Fasting's impact on Metabolic health

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Fasting is a practice that involves refraining from consuming food and sometimes beverages for a specific duration. There are different types of fasts, each with its distinct approach and purpose. Some of the more common types include:

1. **Water Fasting:** This involves consuming only water for a specified period, usually lasting one to three days.
2. **Intermittent Fasting:** Intermittent fasting restricts food intake to a specific daily time window, typically involving 16-20 hours of fasting and 4-8 hours of eating.
3. **Alternate Day Fasting:** In this approach, fasting occurs every other day, with some variations allowing limited calorie intake on fasting days.
4. **Religious Fasting:** Fasting is observed as a spiritual discipline in some religions, such as during Ramadan.
5. **Partial Fasting:** Certain foods are restricted during partial fasting.

Studies that investigated the impact on metabolic health of fasting found that fasting can help improve insulin sensitivity, lower blood sugar and insulin levels, and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Here are some summaries of the current research:

1. **Effect of Intermittent Fasting Diet on Glucose and Lipid Metabolism and Insulin Resistance in Patients with Impaired Glucose and Lipid Metabolism: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis**
   This research looked at clinical trials and discovered that intermittent fasting can be helpful for people with metabolic syndrome. It can lower things like fasting blood sugar, insulin levels, and body weight. The study suggests that intermittent fasting might be a good addition to prevent chronic diseases.

2. **Effects of Time-Restricted Feeding and Ramadan Fasting on Body Weight, Body Composition, Glucose Responses, and Insulin Resistance: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials.**
   Two types of fasting, called time-restricted feeding (TRF) and Ramadan fasting (RF), can affect body weight and blood sugar. This review gathered information on these fasting methods and found that TRF could help overweight or obese people by improving insulin sensitivity and how their blood sugar levels change throughout the day. It suggests TRF could be a useful way to lose weight and manage blood sugar.

3. **Time-restricted feeding improves blood glucose and insulin sensitivity in overweight patients with type 2 diabetes: a randomised controlled trial.**
   A study in the journal Nutrition & Metabolism showed that time-restricted feeding (a form of intermittent fasting) can improve insulin sensitivity and lower blood sugar levels in overweight individuals with Type 2 diabetes. Participants were told to eat all their calories within a 10-hour window each day and fast for 14 hours overnight for five weeks.

Fasting can provide many benefits and it is important to check with your healthcare practitioner prior to initiating any new health care regime or practice.

Practitioners trained by the Metabolic Terrain Institute of Health take a scientific approach to working with patients who wish to implement fasting as a treatment option. It is essential to consult with a MATC Certified™ Practitioner to properly test, assess and address each patient before and during implementing therapeutic fasting interventions, or at the very least consult with a practitioner or health care provider familiar with your specific state of metabolic health. It is crucial to work with a certified practitioner and follow a proper fasting protocol, especially when implementing fasting alongside other treatments.

References:

1. Yuan X, et al. Effect of Intermittent Fasting Diet on Glucose and Lipid Metabolism and Insulin Resistance in Patients with Impaired Glucose and Lipid Metabolism: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. Int J Endocrinol. 2022 Mar 24;2022:6999907.
2. Tsitsou S, et al Effects of Time-Restricted Feeding and Ramadan Fasting on Body Weight, Body Composition, Glucose Responses, and Insulin Resistance: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials. Nutrients. 2022 Nov 11;14(22):4778.
3. Che T, Yan C, Tian D, Zhang X, Liu X, Wu Z. Time-restricted feeding improves blood glucose and insulin sensitivity in overweight patients with type 2 diabetes: a randomised controlled trial. Nutr Metab (Lond). 2021 Oct 7;18(1):88.