

## The Fasting Guide for Women by Life Stage

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### Occasional Fasting and Intermittent Fasting Defined:

#### **Occasional Fasting for Cleansing & Autophagy:**

This is a longer fast done periodically (e.g., once every other month or a few times a year) with the intention of supporting deep cellular repair, detoxification, and autophagy—the body’s process of cleaning out damaged cells and regenerating new ones.

Autophagy typically begins around 16-24 hours into a fast but is more significantly activated after 24–48 hours. Peak autophagy likely occurs between 36–72 hours, depending on the individual and metabolic health.

Purpose: Cellular cleanup and renewal (autophagy), Mitochondrial health, Inflammation reduction, Hormesis (stress adaptation), Metabolic reset

Frequency: Typically done occasionally (e.g., 1–6 times a year). Can be a 24-hour fast, 36-hour fast, or even multi-day fast (48–72 hrs.) under supervision

*This type of fasting is safe for most people to do no matter sex or stage of life.*

#### **Intermittent Fasting (IF)**

A structured eating pattern where you cycle between periods of eating and fasting daily or most days of the week. The most common method is time-restricted eating, such as eating within an 8-hour window. Usually 12–20 hours of fasting per day. Most popular version: 16:8 (16 hours fasting, 8-hour eating window)

Purpose: Blood sugar regulation, Appetite control, Weight management, Improved insulin sensitivity, Digestive efficiency, Circadian rhythm alignment

Frequency: Practiced daily or several times per week as a consistent lifestyle habit

*As you will see in this guide, IF affects Women differently depending on their Life Stage and is not recommended for everyone.*

## 1. Women in Their Reproductive Years (Approx. ages 18–40)

*Consistent intermittent fasting is not recommended for women in their reproductive years, due to its potential to disrupt hormones, stress responses, and menstrual health.*

### **What's happening hormonally:**

- High fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone
- Greater metabolic demands which means nourishing the body properly is very important
- Increased sensitivity to stress and under-nourishment

### **Why we avoid IF here:**

- Can disrupt menstrual cycles or ovulation
- May suppress thyroid (metabolism hormone) function and raise cortisol (stress hormone)
- Increases risk of fatigue, burnout, and disordered eating patterns
- Can interfere with fertility and hormonal resilience

### **What to do instead:**

- Eat within 30–60 minutes of waking most days (protein + fiber)
- Balance blood sugar with protein, fiber, and healthy fats
- Avoid skipping meals—nourish consistently
- Focus on nervous system regulation, digestion, and mineral-rich meals
- Practice gentle overnight fasts (12 hours max) only if it feels natural

## 2. Perimenopausal Women (Approx. ages 40–50)

### **What's happening hormonally:**

- Hormone fluctuations become less predictable
- Increased cortisol (stress hormone) sensitivity
- Insulin resistance may begin to rise

### **Fasting guidance:**

- Consider light intermittent fasting (12–14 hours) 2–3x per week
- Never fast on high-stress or poor-sleep days

- Always break your fast with protein, fiber and whole foods
- Track energy, mood, and sleep closely to assess impact
- Fasting should be used as a tool—not a lifestyle

### 3. Menopausal & Post-Menopausal Women (Approx. 50+)

#### **What's happening hormonally:**

- Estrogen and progesterone levels are consistently low
- Metabolic rate may slow
- Insulin resistance becomes more common

#### **Fasting benefits:**

- Can improve insulin sensitivity, reduce inflammation, support mental clarity
- Often better tolerated and more effective than in earlier life stages

#### **Best practices:**

- Start with a 14:10 window, then explore 16:8 if tolerated
- Fast 3–5 days per week, not daily
- Stay hydrated and include electrolytes during fasts
- Prioritize protein and resistance training to preserve lean mass
- Always listen to your body—don't push through fatigue or stress

#### **Final Thoughts**

- Occasional fasting is a safe and healthy tool for most—but not something to force
- Consistent IF is best reserved for post-menopausal years where hormones are stable, and fasting is better tolerated
- Focus instead on nervous system regulation, protein, sleep, and gut health
- Most women should typically train/workout while nourished and not in fasted state

**Want Personalized Support?** The Centenarian Method helps women of all life stages regulate their nervous system, eat in alignment with their biology, and use tools like fasting only when appropriate. Visit [www.doctorbucci.com](http://www.doctorbucci.com) to join the waitlist or book a strategy session.