

Benefits of Fasting In Disease

excerpted from several articles written by Alan Goldhamer, DC

Fasting has been shown in a number of trials to be the most effective method for lowering blood pressure and normalizing cardiovascular function. Blood pressure tends to remain low in all those using fasting for cardiovascular disease once fasting is completed.

A number of studies have found that fasting is beneficial in epilepsy, reducing the length, number, and severity of seizures. Fasting is especially effective for helping alleviate or cure childhood epilepsy.

Fasting is exceptionally beneficial in chronic cardiovascular disease and congestive heart failure, reducing triglycerides, atheromas, total cholesterol, and increasing HDL levels.

Fasting has been found effective in the treatment of type II diabetes, often reversing the condition permanently.

Because of its long term effects on metabolism, fat stores in the body, leptin, and disease conditions associated with obesity, fasting has been found to be one of the most effective treatments for obesity.

A number of studies have found that fasting is effective for treating both osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Fasting induces significant antiinflammatory actions in the body and researchers found decreased ESR, arthralgia, pain, stiffness, and need for medication.

Autoimmune diseases such as lupus, rosacea, chronic urticaria, and acute glomerulonephritis have all responded well to fasting.

Severe toxic contamination has been shown to be significantly helped by fasting. Clinical trials have found that people poisoned with PCB (pesticides) experienced "dramatic" relief after 7-10 day fasts.

Poor immune function improves during fasting. Studies have found that there is increased macrophage activity, increased cell-mediated immunity, decreased complement factors, decreased antigen-antibody complexes, increased immunoglobulin levels, increased neutrophil bactericidal activity, depressed lymphocyte blastogenesis, heightened monocyte killing and bactericidal function, and enhanced natural killer cell activity.

Other diseases that have responded to fasting are psychosomatic disease, neurogenic bladder, psoriasis, eczema, thrombophlebitis, varicose ulcers, fibromyalgia, neurocirculatory disease, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, bronchial asthma, lumbago, depression, neurosis, schizophrenia, duodenal ulcers, uterine fibroids, intestinal parasites, gout, allergies, hay fever, hives, multiple sclerosis, and insomnia.

The historically lengthy claim that fasting increases life span is beginning to garner some support in research literature. Regularly repeated 4-day fasting has been found to increase the life span in normal and immunocompromised mice.

Although the use of fasting in the treatment of cancer is controversial, there is some emerging data showing that fasting helps prevent cancer. Intermittent fasting (2 days weekly) has shown an inhibitory effect on the development of liver cancer in rats.

Fasting promotes the drying up of abnormal fluid accumulations, such as edema in the ankles and legs and swelling in the abdomen.

Fasting is extremely effective in helping the body to quickly resolve the problems that create the need for the symptoms that we know as acute disease. These symptoms include things like fever, inflammation, pain, etc. It is in acute disease that we see the most dramatic results from short term fasting.

Fasting is also effectively utilized in chronic disease. Chronic disease often has its origin in acute diseases that never resolved or were suppressed. Fasting allows the body an opportunity to generate an acute response in a chronic condition.

The scientific and medical literature contains literally hundreds of papers dealing with the therapeutic use of fasting. It has been extensively used in the treatment of a variety of conditions, including obesity, diabetes, epilepsy, atherosclerotic vascular disease, congestive heart failure, cancer, autoimmune disease such as rheumatoid arthritis, psychiatric disorders including schizophrenia, and as a desensitization tool in the treatment of hypersensitivity and allergies.

Fasting is also used for what might be termed rejuvenescence. It provides an opportunity for the organism to “clean house,” physically and mentally; for accumulated debris to be eliminated; and to allow for the introspection that is so often lacking in the rush of modern day life.