

Foundation Diet

Take control of your health.
Balance your blood sugar.
Learn to make better choices.

Tim Rees



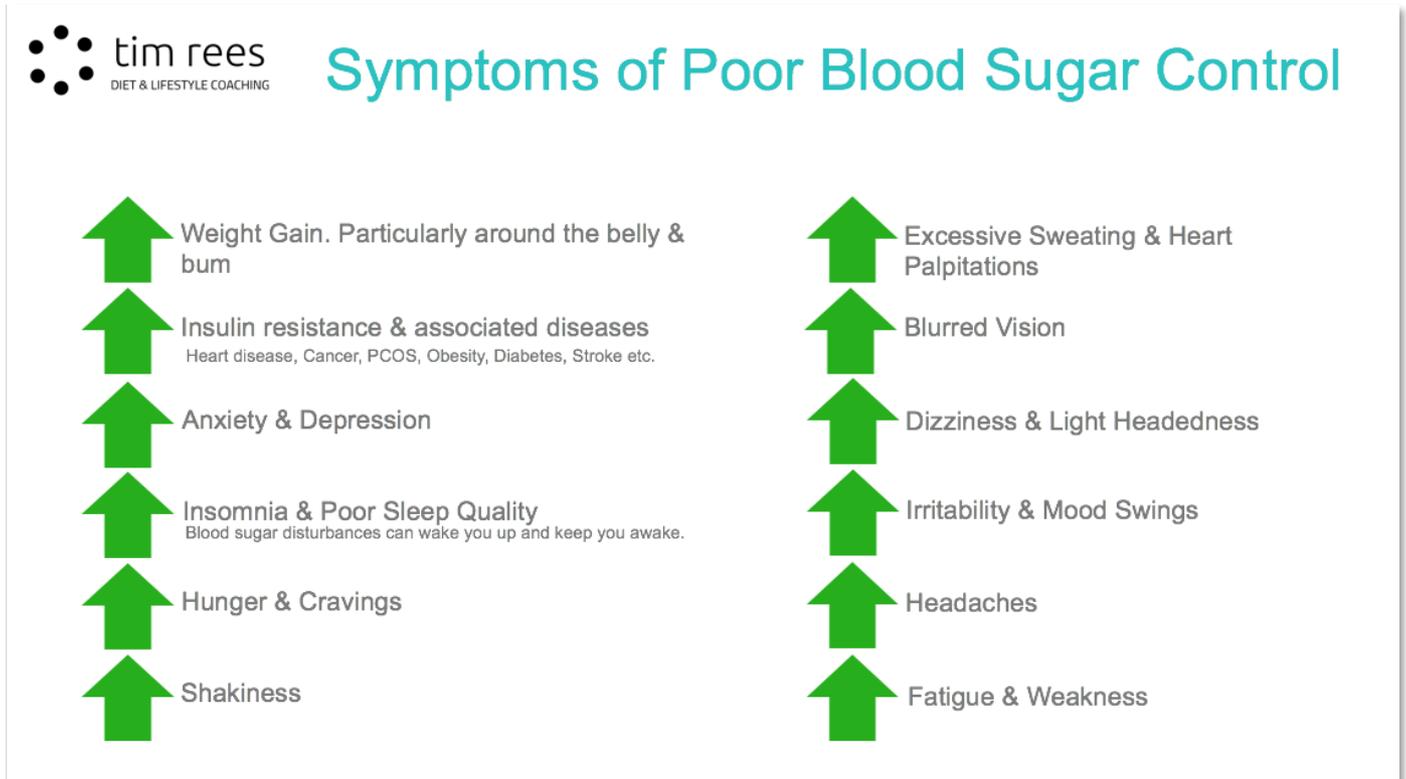
2 major objectives with multiple advantages. Photo by [Priscilla Du Preez](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Objectives

The major objectives of this diet are twofold.

1. Learn *why* you must balance your blood sugar and
2. *how* to balance your blood sugar.

Everyone can benefit by improving blood sugar control. The detrimental effects of the opposite are far reaching. Have a look at the partial list in the infographic below.



Have a look through these undesirable symptoms.

The body has a number of checks and balances to keep all systems within a certain bracket of control. When one of those systems moves outside of that range the body will attempt to bring it back into balance. This is called homeostasis.

In the case of blood sugar, the body likes to maintain a range between 4.0 – 5.9 mmol per litre of blood but you don't really need to worry about the numbers unless you're diabetic.

After a meal it may go up, but it should be brought back down into range quickly and easily by the body's responses.

If a meal is high in refined carbohydrates (white bread, white rice, pasta, etc) and/or simple carbohydrates (sweets, milk chocolate, fizzy drinks etc) it will cause the blood sugar to rise considerably. Carbohydrates contain energy in the form of sugars, they range from fruits and vegetables to sweets. The emphasis of this diet is placed on the latter.

The body uses a hormone called insulin to correct this because glucose (sugar in the blood) is damaging to blood vessels if not taken out quickly.

“Insulin is known as a storage or growth hormone which means it takes glucose and fats from the blood and stores them away for later use in FAT cells”

Preferably, this sugar is used for energy production within the cells, like the muscle cells, where it can power your limbs. Insulin can shovel the glucose into your cells like an old-fashioned train driver shovelling coal into an engine. The faster he wants to go the more shovelling he does.

Unfortunately, many people aren't trying to go faster because they're not 'going' at all. The chances are after a meal they're sitting at a desk or in front of the TV, or some other screen, so the sugar isn't needed in the

muscles and must go elsewhere. Sugar that hangs around in the blood is damaging.

Now the train driver, Insulin, doesn't need to go anywhere so he shovels the coal into a bunker for later use. Insulin, the train driver, is known as a growth or storage hormone which means it takes sugars and fats from the blood and stores them away in fat cells with the idea that they will come in handy at another time. That's the idea anyway.

Often 'another time' never arrives for many of us so it sits there in the fat, normally around the belly. This is because we eat so often and so the stored energy isn't accessed because there is so much coming in from food.

If this pattern continues complications arise in the form of obesity which turns a bad situation into a worse one called insulin resistance (IR). The cruel thing about IR is that it magnifies this affect and makes you an excellent fat storer and starts you down a path you do not want to travel; chronic inflammation and hormonal issues to name just two.

Let's have a closer look at IR a little further down the page. Firstly, let's look at the blood sugar rollercoaster the name for erratic highs and lows of your blood sugar.



The fire represents the mitochondria (energy producers) within the cell. They create energy from the coal (food), predominantly carbohydrates you have eaten. The engine driver shovels the coal into the engine; insulin carrying sugars into the cells. During insulin resistance (IR) the engine door swings shut and prevents any more coal coming in. The engine driver works more frantically to shovel it in as it accumulates outside the engine. This is high blood sugar & blood insulin. The driver eventually stores the excess coal away (in fat cells) to prevent it from causing damage to the rest of the engine (inflammation caused by sugars in the blood).

Keep reading to learn about the blood sugar rollercoaster.

Blood Sugar Rollercoaster

Blood sugar that shoots up and then crashes down cause's mayhem in the body and if repeated, day in day out, will create disease. Colloquially, this process is called the 'blood sugar rollercoaster' but the reality is nowhere near as fun.

This occurs when you eat carbohydrate foods that have a high glycaemic index number (GI), or contain a large total amount of sugars, known as glycaemic load (GL) or you have just overeaten.

The glycaemic index is a list of all foods, containing carbohydrates, and their assigned numbers based on their supposed effect on your blood sugar i.e. the speed at which the food's sugar gets into your blood.

Glucose is assigned 100 ± and is used as a benchmark. If you want to have a look at a comprehensive list [click here](#) but I don't want you to get bogged down with numbers.

The Blood Sugar Rollercoaster

Chronic high insulin & blood sugars cause inflammation and damage to arterial walls & cells

Insulin is released in response to high blood sugar. It begins storing it as fat in cells.

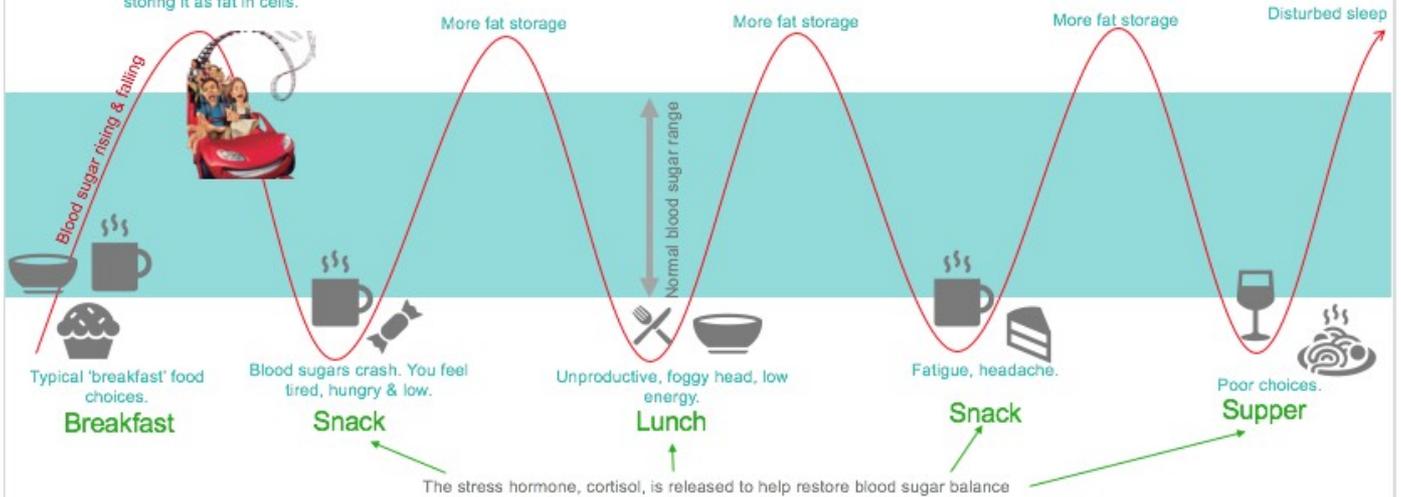


Image taken from Snipstock.com

We go from one sugary meal to another, squeezing in snacks because we are, in essence, self-medicating and trying to balance our blood sugar by eating more after it crashes. The result is a swing from low to high and vice versa, this is damaging to health.

Insulin Resistance

Insulin is excreted by the pancreas at the top of the rollercoaster 'track' to lower the blood sugar, which must be removed quickly in order to prevent causing damage. An overcorrection occurs and the blood sugar drops below the ideal range.

"..you are now a slave to your blood sugar and an awesome fat storer."

You begin to feel hungry again and so your body calls for more carbohydrate foods to raise the blood sugar into the preferred range. However, another overcorrection occurs (this one caused by your choice of food or drink -often quick junk) which sends you back over the ideal range once more.

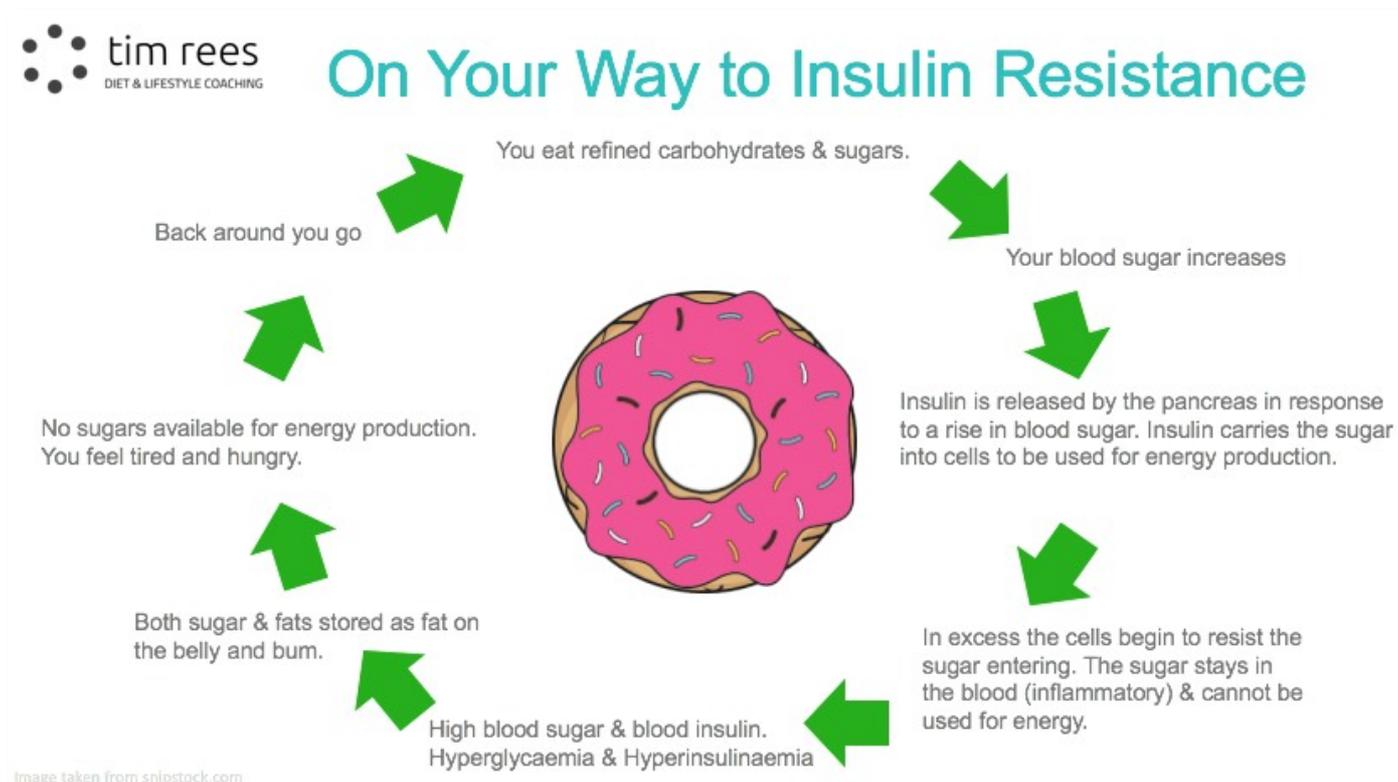
Most likely this fluctuation repeats over and over, every day, week after week, month after month and year after year. You are now a slave to your blood sugar and an awesome fat storer.

I wish this story was only about putting on a bit of weight around the middle; sadly, it's much more serious. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because you may *not* be overweight you are 'getting away with it'.

"Eating refined and simple carbohydrates in each meal and snack...puts a huge amount of stress on the body"

On your way to Insulin Resistance

Have a look at the infographic below. It's a vicious circle that becomes harder to break the longer you ignore it. Assess your own behaviours around food and drink; are you using snacking as a tool to feel better? If so, look to the previous meal and make it more nourishing and less full of high carbohydrate and/or junk foods.



Try to break this vicious cycle, to you lean on certain sugary foods to help you feel better in body or mind?

Have a look at the infographic below to see the staggering amount of illnesses that are strongly associated or directly caused by insulin resistance.



Insulin Resistance Associated Diseases



Obesity is often the start of these other conditions, do what you can to reduce excess fat. It's important.

Excess body fat is often the first to be obvious to you and those around you. Don't let it progress from there. The reality is that obesity is very bad for health and ultimately it is you that has to face it plus the diseases that come hand in hand. Don't wait until you are ill to start making good changes.

Take just 1 piece of info from this pdf...



If you take one piece of information from this page, it's this; **balance your blood sugar**. Photo by [Samuel Zeller](#) on [Unsplash](#)

I will endeavour to show you how you can balance your blood sugar simply by making better choices in the supermarket, at home, out and about.

Don't worry about getting it all correct right from the word go, making changes incremental and setting achievable goals is the way to do it.

“making changes incremental and setting achievable goals is the way to do it.”

Those people who rush and change everything about their diet in a day always fail. Relax, this is a marathon not a sprint.

"If you take a single piece of information from this page it's this; balance your blood sugar"

Making Better Choices

Hopefully you have decided that balancing your blood sugar is something you want to do and so I'm going to give you some tips on how you can achieve it.

Common sense and a bit of know-how is all you need. However, like [the GI list](#), there are things you can refer to for help to get it right especially in the beginning. Keep reading and have a look at the following steps.

Please note, this is general advice not bespoke nutritional therapy, if you are suffering with a chronic disease or are looking for quite a specific therapeutic outcome then it may be more appropriate for you to have [1:1](#) coaching.

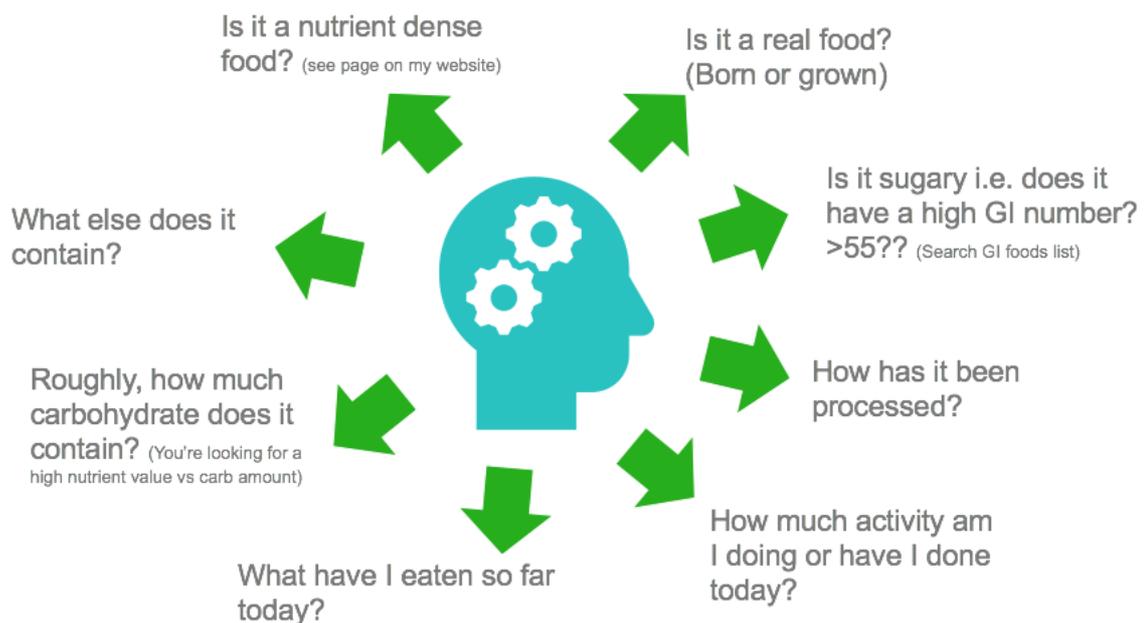
"common sense and a bit of know-how is all you need"

Step 1: Ask Yourself

Your first step is to consider the questions below in the 'Ask Yourself the following' infographic. These questions should be asked when considering your existing foods and adding new ones. The goal is to eat real foods as opposed to eating foods that have been highly processed or made up in a factory. This is a good first step.



Ask Yourself the Following..?



When you are deciding what to buy to eat, ask yourself these questions.

“Swapping your current diet for hunger never works in the long run.”

Step 2: Swaps

Your second step is to consider the type and amount of carbohydrate foods you're eating or planning to eat. Have a look at the infographic below for some useful swaps from poor choices on the left to better choices on the right.

Quantity matters but I'd you to make the swaps first and wait until you are happy with them before reducing quantity which can upset your progress. Swapping your current diet for hunger never works in the long run.



Good Carbohydrate Swaps

Your greens may already be on the plate :)

From this...(mostly junk)

- ↓ White potatoes (in the form of chips, crisps etc.)
- ↓ White breads, baked goods, breakfast cereals
Anything with refined white flour in...
- ↓ White rice, rice flour & breakfast cereals
Some breakfast cereals are better than others, apply what you've learnt here..
- ↓ Milk chocolate & other chocolate bars
- ↓ Fizzy drinks, fruit juices, sweetened hot drinks, most alcohol
- ↓ Cakes & sweet snacks

To this... (more nutrient dense)

- Sweet potatoes, squashes, mashed cauliflower, beans & legumes
- Wholegrain breads & ancient grains
Try rye, einkorn, spelt with seeds etc. Old fashioned oats to replace cereals are OK. Try adding proteins & fats not sweeteners.
- Wild, brown, black, red rice & cauliflower rice
- Dark Chocolate
Hooray! Try increasing the percentage of cacao as you progress. 85% is still delicious but see if you can go higher still.
- Fizzy water & fresh juice
Try adding fresh citrus fruit juice to fizzy water & ice. Herbal teas work too. Green tea is particularly useful, be aware of it's caffeine content though!
- Nuts, seeds & dried fruits
It's easy to over-eat this lot, especially dried fruit. Try taking some with you in a mini Tupperware, ultimately however, you'll want to knock snacking on the head.

Always try and eat vegetables with healthy fats so that more nutrients can be absorbed. Make your meals satisfying.

It's not all about amount of carbohydrates, just increasing the nutrients you get from each meal is healthy and changes how your body reacts to your food for the better.

Step 3: Reduce/Remove Snacking

Your third step is to reduce snacking and ultimately remove it. If this is frightening to you don't worry, just come back to it when you're feeling better. It's actually very easy when your main meals are more nutritious and satisfying.

Human Beings have evolved as opportunistic eaters like so many animals. But, in today's world this actually becomes something we must curtail with will power or more sensible choices.



Make better snack choices before reducing and then eliminating them all together. Go at your own pace.

We are not grazing animals and the belief that grazing is an appropriate and even healthy way of eating is not helpful and, in my opinion, has played a part in the obesity crisis.

If you are unable to go a few hours without becoming hungry, or irritable etc (see the Symptoms of Poor Blood Sugar Control infographic) this is a particular clue and demonstrates the importance of gaining control of your blood sugar.



Humans are not grazing animals or herbivores. Eating all day will make you fat and unwell.

Once under control (balanced) you will easily be able to stay focussed on a task without having to re-start yourself with sugars and or coffee etc.

Try to dedicate yourself to having three proper meals per day. Even if you are unprepared, and have to buy food on the go, there are so many supermarkets around it's easy to find something that fits in with your new way of eating. Even a small newsagent can supply you with a bag of mixed nuts and a fizzy water, or some cheese and an apple.

Skipping a meal will be a lot less frightening and possible, even easy, once you have gained control of your blood sugar. And, yes, skipping a meal is a much better decision than eating junk.



Once balanced your desire to snack will lessen and you will feel calmer, happier and more able to concentrate on things that are truly worthwhile.

Step 4: Intermittent Fasting; Your Call

Your fourth step is completely up to you. I personally enjoy intermittent fasting (IF) and find it very easy. In fact, I find it natural and it fits in with my lifestyle. You can choose which type you do; my preference is the '16:8'.

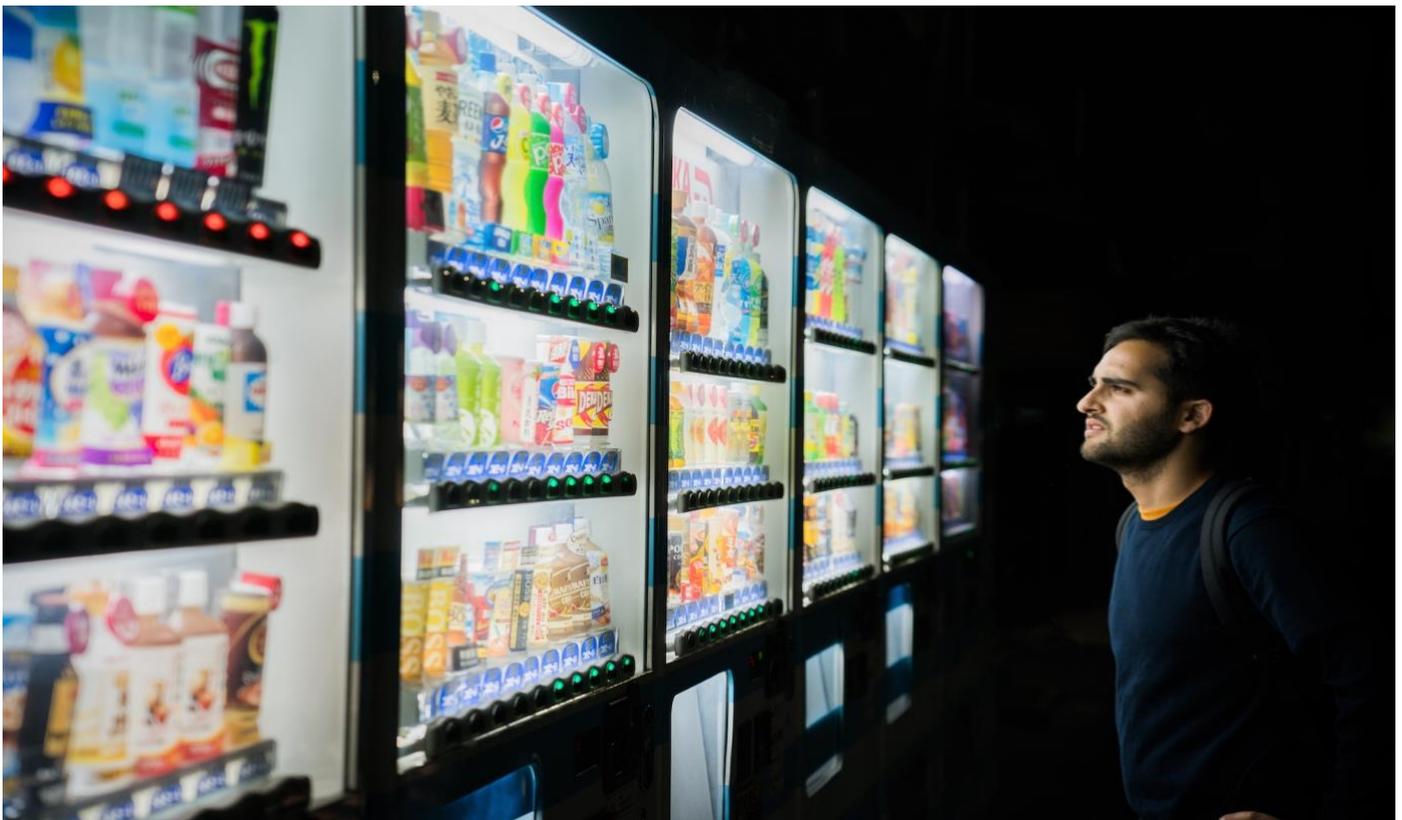
This means that you have at least 16 hours fasting each day. When you fast is up to you. I find the easiest way is to finish eating by about 1900 and then have an early lunch at about 1100 or I just wait until lunchtime, extending it a little further.



With a little planning and by staying busy intermittent fasting can be a really good approach for some. Try it on for size. Don't worry if you don't feel ready, you can come back and have a go whenever you like.

When I ate too many carbohydrates for supper, I would wake up craving more, playing into the hands of those lovely fellows down at Kelloggs HQ. Once things were under control I didn't even think about breakfast. In fact, I use that time first thing in the morning to go to the gym or similar.

The other thing I like about IF is the reduction in choices. Making fewer minor choices per day makes you more productive on other, more important tasks. It is also useful if you are on a strict elimination diet for the same reason.



Making fewer daily choices leaves you with extra time and energy. Many of the most successful people in the world apply this strategy daily.

There are many benefits to IF that are beyond the scope of this page, but a quick Google search will tell you everything you need to know.

Step 5: One Step at a Time

Taking things one step at a time is the way to do it. Don't compare yourself to others, go at your own pace. Try changing one food choice per week if you like.



Get what you desire by taking it one step at a time.

Time has a habit of flying past so before you know it you will be making better choices and reaping the rewards which are many and may surprise you. Have another look at the infographics if you need a reminder.

“Don't give up. When you fall off the wagon.. just put it behind you and crack on.”

Don't give up. When you fall off the wagon -everyone does at some point- just put it behind you and crack on. Don't wait until next Monday or the beginning of next month to start again, just forget the junk you've just eaten and aim higher for the next meal. You can do it!

Good luck and let me know how you get on please?

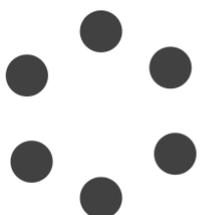
Best,

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DIET & LIFESTYLE COACHING