. When eating their maintenance calorie load (whether in 3 or 1 meal) per day, over 6 months both groups maintained their body weight (within 2kg of their initial weight).

Another study (Verboeket-van de Venne WP 1991) compared 2 meals per day vs 7 meals, with identical calorie load. What they found was no difference in total 24-hour energy expenditure and no difference in total protein oxidation.

While the 7 meals/day (nibbling) pattern had constant steady fat/carb oxidation (burning for energy) levels, the 2 meals per day had higher initial carb oxidation after meals and higher fat oxidation other times of day. In other words, it all evens out when you look at the bigger picture of 24 hours a day!

You Don’t “Need” all those Bars, Shakes and Meal Plans

Supplement companies are making a killing in the weight loss world on “special” snack bars, meal replacement shakes, and prepackaged meals all based around this eat more often to “speed up” your metabolism myth.
Do you now see why everyone “thinks” they need to eat more? It is because that myth is constantly being “pushed” (sold) to the general public as a scientific fact, when it is actually just a great marketing approach!

You will see celebrities on TV getting paid millions to lose weight on those types of programs (when we all should realize now that the real magic is in the total energy calorie deficit, not the amount of meals).

Calories are what matter. If you need to eat 6 smaller meals to keep yourself from binging later on (and going overboard on the total daily calories), then this approach may be the best way for you. If you enjoy eating smaller meals and more times each day, that is up to you and I'm not going to stop you.

But I personally think it is more dangerous to tell everyone they need to eat/snack all the time, as that is just setting up for some mindless and unhealthy relationships with our food. No good can come from that (or should I say “has” come from it).

Once people tire out of those complicated diets (and most all do), they continue that eating/nibbling pattern and the calories just add right back up again! How is this a real and lasting solution?

Time for a better way, and freedom from this obsession.
Chapter 3
Believe it or Not...Some Stress is Good

Life “Used” to Be Challenging
Everything in nature is meant to survive on some level, from plant life to animals to us humans (I'm assuming no animal or plant is reading this of course). You have built-in protective systems such as the immune system and the ability to rebuild and repair your own body (think of a broken leg, a doctor just puts it in a cast but the body does all the rest).

You have those protective responses down to the cellular level, as it’s your cells that keep you alive. You are either in a state of health or disease by the condition of your cells (as they are being protected/ repaired or are being attacked/diseased and being destroyed).

Human beings are meant to be able to withstand tough times, stressful circumstances, periods of under-eating, hunting down wild game, varying environmental stressors and more. The natural world is full of change, and we have to be able to survive as a species.

Don’t get me wrong, we are very fortunate nowadays to be living in such a relaxed (in the physical sense in dealing with nature and survival, not talking about mental
stress we put on ourselves) and protective modern environment. We have homes for shelter and heat, supermarkets for food, and transportation for travel. But the question becomes, are we paying for this “softer, more relaxed” environment now with our health because we provide less “stress” to our bodies?

**Smaller/Shorter Stressors Make Us Stronger**

I know what you may be thinking, “stress is bad right”? Well there are 2 kinds of stress we need to think about. The first kind is a very short-term stress, and the second is more prolonged stress that is chronic and lasting over a longer period of time.

Short-term/minor stress is actually good when we think about our body’s natural design, as we are meant to thrive and get stronger with some challenges. For example, doing resistance training (bodyweight or weights) is a stress to the muscle as it breaks down. It is a destructive (catabolic) process.

It is because of that stress that it signals a rebuilding (anabolic) response. You get stronger as an end result, ready for the next workout to overcome and repeat the cycle (assuming you allow yourself to recover). However if you are always working out and not giving yourself enough recovery, the results do go the other way.

**Bigger/Longer Stressors Make Us Weaker**

With every period of mild/short-term catabolic stress (cellular breakdown/attack), our body generates a powerful anabolic response (cellular repair and rebuilding).
But that rebuilding really only happens during the **non stressful-recovery** phase (as you don't build muscle in the gym, you start building it when you leave).

This is where **very high** levels or **longer lasting** stress will lead to an overall poor health status. **Too much breakdown and not enough recovery** just take us in the opposite direction (hence stressing out at work all day long is not going to be healthy, as there is no break from it).

Our body, muscles, mind, cells all want to be challenged “intermittently” and become **stronger** from it. If we don't, they may get the hint that they are not really needed anymore and just deteriorate (atrophy).

**“Hormesis” is our Natural Design**

Remember that your body is concerned about one big thing. No, its not how your football team is doing this year or what kind of raise you are getting. Your body wants to **survive** and when presented with **small stressors** in your environment, then it adapts for the better (becomes stronger and more efficient at the cell level).

![Graph showing the stress response curve with sweet spot and too much stress]

This is what is known as **“hormesis”** (see the graph above). The body will generate a net positive response to become stronger when exposed to “small” or **“intermittent”** levels of stress. Hitting that “sweet spot” where you generate the optimal response from your body. However as you will also see in the graph, too much stress will take the net response in the opposite/negative direction. That is not the goal as it leads to long term negative results.
Living Longer by Adding Occasional Stress too?
Aging is a simple net equation of your cells breaking down faster and more often than you can effectively repair them. It is a natural part of life, but can be accelerated too if you are not careful.

In fact you could say that many other diseases out there are also just “symptoms” associated with accelerated aging (cells breaking down/being destructive faster than you can repair them).

The answer could be this simple. If you want stronger cells and to slow down the destructive aging process, then you need to challenge your body with small “intermittent” stressors. Make it stronger and more resistant for the next time, while also reducing the amounts of large/chronic stressors you put on yourself.

Time to Get Back to the Old Ways of Eating
I love this quote personally as it sums it all up so simply:

“The deviation of man from the state in which he was originally placed by nature seems to have proved to him a prolific source of disease” ~ Edward Jenner

It may be that this deviation from our natural eating programming is what is causing most all the degenerative health and obesity issues. This could include:

- Eating all day long with no breaks for the body, digestive system, organs or other processes involved to recover
- Eating a continual excess of calories, never alternating loads/amounts to signal a low food stressor for the body to adapt to
- Eating too many modernized processed foods, that give mixed and improper hormonal responses (especially for blood sugar regulation)

Perhaps it is time we get back to giving our body the small intermittent stressors it needs to become stronger, healthier and a more efficient fat burning machine in the process!
Eating and Survival

“We have left behind the feeding patterns of our ancient ancestors in favor of constant mental activity and limited physical exercise. Due to increases in our day to day activity we have an increased energy (mainly glucose) requirement while our physiology is largely still geared to a feast and famine pattern of energy intake characteristic of our hunter-gatherer homo sapiens ancestors. This dilemma between our modern society/behavior and our ancient physiology will represent a recurring problem for gerontology for years to come.”

No More “Feast or Famine” Stress

One of the biggest stressors and concerns of long ago (but not so much today) was there were times of low (or no) food availability. Remember our primal ancestors had to hunt and gather their food to survive. They didn’t go down to the local supermarket, they didn’t go to the 24-hour convenience store/gas station, and there was no drive-thru for a burger. Either they had enough food to eat, or they didn’t.

There could have been times of poor hunting, bad crops, weather conditions that hurt the food supply or other factors (such as seasonal changes) that made their daily food intake vary. There was no real consistency in calories each day.

This is what is also referred to as “feast or famine”.

- **Feast** = The hunt was good, plenty of food to go around, eat plentiful and enjoy.

- **Famine** = All food is low/used up, now time to hunt/gather and find more...and this could go on for a while depending on the environmental conditions around it.
Am I Suggesting to go Live in a Cave and Hunt for Food?
No, I'm not that nuts. But understand the simple fact that your body is not really designed to survive “optimally” by having excess amounts of food all the time.

Your body is primed to withstand periods of high and low calorie intake, and through “hormesis” (remember that from the last chapter?) can become stronger from it. Low food intake (famine) is a stress to the body, so it must learn to protect itself for the next time it could happen, through having an optimal glucose (blood sugar) metabolism.

It is very important to remember that we are talking about the benefits of “short-term intermittent” stressors (that “sweet spot” on the hormesis chart)...not prolonged or chronic ones. There is a big difference between the two.

Wild Animals don’t have Diabetes
Look at many wild animals in nature (not pets around the house or the ones at the zoo that are under different stressors) and you will see the same thing. Many may not eat 6 meals a day, or even every day but yet they can still be plenty fast, lean, strong and not suffer from many of the degenerative diseases that are more common in humans (cancers, heart disease, brain disorders, diabetes, etc).

Ignoring the eating facts about your natural design may just lead your body to malfunction and become sicker and more dysfunctional at the cellular level because of it.
The Only Known Way to Live Longer

Scientists since the 1930s have been doing experiments on animals to find ways to increase their lifespan. So far the only one that has really ever worked has been using a method of restricting calories (otherwise known as “calorie restriction” or CR for short).

By making groups eat about 30-40% fewer calories than other test groups, researchers have been able to see remarkable increases in lifespan (by up to 50% in some species).

Can this also apply to humans? Well you don't have to look far to some of the “longer living cultures” and you will surely NOT see an over indulgence in calories as part of their lifestyle. Apparently Benjamin Franklin knew what he was talking about when he said “To lengthen thy life, lessen thy meals”.

Eating Less and Staying Healthy

Looking at all the research out there about what happens in humans when calories are lowered (besides weight loss that is), you will see many other benefits. Such remarkable results from other CR test groups that have been seen are (but are not limited to):

- Lowered Cholesterol Levels
- Lowered Blood Pressure
- Lowered Fasting Insulin (better glucose metabolism)
- Lowered Triglyceride Level
- Lowered Body Mass

These are all markers to say that the aging process is slowing down, including more protection at the cellular level against diseases. The body is getting stronger and healthier all just by eating less.

We see that our health, longevity and body weight can dramatically be affected by our total calorie intake (in a positive or negative manner...all depending on how much we actually eat).
● Excess intake = increased disease risks, accelerated aging and more body weight

● Less intake = decreased disease risks (through increased protection), longevity and less body weight

This becomes more and more important as we age and our natural processes start to slow down. Our body will need all the additional help you can provide if you want to get leaner and live longer.

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Proven Benefits of Eating Less Every Other Day

“Since May 2003 we have experimented with alternate day calorie restriction, one day consuming 20-50% of estimated daily caloric requirement and the next day ad lib eating, and have observed health benefits starting in as little as two weeks, in insulin resistance, asthma, seasonal allergies, infectious diseases of viral, bacterial and fungal origin (viral URI, recurrent bacterial tonsillitis, chronic sinusitis, periodontal disease), autoimmune disorder (rheumatoid arthritis), osteoarthritis, symptoms due to CNS inflammatory lesions (Tourette's, Meniere's) cardiac arrhythmias (PVCs, atrial fibrillation), menopause related hot flashes. We hypothesize that other many conditions would be delayed, prevented or improved, including Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, brain injury due to thrombotic stroke atherosclerosis, NIDDM, congestive heart failure.


The natural “stressor” signal that comes from eating less overall seems to be a key part of the equation. One that allows the body to stay strong and even “recycle” the older or worn out parts.
“Go Green” and Recycle at the Cell Level
One of the main processes now being explored by scientists responsible for the longevity in those CR models is the activation of more “autophagy”.

Inside the cells we have little power-plants called the mitochondria, which burn fuel for cellular energy. The cell is exposed to many destructive forces on the outside and inside including oxidation and free radicals (especially just from the simple act of producing more energy).

Our internal cellular power-plants (mitochondria) are very susceptible to damage, so it’s important we make sure they are being taken care of. Over time there will be damaged parts (proteins) and it’s up to the body to continually repair and rebuild (like a house that needs to be taken care of to withstand the environmental stressors around it).

Recycle and Repair Damaged Parts

“Reduce, recycle and rebuild is as important to the most basic component of the human body, the cell, as it is to the environment.... Cutting calories helps rodents live longer by boosting cells’ ability to recycle damaged parts so they can maintain efficient energy production.
UF scientists studied 22 young and old rats, comparing those allowed to eat freely with those fed a low-calorie, nutritious diet. The stress of a low-calorie diet was enough to boost cellular cleaning in the hearts of older rats by 120 percent over levels seen in rats that were allowed to eat what they wanted. The diet had little or no effect on younger rats.”


Recycling cells, especially damaged ones, is important. If you want a strong brain as you grow older (as our natural autophagy slows down with age) you have to get rid of and replace any damaged parts. It is a natural repair system that is turned on especially when you signal a low food intake stress.

However if you are always full of excess energy (food) and never have that stress, you will not be signaling for an increase in autophagy and the body will age faster with less internal recycling/repair going on. So if you want to have your body in a healthier state, especially the glucose based metabolism that regulates fat “storing” and “burning”...then you will need to take times to eat less!
Chapter 5
Short Fasting as a Fat Loss “Tool”

I'm Guessing You Want to Burn Fat....Without Being Miserable!
While we have learned that restricting our calories is a great way to be healthier and leaner, there is a down side to calorie restriction (CR). It is a fact, that calorie restriction (eating 30-40+% less than normal every day) is not really so enjoyable.

Calorie restriction can have other negative effects we may not desire in our lives such as loss of muscle mass, loss of performance, excessive loss of weight (becoming too skinny), increased negative mood swings and other wonderful (note sarcasm) things like that.

But what if I told you there may be another way that allowed you to keep your muscle (and build more) while losing fat, keep performance levels high, keep insulin low(er), keep you more alert and happy, and while still giving most the benefits of calorie restriction? In fact just looking at everything listed above, it is giving more benefits than just CR alone.

That my friend is what is commonly known by many as Intermittent Fasting/Feeding (or “IF” for short). Now this is something worth looking into, and is at the heart of the IF Life (get it, the “IF” Life?).
IF as a Better Way over CR?
When it comes to improving our health conditions via nutritional parameters, it seems there are two strategies we could use. Those being either a calorie restriction approach (CR) or more alternate day restriction/fasting (also known as intermittent fasting/IF).

We already talked about some of the drawbacks of a CR approach daily (increased hunger, mood swings, loss of lean muscle), but could intermittent periods of fasting deliver a better solution?

Not only that, could it help more people achieve their weight loss goals all while not wasting muscle in the process (as muscle loss is not our goal for a long-term healthy metabolism)? Let us see what we can learn from IF and how it can apply to your lifestyle.

Improving Your Glucose Metabolism
Remember at the heart of everything is your body's glucose metabolism: regulating blood sugar, energy burning and storage (fat).

So when your glucose metabolism is running efficiently (low fasting insulin levels, low insulin resistance) you are healthier and in an optimal “fat burning” state. However when your glucose metabolism is compromised (high fasting insulin and high insulin resistance) you are in a state of decline (more inflammation and increased disease risks) as well as in a “fat storing” state.
By using short intermittent periods of fasting you will actually allow your body to lower insulin/glucose for longer periods of time. This will help improve the overall function of the glucose metabolism, even more so than we see with CR approaches (because those still allow eating all day, even if very small doses).

**Intermittent Fasting (IF) Lowers Glucose/Insulin more than CR**

“Nevertheless, intermittent fasting resulted in beneficial effects that met or exceeded those of caloric restriction including reduced serum glucose and insulin levels and increased resistance of neurons in the brain to excitotoxic stress. Intermittent fasting therefore has beneficial effects on glucose regulation and neuronal resistance to injury in these mice that are independent of caloric intake.”


**What Happens When We Eat**

First it makes sense to understand what is going on energy-wise when we eat and in-between meals. When we eat something, we enter what is known as the absorptive (fed) state. In this state we are digesting our food and utilizing the nutrients from it.

Most of our energy (mainly from glucose) can be coming from the food being digested and released into the bloodstream, while excess can also be stored (or used for other purposes such as rebuilding and repairing proteins), a process that is mitigated by insulin (the blood sugar hormone we talked about before).

**What Happens When We Stop Eating**

About 3-4 hours after we eat, we enter what is known as the postabsorbtive state, where insulin starts to drop. This is where energy used by the body starts coming form internal sources. The liver is a primary source of stored glycogen via
glycogenolysis (instead of the muscles, unless they are engaged in activity). Also with insulin dropping (and blood sugar coming down) comes an increase in lipolysis (freeing up fats and using them for energy) and gluconeogenesis (converting non-carbohydrate sources like glycerol and amino acids into glucose).

Levels of the lipolytic hormones such as glucagon, GH (growth hormone) and catecholamines are increased (as well as the sensitivity of the body to them), allowing more fats to be released.

The longer one goes without food (and insulin/blood sugar lowers), the more these processes increase. A perfect example is when we go to bed and sleep without eating during the night. Most of that time our liver is spent supplying our brain (which is a glucose hog) with glycogen and burning fats.

Short Intermittent Fasting can lead to More Fat Burning
To simply sum what you just read, having short periods of not eating (fasting) will start to increase lipolysis (the process of releasing fats). This is done with lowering insulin and increasing lipolytic hormones (such as glucagon, growth hormone and the catecholamines).

The fat cells get stronger messages and open up their doors. More free fatty acids (FFAs) means more chance for the body to take them to the muscles and burn them up as energy.
Fasting Increases GH Pulsing

“Serum GH concentrations are increased in fasted or malnourished human subjects. Two days of fasting induced a 5-fold increase in the 24-h endogenous GH production rate.

This enhanced GH production rate was accounted for by 2-fold increases in the number of GH secretory bursts per 24 hr.”


Keeping to the “hormesis” rule you also want your intermittent fasts done correctly to hit that “sweet spot” to get the most out of it. This report will show you how.
Final Thoughts

Hope you have enjoyed the information. To wrap it up:

- Breakfast is not necessarily the “most” important meal of the day in the big picture (as I haven't had it in years!)
- Your body is geared more towards fat burning in the AM
- Many strong and healthy civilizations of the past ate less meals than recommended today
- Eating more times during a day (when cal are equal in lesser # of meals) does NOT speed up your metabolism
- Short or intermittent stress is how our body naturally gets stronger and more efficient in what it needs to do
- Intermittent periods of fasting allow the body to generate more fat releasing hormones (so you can burn those released fats from storage as energy)

In the end if you still want to eat a big breakfast or 6x a day, that is up to you. But I don't want you to be scared into thinking that you “have” to eat all the time in order to lose weight or just stay lean. There is little wisdom in fear based approaches.

There are many ways to go about weight loss and health, and I've found how I can have more energy and easily burn fat just by focusing on eating “intermittently”. Then I can just get on with enjoying my day (as that is all we ever really have).

~ “2 Meal Mike”
About the Author

“2 Meal Mike” O'Donnell started the IF Life blog/site back in early 2008 to help spread the word about “IF”. The IF Life has been featured on many other top sites and has grown way beyond anything ever imagined.

Mike is the author of the popular IF book “2 Meal Solution” (first published in 2010). He has also been a personal trainer and coach for over 10 years.

He likes to enjoy life on a daily basis, stay active with biking/hockey, workout from home, eat good food and most importantly keep things simple (yet effective).

You can also hear him going on about drinking coconut oil in coffee via his website and social media.

Website: The IF Life
Twitter: @2MealMike
Facebook: /2MealMike
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