

Time-Restricted Eating

“Time-restricted eating affects our circadian rhythm, restructures the microbiome, and heals the gut.”

Best-selling author and Cardiologist, Dr. Stephen Gundry's new book, The Energy Paradox, has a plethora of bio-hacks to help people achieve more energy. I thought it would be fun to focus on one of the techniques that could make a profound difference in your patients' health, and yet, doesn't cost them a penny.

By now, you're familiar with the term time-restricted eating, but let's take a deeper dive into the concept and see how to make it work for your patients. Dr. Gundry has been applying this principle for himself and patients for over 15 years, so it's nice to learn from someone else's experience.

The most obvious benefit from time-restricted eating is better insulin regulation. And as we have discussed on many programs, insulin dysregulation causes metabolic inflexibility, over oxidation, hormone dysregulation, and inflammation. Time-restricted eating, as its name implies, means to restrict eating to a set number of hours per day. This encourages, and in many



cases, retrains your body to burn fats as the primary source of fuel instead of carbohydrates.

In his book, Dr. Gundry shares that closing one's eating window to 6-8 hours can have profound effects. He finds that by adding principles of time-restricted eating, people who have been treated unsuccessfully by other doctors have recovered from chronic Lyme disease, EBV, chronic fatigue, food allergies, autoimmune conditions, and toxic mold.

But trying to motivate patients to make that type of change right away is instant failure.

Many, many patients eat 16 hours a day to maintain energy, so to limit their eating will cause headaches, fatigue, brain fog etc. So, he has learned to go in steps.

His first step is to start with what he calls “the biggest lifestyle change.” Stop eating at least three, but preferably four, hours before bed. Here's why. When you eat food, your blood is directed, as it should be, to your gut. It takes tremendous energy to digest and assimilate food.

Dr. Dale Bredesen, a neurologist specializing in Alzheimer's disease, says that when we sleep, our blood

moves to our brain and washes or cleans our brain of metabolic byproducts and toxins. If we don't have proper blood supply, metabolic toxins accumulate. And let's not forget that during the night, our bodies undergo mitochondrial repair. Speaking of the mitochondria... time-restricted eating will promote both mitogenesis, a process of mitochondrial replication and mitophagy, the process of degrading malfunctioning mitochondria.

Dr. Gundry's book quoted a few studies which are worth noting. The first is from Dr. Satchin Panda from the Salk Institute. He showed in both rats and humans, reducing their eating window to 10 hours, which leaves 14 hours of fasting, had profound benefits in terms of weight loss, increased energy, clearer thinking, improved moods, and improved sleep, all over the course of a few months.

He also shared the work of Dr. Sarah Mitchell and Rafael de Cabo, Ph.D., at the NIH (National Institutes of Health). You may remember that there were two large rhesus monkey studies on calorie restriction: one from the University of Wisconsin and one from the National Institute of Aging. Both studies found that a 30% caloric restriction extended health span. There was a lot of argument about why that was; one was a higher protein diet, and one was a higher fat diet. Both had about 35% carbohydrates in their diet.

Dr. Mitchell and Dr. De Cabo divided 6 groups of mice into two protocols. Two groups of mice got a full day's food, and they could eat 24 hours day. One group ate a high fat diet, and the other a high protein diet. Another two groups of mice were caloric restricted, again using a high fat

diet and a high protein diet. However, they put out their food at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The last 2 groups had a full days' food, but it was also put out at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, creating a time-restricted eating pattern. Researchers found that it didn't matter whether it was a high sugar diet, a high-fat diet, or a high-protein diet. Restricting the amount of time for eating was the control factor that made the difference.

He also found that the mice who ate all day had no metabolic flexibility whatsoever. They couldn't shift between using sugar and fat, but the time-restricted mice and the calorie restricted mice had metabolic flexibility. It's a beautiful study that shows it's not just what you're eating, but how long you're eating that makes a difference.

Of course, Dr. Gundry recommends an anti-inflammatory, high fiber diet designed to feed the microbiome. In his book, [The Energy Paradox](#), Dr. Gundry discusses how time-restricted eating affects our circadian rhythm, restructures the microbiome, and heals the gut. He also shares his 6-week retraining program. I've put a link to the right for you.

I don't think there is a perfect way or definitive rule on this subject, so don't get discouraged if you or your patients don't do it perfectly. The key is to start talking about this with your patients. Even if your patients create a 12-hour eating window and then stop eating 3 hours before bed, they are moving in the right direction.

Thanks for watching today. I look forward to being with you again next Tuesday.