

Karwa Chauth – Break your fast effectively - Tips

- By Althea Shah, Fitness Expert - Énergie Fitness India

Karwa Chauth is one of the most loved festivals in India that celebrates the bond shared between a man and his wife. Women pray for the long life of their husbands and ask Lord Shiva to protect them from any harm or difficulties.

Women fast from sunrise to moonrise without food and water. Nowadays even some men fast along with their wives. It is also believed that this festival brings peace, happiness and joy into their married life.

Prepare your body for a long day without food and water

While you prepare for the big day getting together all the things required for the rituals, remember to also prepare your body for a long day without food and water

Planning your medicines

This fast is not an easy one, women with diabetes, hypothyroid and hypertension must plan their day ahead, in order to avoid any health risks during the fast.

Since this fast lasts for about twelve to fifteen hours, make sure that you consult a doctor before planning your day.

Get the dosage of your medications changed since you are on a fast. For example, if you are on insulin then you must decrease the dosage while fasting. Keep monitoring your blood glucose throughout the day.

Planning your meals

Eat slow absorbing foods and include vegetables, pulses and fruits to it. The fiber will help you feel fuller a little longer and offer tons of vitamins and minerals.

Fresh fruits have high water content. Eating a lot of fresh fruits will keep you hydrated.

Dry fruits provide you energy and many nutrients. Include cashews, almonds, raisins and pistachios in the sargi thali, which give you all the essential nutrients for the day. Light-cooked food or simple semi-cooked vegetables will make you feel full, and yet, will not be too heavy for it to destroy your fast.

Sweets like a mithai, rich in glucose and sucrose will give you the energy to carry on throughout the day.

Drink as much water as you can, before the fast begins. Dehydration can increase the risk of developing headaches and fatigue, which can drain and exhaust you. Fruit juices are also a helpful addition

Post the fast

When women try to see the moon through a sieve and then catch a glimpse of their husbands through the same sieve, it is believed that all negative emotions are filtered through it.

It is important to ensure that you restore the nutritional balance after the fast to avoid health obstacles such as fatigue, weakness or tiredness.

Hydrate the body post fasting, but do not do it at one go. Take small sips of water rather than gulping it down.

Dry fruits are a powerhouse of nutrients and have high energy content. Include dry fruits such as figs, almonds and dates while breaking your Karwa Chauth fast.

Coconut water is a healthy way as it will boost your energy level. It contains natural sugar and electrolytes such as sodium and potassium which will hydrate your body.

Lemon juice will keep you refreshed. It will provide a dose of antioxidants to your body and your stomach will be prepared to eat food after a long time.

Green leafy vegetables will boost energy. They are a powerhouse of nutrients, vitamins, minerals & fibre.

Fruits and juices contain fibre and natural sugar which provides energy and help to induce the feeling of satiety. Apples, watermelon and grapes can be consumed while breaking the Karwa Chauth fast. A glass of juice will help you stay hydrated after long hours of not consuming water

Things to avoid

Avoid coffee or tea on an empty stomach: If you consume coffee or tea immediately after a fast, it can result in acidity. You can instead have healthier beverages such as coconut water, lemon juice, fruit juice, buttermilk or cool milk as they will have a soothing effect on your body or have a bowl of plain curd, it will cool down your body and digestive system.

Avoid binge-eating after breaking the fast. Don't eat fried and processed foods, as this will cause acidity. Have a light, healthy meal instead.

Don't eat too many sweets made of processed sugar. Swap it with a piece of jaggery or a bar of dark chocolate.

Don't eat spicy food as it may lead to indigestion. Replace with light homemade healthy meals with less masalas.

Meditate and breathe

Practise pranayama as it helps keep the dizzy feeling away. This yoga posture also allows you to control your breathing pattern and increase the level of oxygen in the body