

Keck Medicine Quarterly: Nutrition Edition

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A collaboration between the
Clinical Nutrition and Food and
Nutrition teams.

Timing the Evidence for Intermittent Fasting

Is intermittent fasting (IF) one of your New Year's resolutions? Let's make time for a closer look.

What is IF?

IF incorporates regular periods with little to no intake of calories, or energy. There are different types, or patterns, of IF, including fasting each day for 16 hours, or fasting on alternate days.¹ Depending on the type, fasting may be limited to calorie-free drinks, like water, black coffee and tea, or it may allow up to 25% of your daily energy needs.^{1,2} Typically, you eat what you want on non-fasting days, though a balanced diet is often recommended.²

Is it effective for weight loss?

Welton et al. reviewed 27 trials of IF published between 2000 and July 1, 2019. Across all studies, weight loss ranged from 0.8-13% of baseline weight. 12 studies compared IF to traditional calorie-restricted diets and found weight loss to be similar in both groups.¹

Generally, participants reported stable or decreased hunger, though one study found increased hunger in the IF group compared with those in calorie-restricted group.¹

Most studies were short and had a small number of participants. Only 5 studies followed participants for 6 months or more after completing the IF intervention, and weight regain of 1-2% from lowest weight was common.¹

Is it effective for heart health and diabetes risk factors?

Results were mixed for whether IF decreased blood pressure in

obese adults without type 2 diabetes. In studies of adults with type 2 diabetes that looked at hemoglobin A1C, A1C decreased with IF. IF may pose a risk of hypoglycemia so those with diabetes should talk to their provider before starting.¹

Is it safe?

No serious adverse events occurred in any of the 27 trials, however safety concerns exist. IF may not be safe for everyone.¹

Take-home points

- As per the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, at this time there is not enough evidence to fully recommend IF as a treatment for chronic health conditions or for weight loss.²
- More research is needed, including longer studies, to understand sustainability and health effects.^{1,2}
- Discuss with your provider if you're considering IF, especially if you're pregnant or breastfeeding, have a history of eating disorders or disordered eating, have diabetes or take medications.²
- Registered dietitians are available at Keck Medicine of USC to support with achieving nutrition, health and weight management goals.

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Have you seen these icons on the menu in the Keck cafeteria and wondered what they mean?



Be on the lookout!

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Wellness

Wellness highlights our Mindful recipes, which meet specific nutritional criteria.

Why is this important? These recipes feature fruits and vegetables which contain fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants for good health. These recipes are heart healthy, as they are low in cholesterol and saturated fat. They also place an emphasis on sustainability and reducing environmental impact.

Please try out the Mindful recipe featured in this issue, found on page 7.



Plant-Based

Plant-based meals only use ingredients from plants such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts. They may include honey and sugar.



Vegetarian

These dishes do not contain meat or fish but may, or may not, contain dairy, eggs and/or honey.



Vegan

These dishes do not contain any ingredients that come from animals.

Next time you're in the Keck cafeteria, be on the lookout for these icons and try something new! You'll also find these icons in the EVERYDAY app (formerly the Bite app) — learn more about the app on page 5.

Nootropics are smart drugs or natural compounds that increase oxygen and glucose supply to the brain to help improve cognition, memory, comprehension and focus.



Stuck in a mental rut? Nootropics may help.

Nootropics, which originates from the Greek words *noos* (“mind”) and *tropēin* (“turning”), are smart drugs or natural compounds that increase oxygen and glucose supply to the brain to help improve cognition, memory, comprehension and focus.¹ They are typically found in three forms: prescription medications, synthetic compounds and natural sources/dietary supplements. Let’s review a few of the natural forms.

Caffeine

Over 80% of American adults consume caffeine, mostly in beverages like coffee, tea, sodas, energy drinks, alcohol and chocolate drinks.^{2,3} Other sources include foods containing chocolate and cocoa, and also dietary supplements.² Caffeine has been known to improve alertness, reaction time, attention and vigilance.³ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends healthy adults consume no more than 400mg of caffeine per day (about 4-5 cups of coffee).⁴

L-Theanine

L-theanine is a non-protein amino acid, meaning it is not an amino acid our bodies incorporate into protein, and is primarily

found in teas or supplements.⁵ Studies have suggested L-theanine’s influence on brain activity along with its effect to increase serotonin and GABA levels help improve relaxation, focus and cognitive function.^{5,6} And, when taken together with caffeine, there have been greater effects in improving focus, memory and avoiding distractions.⁵

Ginkgo Biloba

Ginkgo biloba is an herbal extract, primarily used in alternative medicine to improve cognitive function. In fact, a 6-week double-blind placebo-controlled study was conducted in participants 55 years and older which showed improvement in processing abilities compared to the placebo group.⁷ However, more studies need to be conducted to assess improvement in cognitive function as other studies show no significant differences in younger populations.⁸

Ginseng

Ginseng, also referred to as panax ginseng, is a root that has been used to improve memory, anxiety and mood.¹ In one study of 256 healthy middle-aged adults, ginseng combined with ginkgo biloba improved both working and long-term memories.⁹

It is important to use caution with any over-the-counter supplements as they are not closely regulated by the FDA. Make sure to choose reputable brands, discuss with your doctor prior to taking and monitor any side effects or symptoms to determine the need to discontinue use. Alternative methods can also be used to improve mood, cognition and brain health including consuming a balanced and healthful diet, increasing physical activity, improving sleep and managing stress levels.

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Keck COACH is a dynamic, new weight management program provided at Keck Medicine of USC.



Introducing Keck COACH: Counseling for Obesity, Activity, and Changing Health

Keck COACH is a dynamic, new weight management program provided at Keck Medicine of USC.

What does Keck COACH offer?

Participants will engage with their Keck COACH for 22 short, goal-focused sessions over the course of a year, using TeleCARE, Keck Medicine of USC's video virtual visit platform from the comfort of home. Keck COACH empowers participants to build healthier eating habits, meet physical activity goals and make positive behavioral changes.

Who qualifies for Keck COACH?

To qualify, participants must be diagnosed with obesity, which is defined by a body mass index (BMI) over 30. For help determining BMI, visit the [CDC's adult BMI calculator](#).

Does insurance cover Keck COACH?

Most plans, including the USC EPO plan, cover the Keck COACH program.

How do you get started?

For providers: refer qualifying participants using the "OP Consult to Dietitian" order and choose "IBT-Obesity" as the Reason for Visit. Please also make sure to document medical necessity in your note.

For patients and staff: ask your provider for a referral.

Once the referral is placed, participants will be called to schedule their appointment and their insurance coverage will be verified.

Questions about the Keck COACH program?

Contact Rachel.Lander-Canseco@med.usc.edu.

Recent Happenings & Coming Soon

Sustainability Fair Held in October

The Food and Nutrition department at Keck Hospital hosted another successful Sustainability Fair on October 21st, featuring local vendors, sustainably sourced produce and a seasonal Mindful recipe. Pumpkin Chia Overnight oats were delicious and easy to replicate at home. Our vendors offered samples of fresh organic fruits and vegetables, along with plant-powered items such as Impossible™ meat.



Dietitians Participate in Heart Walk

Keck Medical Center registered dietitians participated in the Heart Walk on October 22nd at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Their team, the Holy Walkamolies, was one of Keck Medicine's top fundraising teams!

Bite App will be Changing to the EVERYDAY App at Keck Hospital of USC

Starting December 7, the Bite app will be changing to the EVERYDAY app.

Find the Food That's Right for You: See what's available at our Keck Hospital of USC dining facilities by browsing the EVERYDAY app.

Order, Pay and On Your Way: No lines, no fuss, no hassle. Order your food and pay through the app. Payment is secure, safe and contact-free.

Get The Facts and Find Your Favorites: Complete transparency about what's in your food. Search for vegetarian and vegan dishes, flag allergens and more.

For more information, visit [EVERYDAY App.pdf](#)



Order Kiosk for the Keck Cafeteria Grill — Coming soon!

Ordering from the grill will be easier than ever with our new self-ordering kiosk. This way, you can customize your order and a ticket will print for the grill cooks to make freshly for you! This is estimated to go live by the end of December.

Meet some of our team members!



Jaynita Patel, MS, RD, CNSC, CCTD
Clinical Dietitian
Cardiothoracic Transplant Program

How did you get into the field?

I became interested in learning about nutrition and how it can impact the body when I was searching for new, healthy recipes to help with my own wellness after I graduated from college. I began looking at recipes online and reading articles involving nutrition and figured this would be a good career to get into.

How long have you been on our team? 7 years (one year working inpatient and 6 years working in lung transplant).

What's your favorite dish to make? Chicken biriyani — I found a recipe that utilizes the instant pot, made a few adjustments and now I can have a quick and semi-fancy dinner in no time.



Jorge Romero
Nutrition Assistant
Keck Hospital of USC

How did you get into the field?

I started working in food service 25 years ago. I have worked at different locations throughout Southern California, even Disneyland!

How long have you been on our team? I have been at Keck for 15 years. I started on tray line, and worked my way up to Nutrition Assistant.

What's your favorite dish to make? I love seafood — especially tilefish, steamed in a parchment paper packet with capers and olives.



Lashon Jefferson Cook
Keck Hospital of USC

How did you get into the field?

I've always liked to cook at home for my family.

How long have you been on our team? I have been at Keck for 2 years. I started as a Food Service Worker, and have moved up to Cook and Expediter on tray line.

What's your favorite dish to make? My favorite dish to make is lasagna from scratch. My favorite foods are cake and sweet potato pie.

The Clinical Nutrition and Food and Nutrition teams wish you a very happy holiday season, and a joyous 2023!

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Ellie Krieger's Corn & Quinoa Bowl with Chicken

From Sodexo's Mindful Recipes

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients

- ½ cup packed fresh cilantro leaves
- ½ cup packed fresh basil leaves
- 1 scallion, white and light green part, dark greens sliced and reserved for garnish
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice, plus 4 lime wedges, divided
- ¾ teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, pounded to ½-inch thickness
- 3 ears corn, shucked
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¾ cup pre-rinsed quinoa
- ½ English cucumber, chopped
- 2 medium radishes, thinly sliced
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced

Directions

1 To make sauce, place cilantro, basil, scallion, ¼ cup oil, 1 tablespoon lime juice, ½ teaspoon salt and 2 tablespoons water in the small bowl of a food processor. Blend until smooth.

2 Brush chicken and corn with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and sprinkle with remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Season chicken with black pepper and cumin.

3 Grill chicken and corn over medium-high heat. Grill until chicken is cooked through, about 4 to 5 minutes each side, and until corn is tender and lightly charred, about 15 minutes total, turning it every 3 to 4 minutes.

4 Allow chicken and corn to rest for 5 minutes, then slice chicken and cut kernels off cob. The sauce, chicken and corn may be prepared up to three days ahead and stored in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature before serving.

5 When ready to serve, place quinoa and 1 ¼ cups water into a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer until all liquid is absorbed, about 12 to 15 minutes. Fluff with a fork, and stir in corn. Divide quinoa/corn mixture among 4 bowls. Arrange chicken slices, cucumber, radishes and avocado on top. Drizzle with sauce and garnish with scallion greens and lime wedges.



NUTRITION PER SERVING: 390 calories, 41g carbohydrates, 26g protein, 15g fat, 400mg sodium, 6g fiber

References

From page 1: Timing the Evidence for Intermittent Fasting

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From page 3: Stuck in a mental rut? Nootropics may help.

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