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## Health U



# Navratri Special: Benefits of Fasting



*"We fast not to please  
the divine, but to  
cleanse our body."*

*- Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*

The auspicious time of Navratri is about to being on 29th Sept'19. This is the time for fasting, cleansing of body and mind. It also marks the onset of festivals.

Though most people keep these fast due to religious reasons but the most logical reason of one week's fasting is to detoxify the body which in turn calms the mind. Another reason is that fasting prepares the body to withstand the change in season from rainy to winter by boosting the immunity.

Saatvik food is consumed in this period. The word 'saatvik' food comes from the word 'sattva', which means the one that is pure, natural and clean. Saatvik food includes ingredients like fresh fruits, curd, pure rock salt, seasonal vegetables like pumpkin and bottle guard, and spices like cumin, coriander and black pepper. These foods are easy to digest and hence aids the metabolism.



### ***Benefits of Fasting***

Fasting helps body, mind and soul in following ways:

1. Consumption of fruits, curd and satvik food speeds the metabolism
2. Drinking of liquids like coconut water, herbal tea flushes out the toxins from the body
3. Fasting helps in burning the fat reserves stored around organs like liver and kidneys. This improves the organ functions.
4. Due to fasting leptin production improves. Leptin is a hormone which improves thyroid hormone production.
5. Triglycerides are a type of fat found in the blood and fasting helps in decreasing the same.
6. Fasting clears the old immune cells and helps in regenerating the new ones, thereby boosting the immunity.
7. Fasting brings discipline to our eating habits and keeps us away from binging unhealthy food.



### ***Tips for Fasting***

1. Keep yourself hydrated with fluids like coconut water, buttermilk, lemon water.
2. Do not over indulge on vrat snacks and fried food
3. Consume fiber rich vegetables like spinach, bottle guard, cucumber and sweet potatoes
4. Use rock salt as it is beneficial for blood pressure and also helps in absorption of minerals.
5. Those who cannot fast can abstain from non-vegetarian food, alcohol, onion, garlic and spices, and use rock salt instead of common salt for cooking.

Having a balanced satvik diet helps in improving digestion, energy and immunity. Do not starve, have a hearty lunch but try to keep dinner light.

Wishing everyone happy and healthy navratri !