

Eat **STOP** Eat

The Radical New Approach to Nutrition
That Can Burn Fat, Improve Your Health
and Might Just Save Your Life

Brad Pilon

Contents

Preface	3	
How it All Started	8	
Introduction	12	
The Fasted State	16	
The Disappearance of the Fasted State	19	
Forget Everything You Have Ever Read About Fasting	24	
Fasting and Your Metabolism	26	
Fasting and Exercise	32	
Fasting and Your Muscle Mass	36	
Fasting and Hunger	39	
The Health Benefits of Fasting	43	
<i>Decreased Insulin Levels & Increased Insulin Sensitivity</i>	46	
<i>Increased Lipolysis and Fat Burning</i>	48	
<i>Increased Glucagon Levels</i>	50	
<i>Increased Epinephrine and Norepinephrine levels</i>	52	
<i>Increased Growth Hormone Levels</i>	52	
<i>Increased Weight Loss and Increased Fat Loss</i>	54	
<i>Health Benefits – The Conclusion</i>	55	
The Eat Stop Eat Way of Life	57	
<i>What to do While Fasting</i>	62	
Eat Stop Eat Conclusions	65	
Eat Stop Eat Frequently Asked Questions	67	
References	74	
Eat Stop Eat	Strength Works, Inc. 2007	2

Preface

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Preface

Take a second before reading this book and think about all the diets you have heard and read about in recent years. Each diet had its own little hook, that made it unique, and each diet had thousands of loyal followers that swore that their diet was the ‘only’ diet that worked.

Now think about the evidence. I will use bodybuilding as an example. Picture two groups of professional bodybuilders in contest shape ready to step on stage; their veins popping out everywhere, skin tight, body fat almost nonexistent.

The first group is bodybuilders from the 1950’s and 1960’s. These bodybuilders were able to get into phenomenal shape using low-fat, high-carbohydrate, moderate-protein diets. The second group is bodybuilders from the 1990’s and beyond. They get into phenomenal shape using very different moderate-fat, low-carbohydrate, and high-protein diets.

Both groups of bodybuilders were unbelievably lean. Both groups used various supplements and drugs. However, both groups had very different nutrition plans. Yet, somehow they all managed to get their body fat down to unbelievably low levels.

Some bodybuilders ate six meals a day, some ate more than a dozen. Some ate red meat, some did not. Some did hours of cardio, some didn’t do any at all. Yet, they all were able to lose fat and get into ‘contest shape’.

This is because for short periods of time, every diet will work if it recommends some form of caloric restriction. And if you follow a calorie restricted diet you will lose weight, guaranteed. The problem is, you simply can't follow a restrictive diet for a long period of time. Sure, a truly dedicated individual can follow a very restrictive diet for 12 weeks and get into phenomenal shape. With the right amount of dedication, a person can even look like a model from the cover of a fitness magazine. And a very small, very unique group can do this for years on end. For the rest of us, this way of eating is too restrictive, too intrusive on our lives, and far too limiting to be done effectively for any real length of time.

Now, what if I told you that long restrictive diets aren't necessary for weight loss? What if I told you that there is a way to eat and a way to live that can give you amazing health benefits, help you lose weight, and that does not involve any prolonged periods of food restrictions, eating schedules, supplements or meal plans? Would you be interested?

In the following pages I am going to share with you a discovery that is the result of countless hours of research, years of schooling, a career in the sports supplement industry and an obsession with nutrition.

I am going to present you with the reasons why I think most diet plans are not necessary, too restrictive and ultimately too complicated to work long term. And most importantly, I am going to describe what I believe to be the single best way

to eat and to live that will help you lose weight and keep it off, without any of the complex plans, rules and equations that is typical of most diets. After all, I don't consider this a diet. It's a way of eating that can ultimately grow into a way of life.

I must warn you in advance, many of these ideas are 'controversial' in that they don't go along with current nutrition trends. I promised myself when starting this project that I would not just 'accept' the current rules of nutrition just because they happened to be the rules that are currently *en vogue*. After all, as our bodybuilders in the example prove, many different styles of nutrition have resulted in the development of astonishing physiques.

So even though the ideas in this book may be radical now, in twenty years, they just might be the new rules of nutrition!

I am positive that if you read this book with an open mind, you will find that everything I have written makes sense. It may be different then what everyone else is telling you, but it is proven by a large amount of scientific research, and it can change your life.

I hope you enjoy the book.

Your author,

Brad Pilon

How it All Started

How it All Started

It was a year ago today that I walked away from my career in the sports supplement industry. Don't get me wrong, it wasn't a bad split, and I didn't want to give up on the industry altogether, I just wanted to start fresh.

To fully explain myself, I have to take you back about twenty years.

I have always been obsessed with exercise, health and nutrition. Before the age of ten, I owned a very impressive collection of *Muscle & Fitness*, and a couple of years later, *Men's Health* magazines. I can remember reading about bodybuilders like Lee Haney, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Lou Ferrigno and all of the articles about diet and exercise programs. It was these articles that peaked my interest in the science behind fat loss.

At sixteen, I had a subscription to the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. I would read any research paper that involved nutrition and fat loss. It took me about a day to read each article because I had to stop and check almost every word in a medical dictionary.

At seventeen, I started working at a local supplement store. This was my first official step into the health and nutrition industry and I have never looked back.

When I started studying nutrition at University, I had only two goals – To learn everything I possibly could about nutrition and metabolism and to graduate with honors. And in the spring of 2000, I accomplished both of them.

Immediately following graduation, and with a surprising mix of good luck and great timing, I was hired to be a Research Analyst at one of the world's leading supplement companies.

Fast forward to June of 2006. I had just spent the last six years of my life working in one of the most secretive industries in the world. During this time, I had been entrusted with protecting some of the most confidential information in the entire industry. I was the person responsible for the inner dealings of our Research & Development Department. Unfortunately, this was part of the problem.

Part of my job was to review bodybuilding and fitness magazines. I was constantly reading about the 'latest and greatest' diet method. After years of reading magazine after magazine, I didn't know what to believe anymore. Each month, it seemed like the newest diet methods contradicted the diet methods that were in last month's magazines. It felt like the weight loss industry was full of nothing but misinformation.

When it came to the science of losing weight, every 'nutrition guru' and 'expert trainer' had his or her own theories on what did and didn't work. After years of

reading and evaluating all of these nutrition and diet programs, I was actually starting to believe the hype myself!

Despite all of my formal education in this very field, theories like high protein diets and cycling carbohydrate intakes eventually started to sound logical to me, even though I had never come across any convincing research to support any of these theories.

After all, they were just theories. Some were based on science, while others were complete gibberish. Many were contradictory to one another, and others defied the basic laws of thermodynamics and science. However, I noticed a funny thing about the industry; if an idea is published enough, and if enough people accepted it, it became true, no matter how inaccurate it really was.

Whoever said, “you can say the same lie a thousand times but it doesn’t get any more true,” has obviously never been involved in the nutrition industry!

The bottom line is that I got into the sports supplement industry for the same reason I eventually left. I wanted to understand the true rules of weight loss, and I wanted to figure out how we should really eat.

I ended up leaving my career in the industry so that I could write this book.

Introduction

Introduction

As part of my background research for this book, I made it my goal to uncover the true scientific facts behind weight loss and nutrition.

Now, I'm not talking about the scientific facts that are thrown around every day by food companies and marketing gurus. You know, the '*eat this, not that*' facts or the '*recent research has shown*' facts. I wanted to find the cold, hard, truths. I was looking for the nutritional equivalent of death and taxes.

My first step in this quest was to read every nutrition and diet book I could get my hands on. In one short year, I read and re-read the following books:

The Atkins revolution, Protein power, Body for Life, The Zone, The South Beach Diet, French Women Don't Get Fat, The Warrior Diet, The Metabolic Diet, Volumetrics, The Obesity Myth, What to Eat, the Omnivore's Dilemma, Real Foods, Food Politics, as well as various 'underground' books on diet and nutrition like Dan Duchaine's *Body Opus*.

On top of this, I also reviewed hundreds (not an exaggeration) of research papers, and re-read several of my nutrition textbooks. I even went so far as to enroll in graduate school to study Human Biology and Nutraceutical Sciences, and let me tell you, it took an almost unhealthy desire to uncover the truth to

drive me to re-enroll in school after a seven year hiatus, with a pregnant wife and a busy consulting job!

So what did all of my research uncover? Well I can tell you that there are indeed two absolute truths when it comes to nutrition and weight loss.

1) Prolonged caloric restriction is the only proven nutritional method of weight loss

and

2) Human beings (nutritionally speaking) can only be in one of the following states: fed or fasted.

That's it. In my opinion these are the only two facts that are undeniable. Everything else is open for debate. This is the problem with nutrition today - it's made out to be so complicated and confusing that nobody knows what to believe.

The result of most scientific research seems to do nothing more than add to the already confused and muddled nutritional theories and diet recommendations that exist, and the cause is clear as day - research on nutrition and food is no longer conducted to improve our health and well being. It is conducted as a method to get us to buy one product over another, and it's all based on us being 'constant consumers'.

As far as I can tell, most research being conducted on food and nutrition these days is done simply for the purpose of marketing. This is because the money

that funds nutrition research typically comes from a food or supplement company. This ‘donation’ or grant comes with the expectation that the research will produce a health claim or other marketing claim that the company can then advertise as a selling feature for their product. As it turns out, health claims on foods and supplements can be incredibly lucrative, and the politics behind nutrition are undeniable.

It was in a book titled “*What to Eat*” by renowned author and researcher Marion Nestle, where I read the following quote – “*The real reason for health claims is well established: health claims sell food products.*”¹ I couldn’t agree more. The bottom line is that research creates health claims, and health claims sell products, whether the product is some new ‘functional’ food or the latest diet program, if research says it works, it will sell more, guaranteed.

Very soon into my research I began to realize that the research on weight loss had become so skewed with politics that it has turned into the world’s most ironic oxymoron. After all, the research was trying to uncover the completely backwards idea; ‘*what should we eat to lose weight?!*’.

When I realized that almost all nutrition research was working under this completely backwards paradigm, I understood that I had only one choice. If I was to avoid all of the bias and vested influence in today’s nutrition research then I had to go back to the absolute beginning. I had to conduct a thorough review of exactly what happens to human beings in the complete absence of food.

The Fasted State

The Fasted State

The definition of fasting is quite simple. I've read through countless dictionary entries and website descriptions of fasting, and have decided that the best definition of fasting is the following: ***“The act of willingly abstaining from some or all food and in some cases drink for a period of time.”*** The key word in this definition is “willingly” as it is the difference between fasting and starving. Other than this one small difference, the net result is the same - the purposeful abstinence from caloric intake over a given period of time.

There are some obvious benefits in studying fasting as a way to find the truth behind nutrition and fat loss. The most important of which is that people with vested interests in selling products have no interest in studying fasting.

Fasting automatically rules out the use of any sort of food, health supplement or functional food. Much to the dismay of food companies, you can't put fasting into a pill and sell it, and as we already discussed, the purpose of most nutrition research these days is the development of new products. So by default, because you do not consume anything while you are fasting, research on fasting contains very little bias from large food company funding (After all, why would a food company spend money proving there is a benefit to eating ***less*** of their products?).

Another benefit of studying fasting is that there is a large volume of research that has been conducted, and more research comes out every day. Fasting has been around since, as near as I can tell, the beginning of recorded history. Almost all major religions have a degree of fasting built into them, and there are many recordings throughout history of various people fasting for different reasons.

In fact, Dr. Michael Eades, author of *“Protein Power”* suggests in an entry to his online blog that fasting may even be the way our ancient Paleolithic ancestors ate²:

“In thinking about the process I came to the conclusion that intermittent fasting was probably the way Paleolithic man ate. We modern humans have become acculturated to the three-square meals per day regimen. Animals in the wild, particularly carnivorous animals, don’t eat thrice per day. They eat when they make a kill. I would imagine that Paleolithic man did the same.”

As Dr. Eades points out, it makes logical sense that our ancestors starved intermittently, depending on the availability of food. There is also evidence to support the fact that many different cultures around the world currently fast. Many people fast for religious or spiritual reasons, and even as a method of weight control. However, in North America, with the exception of fasting for religious purposes, the practice of fasting has all but disappeared.

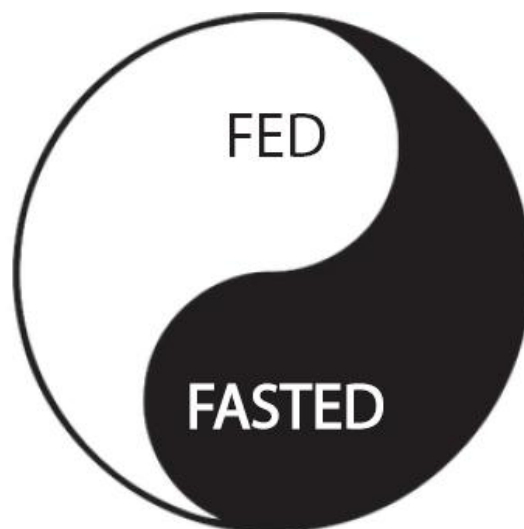
The Disappearance of the Fasted State

The Disappearance of the Fasted State

As I stated in the beginning of this book, nutritionally speaking the human being can only be fed or fasted. By saying this, I mean that we are in the process of eating and storing the calories that come from our food, or burning these same calories as we burn stored energy. This energy is stored in the form of fat and glycogen (the storage form of sugars and carbohydrates in our bodies).

Our bodies are designed to eat food when food is available and use the calories we stored when food is scarce. These are our only two options. Consider them the Yin and Yang of nutrition and health.

- 1) Eating and storing calories
- 2) Not eating and burning calories.



Fasting is the simplest method our body has for maintaining its caloric balance. Store a little when we eat, burn a little when we don't eat. The problem is that recent research suggests that we spend as much as 20 hours a day in the fed state³. We are constantly eating and storing food and we never really give ourselves a chance to burn it off.

So the yin and yang of fed and fasted has been replaced by a constant fed state, where we helplessly try to figure out how to continue eating, and somehow lose weight at the same time. This is a very scary scenario when you consider the fact that our bodies are designed to store fat.

Because we were meant to be in a constant cycle of feeding and fasting, our bodies are designed to store fat when we over eat, so we can burn it later, when we have no choice but to under eat.

Imagine a hunter who has caught and eaten an animal, and foraged around and found some berries. Once the meat is gone and the berries have all been picked, the hunter has no choice but to move on in search of more food. This is how our bodies were designed to function.

So if our bodies were designed to feed and then fast, why doesn't anyone fast anymore?

I think it is because the whole concept of fasting for weight loss and health has been villainized in western society as it goes directly against one of the most basic principles of business – Supply and Demand. To the food industry, the idea of people eating less is bad for business!

Consider this; each day in the United States, the food industry produces enough food to supply every single person with almost 4000 Calories⁴. On top of that, 10 billion dollars per year goes into advertising this food⁵. It would be a huge financial disaster for many food companies, if all at once, everyone in the United States decided not to eat for one day out of the week.

This is why the food and nutrition industry is willing to suggest many different theories on how to lose weight, as long as it means we continue buying and consuming foods.

Think of all the diet suggestions you know. They all rely on the continued intake of food. *Eat six small meals a day. Eat high protein. Eat breakfast (It's the most important meal of the day). Eat cereal. Eat high calcium. Eat whole wheat. Take diet pills.* Whatever the recommendation, it always revolves around us constantly consuming food and food supplements.

After all, this is how companies refer to us - we are consumers (not people). And if you look up the word 'consumer' in the thesaurus you find the synonym 'customer'. How many times have you heard a company representative say

things like, “We value our customer”? Well of course they do, we buy (and consume) their products! Without us, there would be no profits and no company.

In a day and age where so many people are trying and failing to lose weight, it seems improbable that the answer is simply dieting. In fact, in his very controversial book “The Obesity Myth” Author Paul Campos states that he does not believe that dieting is an effective method of weight loss. Indeed, Mr. Campos goes so far as to say the idea that “People could lose weight if they really wanted to” is in fact, a lie⁶.

Now, I’m not willing to go quite as far as Mr. Campos; however, I am willing to say that every single one of today’s popular diets is doomed to fail in the long term. In my opinion, no matter how strong your willpower, it will eventually be overridden by the power of marketing, advertising, and the lure of great tasting food. After all, no one really wants to diet, we just want to look better with less fat on our bodies (Dieting just happens to be a means to this end).

All of this begs the question – ‘have we been led to overlook the simplest form of reducing calories and losing weight - short periods of fasting, in an effort to keep us consuming?’ The answer seems to be a resounding ‘Yes!’

Forget Everything You Have Ever Read About Fasting

Forget Everything You Have Ever Read About Fasting

The amount of anti-fasting misinformation that can be found on the internet is astounding. This is despite the fact that our bodies were designed to fast, and that almost every major religion and culture has some sort of fasting built into its rituals.

Information on fasting and dieting is prevalent in cyberspace, and should be read with extreme caution. Ridiculous statements such as *“fasting deprives your body of nutrients and does nothing to help you modify your dietary habits”*, and *“The weight loss from fasting comes entirely from muscle”* can easily be found on the net. Typically, these statements are followed by more of the same old nutrition mantra *“eat multiple small meals a day”*, eat *“high protein foods every 2-3 hours”*, *“avoid milk and dairy products”* and all the other popular ideas about dieting.

The amazing thing is almost all of the scientific research I reviewed provided evidence in direct opposition to the misinformation found on the internet.

I found very convincing evidence that supports the use of short term (as brief as 24 hours) fasting as an effective weight loss tool. This included research on fasting’s effect on your metabolism and muscle, and on fasting’s effect on exercise and performance. What made this even more interesting is that this type of fasting not only helps you lose weight, but also vastly improves many markers of health.

Fasting and your Metabolism

Fasting and your Metabolism

In my review of fasting, I found some very interesting information, most of which flies directly in the face of much of today's accepted 'rules of nutrition'. Most startling is the fact that being in a fasted state for short periods of time does not decrease your metabolism.

If you have read any of today's popular diets, you know that they are all based on this idea. The story they are telling goes like this; if you lower your calories too much, then you will stop losing fat because your body has entered 'starvation mode' and your metabolic rate will slow to a stand-still. This is the nutrition 'gospel'. However, it turns out that this is actually not true.

Let me explain.

Our metabolism is based on the energetic costs of keeping the cells in our bodies alive. For example, let's say we put you in a fancy lab and measured the amount of calories you burned in one day sitting on a couch doing nothing. Let's assume that number was 2000 Calories. This would be called your basal metabolic rate; 2000 Calories would be the amount of Calories you need to eat to match the amount you burn simply being you.

Now, let's say you moved around that day, perhaps 30 minutes of walking, you might burn an extra 100 calories bringing your daily total to 2100 burnt

calories. Your basal metabolic rate is always 2000, and then any extra energy you expend moving your body (such as exercise) is added to that number.

So in this example, you are going to burn 2000 calories per day no matter what you do. So why are we being told that our metabolism will slow down if we don't eat for an extended period of time? The answer lies with an interesting metabolic process of eating called "*The thermic effect of food*", and some clever interpretation of this rather simple process.

The act of eating can increase your metabolism by a very small amount, this is referred to as 'the thermic effect of food'. This increase in metabolism is a result of the extra energy your body uses to digest and process the food. It takes energy to break down, digest, absorb and store the food once you eat it. This 'energy cost' has been measured in laboratory settings and is part of the basis for popular diets that promote the metabolic cost of one nutrient over another.

For example, it takes more Calories to digest protein than to digest carbohydrates or fats, so some diets recommend substituting some protein for carbohydrates and fat assuming this will burn more calories. Although this is scientifically true, the amount of extra calories this dietary change will cause you to burn is very small and will hardly make a difference to your overall calories burned in any given day.

As an example, the idea of eating an extra 25 grams of protein so you can burn more calories is ridiculous to me. If you eat an additional 25 grams of protein

you would be adding 100 Calories to your diet just so you can burn 10 calories!
The more logical approach would be to just not eat those 100 Calories.

Almost all of the calories you burn in a day result from your basal or resting metabolic rate (the calories it takes just to be alive). Beyond that the only significant way to increase the amount of calories you burn in a day is to exercise.

The research on metabolism and calorie intake is remarkably conclusive. I was able to find the following research studies that measured metabolic rate in people that were either fasting, or on very low calorie diets:

In one study, researchers found that when they made people fast for 3 days, their metabolic rate did not change⁷. This is 72 hours without food. So much for needing to eat every three hours!

In another study by a different group of researchers, people who fasted every other day for a period of 22 days also had no decrease in their resting metabolic rate⁸.

In addition, people who were on very low calorie diets and on a resistance exercise program (i.e. lifting weights) did not see a decrease in resting metabolic rate, and these people were only eating 800 Calories a day for 12 weeks!

In another interesting study, women who ate half the amount of food that they normally eat for 3 days saw no change in their metabolism either⁹.

In still more studies, there was no change in the metabolic rate of people who skipped breakfast, or people who ate 2 meals a day compared to 7 meals per day^{10,11}.

The bottom line is food has virtually nothing to do with your metabolism. In fact, your metabolism is much more closely tied to your bodyweight. If your weight goes up or down, so does your metabolism. The only other thing that can affect your metabolism (in both the short term and longer term) is exercise and weight loss. Even in the complete absence of food for three days, your metabolism remains unchanged.

I find it troubling that every physiologist, medical doctor and PhD that I have talked to seems to understand this, but many of the personal trainers, nutrition gurus and supplement sales people are completely unaware of this scientific fact. This is truly a testament to the amazing marketing that can be found on the internet, and in fitness and nutrition magazines.

This got me thinking; if food intake has no effect on metabolic rate, what other myths have I been led to believe as '*scientific facts*'?

I took it upon myself to examine the science behind many of today's popular diets. I found no difference between any of them in their effectiveness over the long term.

People choosing higher protein, lower carbohydrate diets (similar to Atkins or The Zone) tended to see slightly better weight loss, at least in the short term. However, when studies extended to over 6 months and up to a year, these differences tended to even out¹².

I found only one thing to be consistent with all of these diets. That is the success of any diet can be measured by how closely people can follow the rules of the diet and how long they can maintain caloric restriction. In other words, a diet's success can be measured by how well they can enforce my first nutrition 'truth' – **'prolonged caloric restriction is the only proven *nutritional* method of weight loss'**.

So from what we have seen there is a very large amount of science that supports the use of short term fasting as an excellent way to create a dietary restriction, and seems to be an effective and simple way to lose body fat. And we have also determined it does not have a negative effect on your metabolism, so far so good. But what type of effect does it have on your muscles?

Fasting and Exercise

Fasting and Exercise

Your muscle cells have the ability to store sugar as something called ‘glycogen’. The interesting thing about this process is that your muscles lack the ability to pass this stored sugar back into the blood stream. For example the glycogen stored in your right leg muscles can only be used by your right leg muscles. It cannot be ‘donated’ to your liver or brain or any other part of your body. This basic rule goes for all of your muscles.

During a period of fasting, the systems of your body are relying on fat, and the sugar that is stored in your liver for energy. Your muscles still have their own sugar that they need for exercising. The sugar in your muscles is used up quickly during high intensity exercises like weight training and sprinting.

Research completed back in 1987 found that a three and a half day fast caused minimal impairments in physical performance measures such as isometric strength, anaerobic capacity or aerobic endurance¹³. In other words, they found that a three-day fast had no negative effects on how strongly your muscles can contract, your ability to do short-term high intensity exercises, or your ability to exercise at moderate intensity for a long duration.

This means fasting does not negatively affect anaerobic short-burst exercise such as lifting weights, nor does it have a negative effect on typical ‘cardio’ training.

Another study performed in 1988 found no change in soldiers who were exercising until exhaustion either right after a meal or after fasting for three and half days¹⁴.

From this research we can see that you should be able to work out while fasted and not see any change in your performance.

The only situation where I think there may be a negative effect from fasting is during endurance sports like marathons or Ironman style triathlons, where you are exercising continuously for well over an hour^{15,16}. These types of competitions require the athletes to eat during the actual event in order to maintain performance.

However, it should be noted that the “negative effect” that occurs from fasting before long endurance activity only effects an athlete’s time until exhaustion. So the amount of time an athlete can exercise while fasted before becoming exhausted is less than the amount of time it takes for a fed athlete to become exhausted.

While the amount of time it takes before a fasted athlete becomes exhausted is decreased, it actually has positive effects on these athletes fat burning.

Athletes performing long endurance activity while fasted actually burn more fat than athletes who are fed. So depending on your goals, fasting before endurance exercise may actually be beneficial.

I believe the perceived need to eat before a workout or a strenuous activity is more of a psychological need than it is a physical need. It was Ori Hofmekler, author of *"The Warrior Diet"*, who pointed out that "Predators in the wild only hunt when they are hungry"¹⁷.

Fitness expert Matthew Furey (who often practices short-term fasts) mentioned that back when he was a champion wrestler in college he felt that he was faster, more alert and had better reflexes if he ate less before a meet.¹⁸

So from a psychological perspective, perhaps there may even be a benefit to exercising or competing while fasted.

Fasting and your Muscle Mass

Fasting and your Muscle Mass

The other great myth about dieting and fasting is that you will lose your muscle mass while you diet. This is completely false. Not only does reducing your caloric intake not cause your metabolism to slow down, it also does not result in a loss of your hard-earned muscle.

There is one imperative rule that goes along with this statement: you have to be involved in some sort of resistance exercise, like lifting weights.

While long term caloric restriction on its own can cause you to lose muscle mass (such is the case with hospital patients who are on a low calorie diet and confined to bed rest), the combination of caloric restriction with resistance exercises has been proven to be very effective at preserving your muscle mass.

Research on men and women undertaking a very low calorie diet found that even with a 12 week long diet consisting of only 800 Calories and only 80 grams of protein per day, the people in the study were able to maintain their muscle mass as long as they were exercising with weights three times per week¹⁹.

In another study, men restricted their caloric intake by eating 1,000 Calories less per day than they normally ate for 16 weeks. They took part in a weight