

# Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

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## Intermittent Fasting: The 3-Step Protocol for Vibrant Health

**How to stabilize your blood sugar to prevent and reverse diabetes, lower blood pressure, reduce inflammation, heal adrenal fatigue, and turn back the clock.**

Intermittent fasting has become a popular way to lose weight or simply improve health, and my patients often ask me if it's something they should try. The answer isn't a simple yes or no. It depends upon your current state of health.

Many people have underlying problems resulting from years of a poor diet. Interjecting intermittent fasting into such situations can make things worse. But if the more basic issues are resolved — I'll explain how — a fasting regimen can be beneficial.

Before I discuss benefits of intermittent fasting, let's take a look at what it is, and how it differs from what most of us think of as "fasting."

There's a common misconception that fasting means starvation. Fasting simply means going without eating, by choice, for a period of time. This could mean not eating for part of a day, for a whole day, several days, or even longer. But this isn't the same as

starvation, where people are deprived of food to a point where their body wastes away, and they can die.

Fasting is something human beings have done for thousands of years. It's a ritual at certain times of year in some religions. In secular settings, it's been practiced as a method of cleansing and revitalization; some holistic practitioners recommend a fast once or twice a year to detoxify your system, sometimes with various herbal aids. These practices are not the same as intermittent fasting.

### What Is Intermittent Fasting?

Intermittent fasting means cycling between periods of eating and not eating. One example would be not

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE:**  
**Vitamin D: Can You Get Enough from Summer Sun?**

eating until lunchtime, or later, on one day; eating more frequently for the next day or two; and on the following day, not eating until later in the day.

Another, popular way is the “5:2 diet.” For 5 days you eat as usual, but on 2 fasting days you eat much less: 500 calories for women and 600 calories for men. Food on fasting days can be broken down into 2 or 3 small meals.<sup>1</sup>

There’s also a “4:3” approach: You fast on 3 days each week and

eat normally on the other 4 days.

In any regimen, fasting days can be consecutive, such as Thursday and Friday, or non-consecutive, such as Monday and Thursday.

Another type of intermittent fasting, sometimes called “time-restricted eating,” extends the time between meals and snacks every day. As an example, you could skip snacks and sodas (and any alcoholic or other drinks with sugar) after dinner and not eat until breakfast the next morning. This means you would not be consuming any food for a few extra hours each day.

In theory, the last example may sound minor. But it can produce a meaningful improvement for many people.

Intermittent fasting isn’t a “diet” in the usual sense. Rather than focusing on what you eat, it’s about how often you eat — and don’t eat. That said, the quality of your food is also important; fasting is not an excuse to eat junk food.

Intermittent fasting regimens can be followed for as long as you like. They don’t lead to starvation or cause problems in healthy people. On the contrary, when done correctly, they can reverse problems caused by our usual pattern of eating.

## What’s Happened to Our Eating Habits

The human body wasn’t designed to be a round-the-clock eating machine, although it’s heading in that direction. One study, at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, Calif., found that it’s quite common for meals and snacks to be eaten virtually all day, except when sleeping.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout history, it wasn’t

unusual for people to eat once a day or less often, depending upon what they could hunt or harvest. The three-meals-a-day routine evolved as a cultural phenomenon, around work and school schedules. Although there isn’t a biological reason why we must eat that way, it used to work well.

In the last few decades, aggressive product development and marketing of convenient and on-the-go foods have turned frequent snacking into a common habit. And here’s the worst part: Most of the snacks are chock full of refined carbs and often go hand in hand with sugary sodas.

## What’s Wrong with Eating Too Often

A constant flow of food keeps your digestive system working all the time, without a rest. This alone can detract from your overall well-being, but there’s another problem.

The processed food and sodas make your blood sugar sharply rise every time you eat, and then blood sugar crashes. You get irritable, feel tired, crave more of the same, and eat more.

Each time blood sugar rises, insulin also rises, to enable your body to utilize the blood sugar as fuel. And when this occurs too often, cells become less and less sensitive to the insulin — that’s insulin resistance. Your body pumps out more insulin to compensate, and eventually insulin levels stay elevated all the time.

Elevated insulin leads to more of the food you eat turning into body fat. It promotes inflammation, leads to type 2 diabetes, turns “bad” cholesterol into dangerous small

### Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

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particles, contributes to plaque deposits in arteries, increases risks for cancer, and speeds up mental decline as we age.

That said, eating every 2 or 3 hours is sometimes necessary for a while. I explain why in Diet Step #1 on page 4 and in my book, *Smart Blood Sugar*.

Intermittent Fasting Reverses Damage

Intermittent fasting can help to reverse these harmful processes. When you fast, insulin levels drop, and then your body can access stored fat and burn it to produce energy.

Once that happens, you can go for longer periods without eating and feel great, and internally your body will start to function in a healthier way. But opening that door to fat burning typically requires some preparation before beginning any type of fasting.

Where to Start

Preparing for intermittent fasting is a bit like getting ready for a marathon. Without the proper training, you might be able to force yourself to cross the finish line; but for days afterward, you'll be exhausted and limping. This is counterproductive.

Most people have spent years or decades eating a poor diet — too much processed food, refined carbs, starch, and sugar, and too few vegetables and healthy fats. Consequently, they are probably not in shape to undertake a fast. Underlying problems that need attention first may include unstable blood sugar, adrenal fatigue, hidden infections, and mental or physical stress.

If any of these situations exists








and is not resolved, intermittent fasting may be too difficult. Or it may put too much additional stress on your system and make you crave more sugar, deplete your energy, and make you feel worse.

Start by understanding the signs of unstable blood sugar and adrenal fatigue. Then, you can take the steps I'll describe to correct these, as needed.

Adrenal Fatigue and Unstable Blood Sugar

You probably know that the adrenal glands produce cortisol, the stress hormone. But these glands also help to stabilize blood sugar. When you fast, this system gets a workout; if it's broken down, you can feel worse.

If you have adrenal fatigue — meaning weak adrenals — you

Benefits of Intermittent Fasting	
These are some of the benefits studies have found: <sup>3,4</sup>	
Diabetes 	Lowered levels of blood sugar and insulin in type 2 diabetics, helping to reverse the disease; helped to lower risk of diabetes in healthy people.
Weight Loss 	Effective for weight loss with greater improvement in metabolism and health markers than traditional weight-loss diets.
Memory 	Improved memory in older adults and in animals, and reduced brain inflammation.
Heart Health 	Lowered blood pressure, resting heart rate, triglycerides, blood sugar, insulin, inflammation, and oxidative stress associated with atherosclerosis.
Recovery from Surgery 	Intermittent fasting for 2 weeks before gastric-bypass surgery improved results. In animal studies, intermittent fasting improved recovery from a variety of surgeries and head and spinal cord injuries.
Cancer 	In animal studies, intermittent fasting reduced growth of cancer cells and tumors. Human studies are showing that it can enhance the effects of chemotherapy.
Healthy Aging 	Improved general health conditions that indicate intermittent fasting slows or reverses disease processes and slows aging.



might feel fine if you go without food between dinner (no evening snacks) and breakfast the next morning. But this won't be enough to correct the adrenals. And any other type of fasting will likely leave you feeling worse.

Here's one telltale sign of adrenal fatigue and unstable blood sugar: You can't concentrate and have memory issues until you eat. And about 20 minutes after you've eaten, you feel great.

Another sign of weak adrenals is waking up during the night. It happens because poor adrenal function is causing your brain to starve. The brain needs blood sugar. When blood sugar runs low while you're asleep, the adrenals should signal the liver to release some glycogen (the stored form of blood sugar). If the adrenals are weak, they don't do this.

The brain gets super hungry, and as a survival mechanism it wakes

you up. As you wake up, your system revs up a bit and the brain gets fed.

You also wake up tired in the morning. This is because weak adrenals don't produce enough cortisol, which should be high enough to give you energy to start the day. But this can be corrected.

**DIET STEP 1**

If you have no signs of unstable blood sugar or adrenal fatigue, you may be ready to start intermittent fasting. But I haven't found that to be the case with most people.

The diet I recommend will stabilize your blood sugar and revitalize your adrenals. The most important thing is to eat every 2 to 3 hours, with regular meals and snacks. Have your last snack no later than 3 hours before bedtime. And aim to eat mostly whole foods, not processed ones.

Meals and snacks should contain fewer carbs than usual and more fat and protein. If you wake up at night, have a small snack with fat and protein, such as a spoonful of nut butter.

Eating every 2 to 3 hours may sound odd, since we're talking about intermittent fasting, and I've explained why eating too often is a problem. However, I'm not suggesting that you snack on junk food, which is what created the problem in the first place.

Eating the right foods every 2 to 3 hours will stabilize blood sugar, nourish the adrenals, and put you in a position where you can benefit from intermittent fasting. Like an athlete ready for a race, you'll be in shape to try a fasting regimen.

I've outlined some more eating tips on page 6. For more details  
*(Continued on page 6)*

**Are You Ready to Start Intermittent Fasting?**

If you have unstable blood sugar or adrenal fatigue, these need to be corrected before starting any type of fasting regimen. Otherwise, these problems can get worse, and intermittent fasting will be difficult, unpleasant, and counterproductive.

Below are the common signs of unstable blood sugar and adrenal fatigue. If you experience one or more of these symptoms, do not start intermittent fasting until you've done the steps outlined in this article, starting with Diet Step #1.

- It's hard to get up in the morning.
- It's hard to wake up and you're tired in the morning, even when you get enough sleep.
- You feel tired in the afternoon but get a "second wind" later in the day.
- You wake up during the night.
- You can't concentrate, focus, or remember well until you eat.
- You feel much better about 20 minutes after eating.



- You get blurry vision that goes away after you eat.
- You have mood swings.
- You easily catch colds and flu.
- You've been gaining weight, especially around your abdomen, but aren't eating more.
- Your sex drive is low.

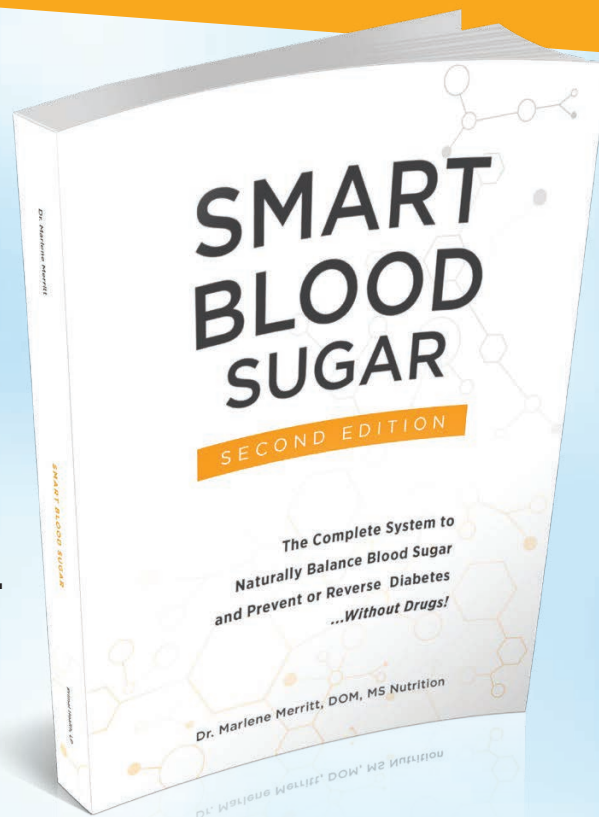


# Dr. Marlene Discovers “Insulin Switch” That Stops Blood Sugar Spikes



This blood sugar “switch” is built into every cell of the body and, when it is flipped “ON”...

- Blood sugar returns to the healthy range
- Weight is shed from belly, neck, arms, and thighs
- Energy levels return to normal
- Sleep becomes easy again



Dr. Marlene has been helping people repair their blood sugar for the last 15 years.

Just like Arthur Mabee, who was suffering from high blood sugar. His insulin levels were so high, the blood vessels in his eyes began bursting. He was severely overweight and suffering from heart problems. Arthur's doctor wanted to put him on Metformin...

That's when Arthur discovered Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Smart Blood Sugar**. “I said, ‘Well, I’m going to order this book because this doctor knows exactly what she’s talking about,’” Arthur explained.

In just three days of using Dr. Marlene's **Smart Blood Sugar** program, Arthur began to feel changes in his body. He gained more energy, his memory improved, he began sleeping 8 to 12 hours per night—and best of all—he lost 118 pounds since reading the book.

*“I’ve improved my health 190%... I no longer have diabetes. I no longer have a pre-diabetic condition,” shared Arthur. “My eyes have even cleared up. This has definitely helped me more than anything I’ve ever done in my life.”*



Did you see that? Arthur no longer has diabetes. And so can you! Yes—it is possible to reverse type 2 diabetes and maintain blood sugar in the normal range.

Dr. Marlene's **Smart Blood Sugar** is working for people all across America. And she believes it can work for you, too. Here's how...

This simple plan works by doing a few simple things that bring blood sugar down while stopping a few things that have been pushing blood sugar up. It's a combination of these two actions that make the protocol work so well.

Dr. Marlene's **Smart Blood Sugar** has become a best-selling book because it cuts through all the confusing and contradictory information and zeros in on the exact steps to take right now to heal your blood sugar.

In this easy-to-read, 100-page book, you will find step-by-step guidance, easy tools, and dozens of tips on how to maintain healthy blood sugar levels and repair insulin resistance without wasting a lot of time or money.

“Get this book, sit down, and do the same thing I did. Read it word for word,” Arthur shares with others. “**Smart Blood Sugar** will help you greatly.”

It's time to bring your blood sugar back in the healthy range. Get your copy of Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Smart Blood Sugar**, today for only \$27!

**Order Your Copy Today!**  
**[www.SmartBloodSugar.com/Book](http://www.SmartBloodSugar.com/Book)**



on the right diet, I recommend checking out *Related to This Topic* on page 9.

## DIET STEP 2

As my patients follow my first diet step, they reach a point where they become aware of improvements. These are some of the things they tell me:

- “I feel different.”
- “I’m not cranky.”
- “My brain works better.”
- “I have more energy.”
- “I’m more alert.”
- “I can focus better.”

Once you reach this stage, it means your blood sugar is more stable and your adrenals are in better shape. Now, you can start to skip snacks — but do it gradually so that you maintain your new and improved state.

Skip one snack for a few days and see how you feel. If all is well, skip another snack for a few days. Once you’ve eliminated all your snacks and have maintained your new and improved state, keep eating your three meals. If you stay stable for the next three weeks, you’re ready for Diet Step #3.

## A Word of Caution

When you start to skip snacks, it’s vital to be aware of how your body is reacting. Check the list on page 4: *Are You Ready to Start Intermittent Fasting?* You can print it out and put it on your fridge and use it as a checklist.

If you find that you’re experiencing any of those symptoms — crankiness, memory lapses, sagging energy, or others — it means that your body isn’t ready for that much change.

Don’t try to tough it out. If you rely on willpower to get by without eating as often as your body needs to at this stage, it will be counterproductive.

You can desensitize your internal hunger signals if you habitually force yourself to get by with eating less often, but your adrenals will be continually overstressed. Eventually, the added adrenal stress will catch up with

you, leaving you exhausted. Then, it will take longer to get back on track — much like a runner who keeps training with a sprained ankle instead of allowing it to heal.

Instead of forcing yourself to go without food, add one or more snacks back into your routine and make sure you aren’t inadvertently eating too much starch or sugar.

Once you’ve regained your improved state, try skipping snacks

## Eating Tips: Before Intermittent Fasting

Follow my eating plan in *The Guide to Healthy Eating* in Volume 1, Issue 8, of this newsletter. And see *Related to This Topic* on page 9 for other newsletter issues that contain helpful information. The snapshot below lists things to eat or avoid.

### To stabilize your blood sugar:

- **Do not skip breakfast!** You must eat within an hour of waking up, even if it’s a small portion.
- Eat every 2 to 3 hours. Do not wait until you are hungry.
- Include high-quality protein and fat in your breakfast, such as eggs or leftovers from dinner the day before.
- Lower your carb intake and eat a balanced diet of vegetables, meat, and fats (my eating plan has details).
- Eat fish regularly, at least twice a week, or get omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil supplements: Take enough to get 1,000 mg of a combination of EPA and DHA daily (amounts of these are listed in the Supplement Facts on labels). This is a must.
- Snack with low-carb foods — those that will not make your blood sugar rapidly increase, such as nuts and nut butters, seeds, hard-boiled eggs, beef jerky, etc.
- Avoid all fruit juices, carrot juice, and most fruit.
- Avoid smoothies, as these are generally high in carbs. Eat whole food instead.
- Never eat foods that are high in starch or sugar without a source of protein or fat. The combination will temper a rapid rise in blood sugar from the starch or sugar.

### To help your adrenals regain healthy function, avoid consuming these:

- Artificial sweeteners, as these block production of some adrenal hormones.
- Concentrated sugars.
- Too much caffeine, including beverages that are “decaf,” as decaf versions can still contain small but significant amounts of caffeine.
- Nicotine.
- Alcohol.
- Foods that you don’t tolerate well, such as gluten or dairy.
- Partially hydrogenated fats.



again. Do it gradually as I've described in Diet Step #2. Once you're stable while eating only 3 meals, go on to the next step.

## Take Baby Steps

This is where intermittent fasting starts — with baby steps. And don't fast every day.

Just to be clear, "fasting" doesn't mean you have to go without food all day. You can, but this isn't the only way to do it, and certainly shouldn't be done right away. In fact, I find that going without food for an entire day does not work well for many people, especially for women.

Intermittent fasting produces benefits by extending the time that you go without eating. Starting with a small increase in time without food is much like starting a weightlifting regimen to gain strength: You always start with a light weight. In this case, you're strengthening your internal system of turning food into energy and making it more efficient.

The exact regimen you follow can vary, depending on what works best for you. What I'm going to share is what I've found works best with my patients.

## DIET STEP 3

Daily time-restricted eating — skipping a meal every day, for example — is one form of intermittent fasting. However, I've found that blood sugar and adrenal function are typically more stable, and my patients feel much better, by fasting once or twice a week on the days of their choice.

To recap, you start this step once you've reached a point where you're eating only three meals, without any

snacks, and feeling good. This next step is extending the time you don't eat, once every few days.

Try skipping breakfast on one day. If you feel good all through the morning, don't eat until your usual lunchtime.

However, if you start to feel "hangry" — hungry and angry or irritable, or your energy sags mid-morning — have a low-carb snack. A spoonful of nut butter may be all you need. Then, eat your usual lunch and other meals.

Make sure you aren't consuming extra carbs or sugar in food or beverages. And a few days later, try skipping breakfast again. Maybe you can go a bit longer before you need a small snack, or maybe you will feel good until lunch.

On your fasting days, keep increasing the time without food for as long as you feel good, not any longer. As in Diet Step #2, it's vital to be mindful of how you feel,

and don't let yourself get to a point where symptoms of unstable blood sugar become bothersome.

You should continue to feel better and better as you do this. If that doesn't happen, take an honest look at your food and beverages.

It's a good idea to track everything you eat and drink for a few days. An app such as [myfitnesspal.com](http://myfitnesspal.com) can be helpful, or you can go low-tech and use a pad and pen. But really take an inventory and eliminate any excess carbs and sugars.

If that doesn't produce good results, there are two other types of issues that could be interfering and will need to be addressed: Inflammation and stress.

## Beware of Inflammation

Chronic inflammation will sabotage your efforts with intermittent fasting. The most common inflammation trigger is a

## A Fasting Tip for Women

Women's bodies are biologically designed to hold onto more fat than men, and I've found that women have a more difficult time fasting. However, the 5:2 approach works well for many of my female patients.

Once you've stabilized your blood sugar and adrenals with Diet Step #1 (page 4), here's how to do it:

- Choose any 2 days of the week to fast, such as Mondays and Thursdays or Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- On those days, women will be eating 500 calories and men will be eating 600 calories. Initially, you'll have to do a bit of calorie counting to establish the right amount of food.



- A website or app, such as [www.myfitnesspal.com](http://www.myfitnesspal.com), is a useful tool.
- On the 5 regular days, keep eating your usual meals and snacks — not more, not less.
- On each fasting day, eat your reduced amount of food, divided into 2 or 3 small meals.

Not all women have difficulty fasting, but if you do this is a good option.

diet of processed foods with lots of starch and sugar, so I like to address that first with the diet steps I've described.

Food intolerances can be another problem. I've found that gluten and dairy are common offenders. If you know or suspect that these or other foods could be blocking your progress, try eliminating them and see how you feel.

A chronic, low-grade infection can be another stumbling block. Sinus, dental, and urinary tract infections are quite common. If you know your teeth need attention, seeing a dentist is the only solution. If you suspect another infection, see your doctor and get any necessary treatment.

An injury that hasn't fully healed or other types of chronic pain are also potential stumbling blocks. For example, a sprained ankle months ago may not have fully healed. You've grown accustomed to the discomfort, but it really needs to be looked at and treated.

If traditional medical treatment isn't resolving your pain, consider seeing a chiropractor, physical therapist, or acupuncturist.

## Manage Stress

Stress can defeat your best efforts with intermittent fasting because it tires out your adrenal glands. This leaves you feeling drained and destabilizes blood sugar, which makes you crave starchy and sugary foods and can make your energy level and mood roller coaster.

In times of stress, your adrenal glands produce extra cortisol, the stress hormone. The cortisol is designed to help you mobilize your internal forces to overcome

danger. This works well in an acute situation: You're happily driving along when a truck suddenly pulls in front of you; you go on alert and slam on the brakes to avert a collision. Once the incident is over, cortisol levels should go down to normal.

Chronic stress is different. The cortisol is chronically elevated and destabilizes your blood sugar, energy levels, and overall sense of well-being.

## Top Sources of Stress

Stress can be mental, emotional, physical, or a combination. These are some common stress-inducing situations:

- Working more than 40 hours per week.
- Constantly bringing work home at night and on weekends.
- Overscheduling activities in your life.
- Not taking vacations.

- Changing jobs.
- Getting married or divorced.
- The birth of a child or grandchild.
- Death of a loved one.
- A loved one becoming seriously ill or debilitated.
- Moving to a new home.
- Exercising too vigorously or too much (for a marathon, for example).
- Inadequate sleep.
- Anemia.

Do what you can to resolve situations that are causing stress in your life. Sticking with the low-carb diet I recommend will reduce the negative effects of stress on your system.

## Supplements for Stress

Supplements are not a substitute for dealing with stressful life situations, but they can be helpful while you work out ways to deal with those situations.

### About Dr. Marlene

Dr. Marlene Merritt's passion for natural medicine is fueled by her drive to help others, and her own experience of overcoming a debilitating heart condition, diagnosed at the age of 20. A competitive cross-country cyclist at the time, she suddenly began experiencing severe chest pains. Forced to quit the sport, she suffered from extreme fatigue and constant pain for another 15 years, despite doing everything that conventional, Western medical doctors told her to do.

And then, the tide turned. A physician trained in naturopathic healing recommended a whole-food vitamin E supplement. A week after starting the supplement regimen, her energy began to return, and the pain began to disappear.

Dr. Marlene is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, has a Master's in Nutrition, and is an Applied Clinical Nutritionist. She is Board Certified in Bariatric Counseling, and certified in the Bredesen MEND Protocol,<sup>™</sup> a groundbreaking method of reversing Alzheimer's disease. She sees patients at the Merritt Wellness Centers in Austin, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, trains health practitioners nationwide, and is the author of *Smart Blood Sugar* and *The Blood Pressure Solution*.





**Adaptogens:** Some herbs are categorized as “adaptogens.” They help your body resist stress and they restore internal balance. Ashwagandha is an especially helpful one.

Chronic stress can exhaust your adrenals glands. As a result, they can’t produce enough cortisol, making it difficult for you to get going in the morning and to deal with challenging situations. Ashwagandha makes cortisol last longer, which takes some pressure off the adrenal glands and makes it easier for them to heal.

You can take a supplement of ashwagandha or a stress-reducing formula that combines it with other adaptogens, such as ginseng. Such supplements can also help you get a good night’s sleep.

Different herbal products contain different concentrations of herbs, so follow product directions.

**Vitamin C:** The adrenal glands use vitamin C more than any other part of the body. Extra vitamin C helps to feed your adrenals, and

stronger adrenals make it easier for you to deal with stress.

Take 100 to 200 mg daily or more as stress increases your need for vitamin C. If you take too much, the vitamin can cause diarrhea; take a smaller dose.

**Theanine:** Also called l-theanine, this is an amino acid found mostly in tea. When taken during the day, it increases mental focus and attention, and has a calming effect without making you drowsy. When taken in the evening, it helps you sleep.

It may seem odd that one substance could provide such a combination of effects, but it does. Take it per product directions.

## The Right Amount of Exercise

If your adrenals are weak, exercise can be exhausting and counterproductive. If this is happening, short periods of easy walking, cycling, or hiking can be

helpful in reducing stress. But hold off on more demanding workouts.

The key barometer is this: You should feel at least a bit invigorated from exercise. If you’re exhausted afterward, you likely did too much, so cut back.

Following the diet steps that I’ve outlined, treating any underlying causes of chronic inflammation, and managing stress will put you in a position where more intense exercise will make you feel better.

## A Final Word

Each person is unique, so responses to different types of intermittent fasting will differ. It’s vital to set yourself up for success by making sure your blood sugar is stable and your adrenal glands are working well.

I’ve found that my approach to diet and a gradual start-up of fasting is practical, realistic, and produces results. But about half of my patients also need to deal with inflammation or stress.

A lingering infection is the most common inflammation trigger. And working too much is the most common trigger of chronic stress. If you, like many people, have some unused vacation days, you may want to take some time off. It’s very therapeutic to spend some time doing things you enjoy.

Most important, listen to your body and do what works for you.

## Related to This Topic

These are some earlier issues of this newsletter that address related topics:

Related Topic	Volume	Issue	Title
A Healthy Low-Carb Diet	1	8	The Guide to Healthy Eating
Healthy Carbs	3	6	The Diabetic’s Guide to Eating Carbs
Gluten	2	1	How Gluten Can Cause More Than 30 Health Conditions
Controlling Weight	2	2	10 Reasons Why You Gain Weight and Can’t Lose It
Healthy Meats	3	6	The Diabetic’s Guide to Eating Meat
Sleep	2	2	The 10-Minute Sleep Solution
Exercise (page 7)	1	9	The Secret to Effective Aerobic Exercise

Access these online by logging in to [www.NaturalHealthConnections.com](http://www.NaturalHealthConnections.com).



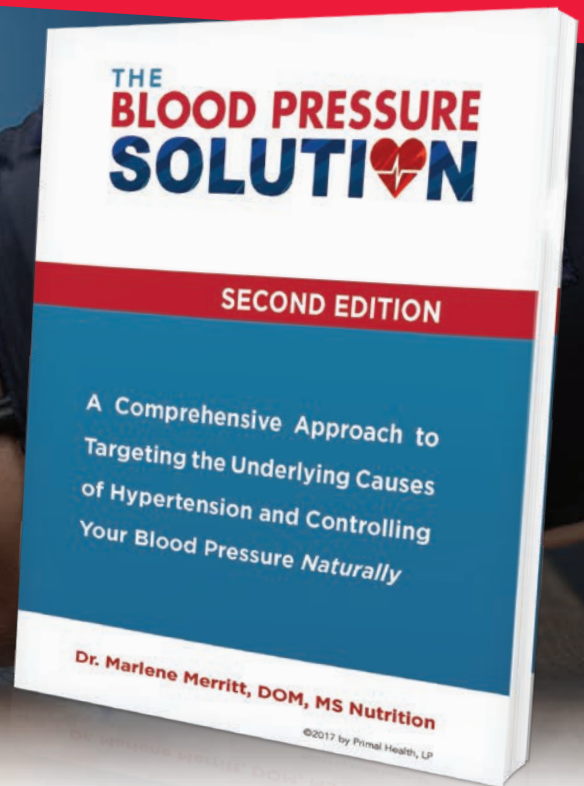
1 Carter, S., et al. “Effect of Intermittent Compared With Continuous Energy Restricted Diet on Glycemic Control in Patients With Type 2 Diabetes.” *JAMA Netw Open*. 2018;1(3):e180756.

2 Gill, S., et al. “A Smartphone App Reveals Erratic Diurnal Eating Patterns in Humans That Can Be Modulated for Health Benefits.” *Cell Metab*. 2015 Nov 3;22(5):789-98.

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4 Patterson, R.E., et al. “Intermittent Fasting and Human Metabolic Health.” *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2015 Aug; 115(8): 1203-1212.

# Get Dr. Marlene's Best-Selling Book... **Blood Pressure Solution!**



**Dr. Marlene has been sounding the alarm about dangerous blood pressure drugs for the last 15 years — and offering a safe, natural alternative.**

She has worked with hundreds of patients who were suffering high blood pressure—many were taking two, three, even four medications and going through awful side effects...

Just like Kathleen Kelly, whose ankles swelled up from the prescription blood pressure drugs she was taking. She also suffered an awful cough from using Lisinopril. By the time she read Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Blood Pressure Solution**, Kathleen's doctor had her on three blood pressure medicines combined—and her blood pressure was still high!

"My patients are always surprised to see how easy it is to use my natural Blood Pressure Solution," said Dr. Marlene. "The diet is not restrictive. Many of the foods you thought were taboo are perfectly ok—like steak is ok, butter is ok, natural sea salt is ok, even several carb foods are good. Part of the solution is to get good fats into your diet."

After reading **Blood Pressure Solution**, Kathleen made simple lifestyle changes found in the book and began to see immediate results...

***"My blood pressure came down right away...I just feel great. I'm ecstatic. I go around telling everybody I found the fountain of youth. I have much more energy now. My concentration and focus are better. I can walk around my block without getting winded anymore. I am 100% off my medication."***

Did you see that? Kathleen reports she is 100% off her medications. And so can you!

Yes! You too can be off these anti-hypertensive drugs... maintain blood pressure in the normal range... and feel good again!

Dr. Marlene Merritt's **Blood Pressure Solution** is working for people all across America. And she believes it can work for you, too. Here's how...

Dr. Marlene originally developed her unique solution for her patients at the Merritt Wellness Center in Austin, Texas. And after seeing just how successful it was for people in her own community—she decided to put her entire natural solution, with step-by-step guidance, into an easy-to-use book called, **Blood Pressure Solution**.

This is a comprehensive approach to targeting the underlying causes of hypertension and controlling your blood pressure naturally.

Dr. Marlene's book has been sweeping the country with over 330,000 copies sold in the U.S., and even 32,000 copies shipped overseas.

So, are you ready to bring your blood pressure back to the normal range? Gain more energy? Drop a few unwanted pounds? And feel better than you have in years, just as Kathleen did?

Great! Get your copy of Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Blood Pressure Solution** today! Go to the website listed below, and you'll see a complete review of the book, watch videos from people just like Kathleen and order your copy of **Blood Pressure Solution**!

**Get Your Copy Today! Go To:**  
**[www.PrimalLabs.com/BPS](http://www.PrimalLabs.com/BPS)**

# Fiber Improves Diabetes and Overall Health

We don't hear much about roughage these days; fiber is the trendy term. Call it what you will, it's a component of plant foods that is essential for good health. And on average, Americans eat a little over half the optimum amount.

Fiber keeps us regular, acting like an internal broom to eliminate waste and toxins; it helps to keep blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol in healthy ranges; and it is a prebiotic (food) for your beneficial gut bacteria. It reduces risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, colon cancer, and death.

## Fiber and Diabetes

A recent study analyzed research with 8,300 diabetics. It found that those who routinely ate more fiber had healthier levels of blood sugar, insulin, inflammation, cholesterol, and triglycerides, and less risk of death from any cause.<sup>1</sup>

## Vegetables Are Underrated Sources of Fiber

The high-fiber foods that are most often touted are whole grains and legumes, such as beans, peas, and lentils. Although these are nutritious foods, I've found that because most people have eaten too many carbs and sugars throughout their lives, relying too heavily on grains and legumes perpetuates high blood sugar and insulin. This underlies diabetes, heart disease, and Alzheimer's.

In small amounts, whole grains and legumes can be part of a healthy diet. But you can get much of your daily fiber from non-starchy vegetables that you don't need to limit.

If it's difficult for you to reach the optimum daily amount of fiber from food, you can take a fiber supplement to bridge the gap.

## Fiber Sources

Non-starchy Vegetable	Fiber in 1 cup
Collard greens (cooked)	8 grams
Broccoli	5 grams
Carrots	5 grams
Asparagus	4 grams
Beet greens	4 grams
Beets	4 grams
Brussels sprouts	4 grams
Green (snap) beans	4 grams
Okra	4 grams
Spinach (cooked)	4 grams
Swiss chard	4 grams
Kale	3 grams
White button mushrooms	3 grams
Cabbage	2 grams
Cauliflower	2 grams
Celery	2 grams
Eggplant	2 grams
Green bell peppers	2 grams
Leeks	2 grams
Zucchini	2 grams
Lettuce	1 gram
Tomatoes	1 gram

### High-fiber fruits:

A half-cup of avocado: 5 grams  
 1 medium-sized pear: 5 grams  
 A half-cup of raspberries or blackberries: 4 grams  
 1 medium-sized apple: 4 grams

### Fiber in a half-cup of legumes:

Lentils or split peas: 8 grams  
 Beans or chickpeas: 5–6 grams

### Fiber in popular whole grains:

A quarter-cup (before cooking) of steel-cut oats: 5 grams  
 A half-cup of cooked brown rice: 2 grams  
 1 slice of whole wheat bread: 2 grams

### How Much Fiber Should You Eat?

The Institute of Medicine recommends:

	Age 50 or Younger	Age 51 or Older
Men	38 grams	30 grams
Women	25 grams	21 grams

## Collagen Fights Skin Aging

As we age, loss of elasticity in our skin makes it sag and look crinkled or leathery. Collagen can increase elasticity, making skin look younger, according to a study of 36 postmenopausal women.<sup>2</sup>

In the study, half the women took a collagen supplement — 5 grams daily of collagen hydrolysate from fish — for 4 weeks while the other half took a placebo, and researchers measured the elasticity of sun-exposed skin on their cheeks along the way. Skin of the women taking the collagen was significantly more elastic at the 4-week mark. Another measurement, 4 weeks after women stopped taking the supplement, showed that the skin was still improved.

Collagen powder supplements can be mixed in drinks or sprinkled on food. Bone broth is a good food source of collagen.

1 Reynolds, A.N., et al. "Dietary Fibre and Whole Grains in Diabetes Management: Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses." PLoS Med. 2020 Mar 6;17(3):e1003053. 2 Sangsuan, W., et al. "Four-weeks Daily Intake of Oral Collagen Hydrolysate Results in Improved Skin Elasticity, Especially in Sun-Exposed Areas: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Trial." J Dermatol Treat. 2020 Mar 9;1-6.



# Q&A

**Q: All the recommended foods that are good for you are usually not allowable with warfarin. Can you suggest foods for a healthy diet on warfarin?** — *Benda N.*

**A:** Although it's often called a "blood thinner," warfarin doesn't literally thin blood. Rather, it slows down the blood's ability to clot. It does this by interfering with the normal function of vitamin K, which plays an important role in healthy clotting.

Common wisdom says that people taking warfarin shouldn't eat leafy greens — one of the healthiest types of food — because they are high in vitamin K and reduce the effectiveness of warfarin. But a recent Canadian study found that this theory is not correct.

Researchers found that eating a consistent amount of vitamin K-rich leafy greens, such as beet, collard, turnip, and mustard greens, and spinach and kale, produced better results with warfarin than avoiding such foods. But — and this is the key point — you need to consume a consistent amount of vitamin K each day.

Varying the amount of vitamin K from day to day is what will cause problems with warfarin. This means that you will need to be vigilant about tracking the amount of vitamin K you consume each day. Equally important, your doctor will need to adjust the warfarin dosage to match your vitamin K consumption.

Keep in mind that there are newer anti-clotting drugs that don't affect vitamin K and, unlike warfarin, don't need close monitoring. You may want to ask your doctor about alternatives.

**Q: Is it okay to eat whole eggs?** — *Joseph L.*

**A:** Egg whites are considered healthy foods, while yolks have been demonized because they contain cholesterol. However, the cholesterol in eggs doesn't affect the cholesterol levels of people who eat them.



We are not easily able to digest cholesterol; only about 50 percent of it is absorbed. And the part that we absorb is rarely a problem if you're eating good fats and follow a low-carb diet. Good fats include those from fish, extra virgin olive oil, avocados, bone broth, and nuts and seeds. Eggs also contain good fats.

If you're concerned about cholesterol, it's important to be aware of what turns cholesterol into an unhealthy substance: too much sugar and starch. These drive up blood sugar and insulin, which increase overall inflammation in your body. And they turn "bad" LDL cholesterol into small, dense particles that pose danger by provoking growth of plaque in arteries.

I cover the various mechanisms and myths related to cholesterol in Volume 1, Issue 4, of this newsletter: *When Statin Drugs Can Harm You More than Cholesterol*.

Protein is found in both yolks and egg whites, but the yolks also con-

tain other valuable nutrients, including lecithin, choline, and B vitamins that are needed by the brain.

Lecithin helps to clear cholesterol out of your body. It's also good for your brain and nerves, helping them build better cell membranes.

Choline is essential for your body to produce acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter, meaning it transmits signals within the nervous system and the brain. Consuming enough choline is important for a healthy mood, memory, muscle control, and overall healthy brain function.

Although eggs can be eaten at any time of day, they are a good breakfast food because they provide 6 grams of protein and 5 grams of fat per egg and contain zero carbohydrates. The protein-fat combination will keep your blood sugar and energy stable and prevent cravings for starchy and sugary foods later in the day.

## Do you have a question for Dr. Marlene?

Send your health-related questions to [drmarlene@naturalhealthconnections.com](mailto:drmarlene@naturalhealthconnections.com). Please include your first name and the initial of your last name. Although she cannot answer each question directly, Dr. Marlene will select a few in each newsletter and will address other questions and concerns in articles in future issues. Answers are intended for educational purposes only and should not be viewed as medical advice. If you need help with your subscription or have questions about Primal Health supplements, email [support@primalhealthlp.com](mailto:support@primalhealthlp.com) or call 877-300-7849.