



## Lesson 8: How to Break Your Fast

Hi everyone. It's Megan Ramos. Welcome to lesson eight of our fasting masterclass. In today's lesson. I'm going to discuss how to break your fast.

Now, usually when people experience gastric distress, such as bloating, cramping and loose stools, when they break their fast. Well, usually this is just a short term side effect of the body adapting to fasting or to a newer, longer, intermittent or extended fasting protocol. Over time with consistent practice with your fasting, your body does adapt.

What happens is when you first start the fast or first start to do longer fasts, your body is really confused. "Hey, what is she doing? Or what is he doing? We're going to stop producing digestive juices because we don't understand. We're going to save that metabolic energy just in case we need it for a threat later on." But what happens is we go and we eat and then we don't have any digestive juices or nowhere near enough to completely process our meals efficiently. So we end up experiencing some discomfort.

But over time the body realizes, "Okay, we're doing this fasting thing," and it adapts and it continues to produce digestive juices in normal quantities and then you have plenty available for when you go to actually break your fast.

Then there are other individuals who never seem to experience any issues breaking their fast, ever. Intermittent fasting protocols, like 42s or 48s, extended fast like five, six or seven days, never seem to have any issues. It's almost like they can eat anything they want when they break their fast too, without problems. But suddenly six months, one year down the road, they might just start to experience some issues breaking their fast. Well, this is likely due to just a disruption in their gut microbiome. Perhaps they've been eating out a bit more than normal and even though they're trying to eat great foods, they're still inflammatory fats and hidden sugars, and that can disrupt their gut microbiome. Perhaps unfortunately they need to take a round of antibiotics, which we definitely know causes a bit of chaos. And then just stress and anxiety, poor sleep, all of those things do a real number to our gut health.

So every now and then people have disrupted gut microbiome and that can cause us unwanted gastric distress when you go to break your fast. But over time as the gut microbiome balances

and heals itself, then we seem to break our fast without any issues. So a lot of people will notice they might have this bout of time where they have a lot of issues, but then, hey, everything's gotten better. So hang in there, everybody. Every fast is different and how we break our fast, well, that can be different every time, too.

Now there are some foods that are more likely than others to trigger an upset stomach when you go to break your fast. You might not have any sensitivities to these foods, and if you don't, then there's no reason why you should exclude them from your break-fast meal. You might have sensitivities to one or two of these foods and just because you might have to restrict, having those foods at your break-fast meal, doesn't mean that you've have to restrict the other foods. So, it is very personal. It is not a one size fits all recommendation, but these are the foods that most often cause gastric distress when you go to break your fast.

The first one is actually bone broth. Now this happens more often with homemade bone broth because it tends to be a little bit more greasy than store-bought bone broth. And often more so with beef broths compared to chicken broth, that tend to be less greasy in general. Other foods would be raw vegetables. Raw vegetables are actually really tough to digest. So we recommend that you have cooked vegetables when you break your fast. Nuts and nut butters can be very difficult, as well. And eggs can be very problematic when people go to break their fast, but they're such a great breakfast meal that it's tough to give them up. And last, but not least, it is more tough to digest meat. Pretty much any meat can be difficult for some of us to digest. So we might be looking forward to that really yummy steak or those pork chops or some of that lamb, but it often is a little bit too much for a sensitive digestive tract.

Now in the case of a carnivore and especially those who tend to be beef dominant or beef heavy in their carnivore diet, ground meats tend to do much better for break-fast meal, if you show sensitivity. So you can pretty much have any ground meat when you go to break your fast. Now there is a concern about bacteria in ground meat, so there's ground beef. You really want to be mindful of where you're sourcing it from or even having your butcher grind it in front of you to make sure that there's nothing funny in there.

And the only cooking oil that I would say to be cautious of using when you break your fast is coconut oil. Coconut oil, as you've gathered, is definitely one of my favorite fats, but it is digested very quickly. And when you use it for cooking things such as your vegetables, it can sometimes lead to tummy issues. But all of the other fats, even animal fats like duck fat, beef tallow, pork fat, leaf lard, butter and ghee, they're all perfectly fine to use as well. And then of course plant-based fats, which is olive oil, avocado oil are great fats too, for cooking, for your break-fast meal. So don't shy away from those.

Now, what is a good strategy if you are having issues breaking your fast? The first and most easy hack to do without really trying to change what it is that you're eating. So if you're someone

who likes eating bacon and eggs, for example, when you break your fast and you don't want to change that, well, try this hack first. Try taking one to two tablespoons of chia seeds or psyllium husk. Soak them in a glass of water for about 15 minutes and then drink that concoction about half an hour before you want to break your fast. See if that helps.

Another strategy, energy would be to have a tomato, cucumber salad with some parsley. Parsley really helps bulk up the stool. The tomato and cucumber salad with a little bit of olive oil will help prime you for digestion. So consuming that about half an hour before you break your fast can also be helpful.

Now for someone who feels like they've tried everything, absolutely everything under the sun to break their fast and is still having strategies. This is perhaps where having some probiotic rich foods before you break your fast can be really helpful. So very fatty yogurt. You could even add in some chia seeds to that, or you can use a coconut yogurt or coconut kefir, if you're dairy free, and use that to break your fast. See if having those probiotics help.

Now, if none of those hacks are working, then it's time to really look at your breakfast meal and see if you need to exclude any particular foods. Again, most people do better on cooked vegetables and usually a protein source that is recommended would be fish or poultry. And you can have fattier fishes or poultry. People seem to tolerate fattier fishes like salmon and cod very well or fattier cuts of poultry, such as chicken wings or chicken legs, even with the skin and even if they're cooked in fat. Those foods are just a bit easier on our digestive system to process and tend to go over better for breakfast.

Now for those intermittent fasters, the 36, the 42s, the 48s that are experiencing gastric distress, how do you balance the rest of your eating day? So, be cautious with your breakfast meal, but you are going to end up eating another two or three times that day. What do you do? So if you're an intermittent faster and you're experiencing issues breaking your fast, I would have a light meal for your first meal and then go back to eating normal meals for your second and third meal of the day. And over time, hopefully just within a few weeks, you're no longer experiencing this gastric distress when you break your fast and you can have a more substantial breakfast meal if your tummy is feeling up for it.

Now for those extended fasters out there, people doing three, four, five, seven, 10 days of fasting, it's better to just have one meal when you break your fast. Just one meal and wait 12 or so hours before you have your next meal. A lot of people tend to break their extended fast late in the afternoon or early evening. It's better to wait until the next day at breakfast or lunch to have your second breakfast meal.

Now, when you have that first meal after your extended fast, again, it's good to be mindful of what you're having, but by the next day, most individuals are ready to jump in and eat their

regular meals, whether they include eggs or bacon or beef or nuts and seeds. Whatever it is you tend to tolerate it very well come your second, third meal and so on and so forth after breaking your fast. It's just that first meal and that first day that you need to be mindful of.

Now, let's talk a little bit about holiday celebrations and vacations in general. Now I want to be very sensitive that this past year and this year are very different years, but things are going to resume in a more normal fashion. There might be periods of time where we're doing an extended fast leading up to a holiday celebration or a vacation. Now it's never advisable to break your fast either on the day of the celebration or the day you're leaving for vacation. You always want to give yourself at least a 24 hour buffer just in case you do experience some tummy issues. So if you're having a holiday at home, such as say Thanksgiving, or you're going to a relative's house, then I would say 24 hours is a good buffer for breaking your fast.

Now, if you're going on a vacation though, and you're really trying to be diligent before your vacation, because you want to look great and feel great on your trip, I would give yourself a good 48 hour buffer before you leave. Now that first day you break your fast, you're only having one meal. The second day, you are going to perhaps feel a little bit bloated. You are going to retain water after ending an extended fast. So, you might not be feeling as completely comfortable or confident as you want to feel on your vacation that day, but 24 to 48 hour mark after you end your extended fast, well that's when the body sort of resettles.

By the time you leave for your trip, you should be feeling good. That water weight should be gone. Any digestive issues should be gone, as well. And you should be feeling really raring to go and excited on your holiday trip. So don't get discouraged the day before if you do feel a little bit discomfort, bloat, feeling like you're retaining water. It will settle down in that 24 hour to 48 hour window and then you can leave on your trip feeling just great.

Now, a couple of little caveats for people that are still struggling after trying all of these hacks. A lot of them tend to have fibroid goiters or issues with the thyroid goiters and sometimes taking selenium supplementation can be helpful. Now taking too much selenium supplementation or taking supplementation while eating too much selenium in the diet can actually be really dangerous and leave you feeling like complete garbage. So if you have tried everything else and you do know that you've got issues with your thyroid gland and you might have a goiter, then I would really recommend you talk to your functional healthcare practitioner about your lab work, about your thyroid status and see if selenium supplementation is something that you might benefit from taking.

And just one note about consuming alcohol when you go to break your fast. It's generally advisable just to wait and have that glass of wine, or have that spirit to your next eating day and not when you have your breakfast meal. Or if you're doing the intermittent fast and you're

breaking your fast at lunchtime, then it'd be better to wait til your dinner later on that day to have that particular adult beverage.