Can you live for seven days without a bite to eat?

One VERY IMPORTANT thing to consider before trying the suggestion in this article. You should consult your physician before trying it. If he is really interested in the results, don't forget to bill him $300 an hour. Seriously they may be interested in the results even to the point of paying for before and after tests to verify the results. If you are sick it might be a good time to ask your physician if this effort might help or if there is some medical reason you should not. I went into this in a relatively healthy condition. I do not have extra cash to pay doctors and it would take me six-to-twelve months to get a doctor through the VA to give me the okay.

I will also warn you that my descriptions are somewhat graphic, but I felt it important to report all of the effects.

In my work I run across a lot of different views and opinions. I found a short interview on fasting at the *Natural News* web site. The interview was with Thomas Lodi, MD(H). His web site, An Oasis of Health, is primarily concerning alternative treatments for cancer.

The interview concerned fasting for seven-days and the physiological effects. According to Dr. Lodi, fasting this long restores the proper ratio of cyclic adenosine monophospate (called Ciclic ANP, or abbreviate cAMP) to cyclic guanosine monophosphate (Commonly called cyclic GMP or abbreviated cGMP). The proper ratio is 4 cAMP-to-1 cGMP.

I do not pretend to know what this means, but cAMP and cGMP

are called messengers which are broken off of a higher compound. An article on Lab Manager suggests that an increase of cAMP may have positive effects on people with depression. So if the research Dr. Lodi sites is correct, fasting for a short period, or up to seven-days, may improve your depression better than any drug.

Dr. Lodi suggests a relationship between the proper ratio of these messengers and the lymphoid tissue associated with the immune system. 60% of the lymphoid tissue associated with immune is in gastrointestinal tract, he said. I tried to research this but it went into very technical explanations that I did not understand. I can put a dressing on a wound and I know that it will eventually stop the bleeding through clotting. I cannot pretend to explain the physiological mechanism behind it. The basic idea—as I understand it—is that when you eat, especially overeat, these lymphoid tissues are engaged in defending against what you eat and not engaged in defending you against sickness.

The purpose of this article is to describe my experience with a seven-day fast with some caveats.
(1) I continued to take 1000 to 2000 mg of vitamin C through gummy vitamins. I chose those because the other non-chewable pill forms generally require food to properly dissolve them. I was taking a multivitamin gummy, but ran out on day two or day three.
(2) I continued to drink coffee and, on occasion, used those flavored creamers. Probably not the best idea but I think the effect was negligible.
(3) I continued to drink iced tea with some sugar. Again I believe the amount of sugar was negligible.

HOW MY WEEK WENT

Forgive the fact that I drift from past tense to present. I began to write this article into the fast, thus on some days I was describing how I actually felt that day.

Day 1
I started off on Sunday. I started Sunday morning. In other words, I could not eat until the next Sunday at breakfast. No real effect on my well-being. It seems I did urinate more, but that was probably because I drink a lot of liquids. At this time it was mostly water. In fact I slept pretty good Sunday night. Except that I was woken by a thunderstorm while camping and decided it best to conduct an emergency evacuation about 11 p.m. Right when I got home, of course, the thunder stopped. I think I went back to sleep around 2 a.m. and slept well.

Day 2
Through Monday I felt okay, but the hunger pangs were with me throughout the day. I was able to function clearly, though. I napped in the afternoon and that seemed to help.

Day 3
Tuesday was the worst. I was hungry. I was not dizzy, exactly, but my mind was kind of off-balance. So I was off balance. That is the best description I can give. I was miserable and thinking about giving up. I have fasted this long before and this is usually the point I give up. I slept after working.

I am not ashamed to admit that I prayed to God—the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob—to strengthen me and shore me up. You may call that mental re-enforcement, lack of oxygen to the brain or whatever. I call it being a Christian, which is what I am. I prefer disciple over that term, but you would not understand unless you understand the history. The point is that on Day 3 I did not think I would last. I used sleep, mainly, to stave off the problems. I was determined, however, to last the seven-days.

Day 4
Wednesday. I expected to wake up in the same condition. To my amazement, my mind was completely clear. I was weaker than usual. I did not feel real energetic.

Because this day happened to coincide with National Dog Day, I took my dog out to walk in the woods and spent the day, mostly, playing with him. I still feel the hunger, but it is very manageable. Although I still felt weak, I had the strength to clear a fallen tree from the road we walked on. The tree was not really huge, but it had been rain soaked which made it a little heavier. I did not lift the tree, but dragged it. The top part was rather light, only about 100 pounds. I am guessing the weight because in my weakened state it might have been even lighter. The trunk, however, seemed to be about 250-t0-300 pounds. I was able, however, to drag it to the side of the road, as well. I did drag the objects. I did not attempt to lift them.

I do not usually seek to move trees from forest roads, but I usually do pack out trash left by disgusting people with no respect for the land. This was more a mental affirmation that I was okay.

Day 5

Thursday. I woke up slightly better than Wednesday. My mind was a little clearer. The hunger is still felt, but slightly less. I began to write this article (which I should have done from the beginning). While I kept my mind on researching these effects, the hunger did not bother me. I was able to absorb only a fraction of the material. I confess that, at this point, I still do not understand it all. My objective, here, is to simply determine the effects of fasting for seven-days. So far there have been few negative effects (mainly on the third day) and none after that. My mind seems to be a little clearer. I am anticipating being able to eat again, though. That is one possible negative effect. Particularly when my friends on Facebook are posting their scrumptious meals. That effect is negligible, though, and has not affected my desire to continue with the fast. I have found that combining fast with naps is very helpful. I have that luxury which many do not have, however.

Interestingly I had a big day 5 test. The vehicle that I just bought broke down before my first payment. Before this fast, this would have driven me into a rage. Yet I am calm. I had some “stinkin’ thinkin’,” as my AA friends would tell me. But I am not enraged. Even speculating an expensive repair bill is not giving me to anger. (Of course I will not publish this article until probably AFTER the repair is made so the mechanic will not know that) The point is that I feel more amazingly in control of my emotions than before the fast. I admit this does stress me to give up and eat.

Another thing that I never thought to do was to check my urine. Before the experiment my urine was light and *WebMD* says that is probably because I was drinking too much fluid. I did notice that I was going far more regularly the first day. Today that color turned to the amber color which indicates that I might not be drinking enough fluid. I drank about the same amount of tea and coffee. I could probably increase water. The other cause could be the increased amount of vitamin C.

What is critical is the smell. I did not notice any change in smell. Your urine may smell strange if you eat certain foods such as asparagus and beets, according to the *WebMD* article. No cause for alarm. What this change in color did do is tell me that there are definite physiological changes going on. Since I felt okay, I was not alarmed. I would suggest that, if you are working with a physician, you report any changes in the smell of your urine.

I am tired at 7:39 p.m. I did not get a chance to nap during the day. My mind, however, is surprisingly clear.

Day 6

Friday. On day 6 I woke up about twenty minutes after midnight due to itchy hands. Had to get up and get medicine on to stop them. The hunger pangs are back and I think that is keeping me

up, as well. Another stress arose over my car. Yet, I actually feel quite calm. I have already worked out a strategy in my mind. I wound up working until about 3:30 a.m. Oddly enough, I felt the need to defecate this morning prior to returning to bed. I woke again about 8 a.m. I did defecate a little, but there was more smelly gas.

The rest of the day was spent concentrating on my stressful situation. I did notice that some of my bad thinking was returning, but I handled it in a much more calm fashion. I did forget to take the vitamin C in the morning, but I do not know if that was a contributing factor. I do know that I was able to finally get an hour nap beginning at 4:45. That energized me the rest of the evening.

This was not one of the goals, but a friend asked me about my weight. I weighed in 15-pounds lighter this afternoon. If I return with a steady diet, I should be able to, at least, maintain that new level. This is why I plan to start off with soups and a lighter diet. I do still have the urge for some of those chemical-laden tasty treats I used to eat, but not as bad as I used to. Returning to them might bring the more intense urges back so I'll have to take care.

As of now, I consider this experiment very successful. I am feeling good, though I feel the hunger a bit. I do admit that I am anticipating the end of day 7. I must stress, again, that you should check with your doctor to determine if you are healthy enough to try this. Water helps to dilute the feeling of hunger considerably and is necessary for your life. You can drink up to a gallon a day. I highly recommend that if you choose filtered water, do NOT choose distilled water. I understand that distilled water is absolutely free of chemical compounds that your body will need. If you drink distilled water, I am told that it will actually extract those chemicals from your body.

Day 7

I woke about 7 a.m. I had to check my car and replace a part. I was hoping that would resolve my problem and everything would smooth out. It did not happen. Although I was disappointed, I did not get enraged. I expect the worst but hope for the best.

Again my mind was clear and I had no real anger.

I broke my fast at about 4 p.m. I ended it by sharing a beef jerky with my dog. I then had a bowl of cream of potato soup with crackers. That was after about an hour nap.

I did wind up consuming another bowl of soup about 8 p.m., or so.

RECOVERY

The next morning I ate soup and some of those bad things. I do notice, though, that I am not craving those bad things as much. I did not really think to write down a menu. I was able to keep to a reasonable diet, although Sunday night there was a special function in which I probably overdid it.

What interests me the most is the change in myself. I would normally take a bathroom break and, on the way back to the computer, pick up whatever I had laying down to snack on. I do not crave doing that now. The other thing is the peace in my mind. It is something that I really cannot describe. It is something one must experience. I really think that in some cases—maybe not all—this might be an effective treatment for certain depressions and other mental illness. I stress, however, that the person should be monitored constantly by loved-ones who have been briefed on how to talk with the person during this period and when to call it quits. It might help to even have the loved-one fast with them. I would not recommend a fast this long for children.

I am concentrating, now, on trying to focus on a better diet. I might try this again the last week of next month. I might

even try to get the VA involved and have some tests run before and after to see the results.

SUMMARY

If you are a working stiff, here are a few tips that might help. Start your fast Thursday evening. It will not affect your performance on Friday. If you have the same experience as I, your worst day will be on Sunday. On Saturday and Sunday you will probably have to forego the “honey-do” list and nap to help you through the tough period. By Monday, you should return to a rational, functional human being.

If you are in a stressful job, those stresses will still remain. I would drop the coffee altogether during your fasting period and stick to hot or iced tea. Particularly green tea, but regular pekoe tea is okay. Use very little sugar. I believe that by this time, your mind will be clear and your disposition will actually be better. You may even surprise a few people at work. You may not be able to take a nap, save your lunch hour. I would suggest, though, that hour might be better spent concentrating on manuals or books which might improve your job position. For sleep I would recommend the old Ben Franklin saying, “Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.” In other words, when you return home, go to bed earlier than normal. If you usually go to bed at 11 p.m. try going to bed at 9 p.m. Or even 8. If you work during the night, obviously you will have to set your sleep schedule accordingly. The idea is to try to get more sleep while you fast.

I find it better if I tell as few people as possible when I start something like this. The reason is that they will either try to derail you or tell you what a good job you are doing. Either is a detriment to your goal. This is called negative and positive reinforcement, respectively. The more people try to cheer you to your goal, the more you tend to think about your goal and fixate on it. That is okay if you are running a

5k which you will probably accomplish in about ten minutes (That's thirty minutes for me in my car). Or if you are trying to do a number of sit-ups and push-ups, positive reinforcement is great. If you are trying to do something like this, however, over a period of time, positive reinforcement might not help no matter how helpful the person is trying to be. That has been my experience in the past.

I discussed this project with a friend whom I felt it might help. He reminded me of something very important. How to break your fast. You do not want to start stuffing down three plates of bacon and pancakes. Start slow. My plan is to start with soups and perhaps some crackers. I will probably consume four-to-six throughout the day. To not sabotage my efforts, I will probably stop eating about 5 or 6 p.m. I usually go to bed right around midnight.

There is one more very important concept here. If your neighborhood, State or country should suffer a natural disaster or an external attack, you can—and probably should—fast for as many days as possible. It apparently has not killed me, so it might not kill you. This will extend your food stores. If you have any food in the refrigerator, you should consume those foods, then you can start your fast. You do not know how long your difficulty may last. If it last only seven-days even better. You still have your storable food in stock.

The bible speaks about prayer and fasting. I have not found anywhere that directs the length of time. In Matthew 17:14 (Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-42; Luke 17:5-10) the disciples have a discussion concerning the casting out of demons. There was a man with a lunatic son who was "sore vexed."

> *14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. 16*

> *And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. 17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. 18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. 19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 20* ***And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain****, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. 21* ***Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.***

Can you cast out your demons? Jesus tells us that it requires faith and prayer and fasting. I believe we rely too much on the pharmaceutical companies for our well-being. In some cases they are absolutely necessary. If you get a snake bite, you want to get an anti-venom as quickly as possible. Ritalin may not be the right answer for ADHD. It may be a last resort.

I did not start this as a religious fast, mind you. Though I did ask for the help of God on several occasions. This was an experiment solely on the physiological effects of fasting. I found that even though I retained a few old bad habits, the fasting was very successful.

I have to confess that the spiritual effects and the effect on my mind is stunning.