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Celebration

TIMES

NAVRATRI SPECIAL

A Community Connect Initiative

Feasting while fasting

EATING IS A NECESSITY, BUT TO EAT INTELLIGENTLY IS AN ART. WE TELL YOU ABOUT THE RIGHT DIET PLAN THAT YOU NEED TO FOLLOW TO REAP ALL THE BENEFITS OF FASTING DURING NAVRATRI...



Dr Anjali Phatak

Navratri is one of the most important festivals celebrated with great joy, enthusiasm and tradition in our Indian culture. Associated with Goddess Durga, the nine days fasting ritual has a lot of religious significance and beliefs attached to it. Fasting is part of a healthy and balanced choice to protect yourself from preventable modern lifestyle diseases. Fasting as a remedy is completely harmonious with the philosophy of 'nature-cure'. Periods of deliberate fasting with restriction of solid food intake are practiced worldwide, mostly based on tradition-

ods, immunity system is low and one should take a light, nutritious meal as well as indulge in the practice of cleansing and purifying your body. This is one of the reasons to avoid meat, alcohol, grains, table salt because all these foods are hard to digest. So, it is scientifically proven that fasting during this time has major benefits.

Fast in a healthy manner

>> First of all eat small frequent meals, this will not only give you energy for the day but will also keep your blood sugar levels stable.

>> Begin your day by drinking luke-warm water with a few drops of lemon to flush and detoxify the system.

C, and antioxidants.

>> Drink a lot of fluids such as juices, vegetable soups, lassi, milkshakes and herbal tea. Besides giving you sufficient energy they will keep you active all day long.

>> Avoid fried foods and take more of curd, milkshakes, fresh fruits and so on. Fried foods produce a lot of burning sensation in the body.

>> Make sure to avoid staying empty-stomach for long hours. Eat small portions every few hours.

>> Eat almonds (soaked overnight) and raisins to boost minerals. Avoid too much sugar and too much salt in your diet.

WHO SHOULD AVOID FASTING?

- >> Uncontrolled Diabetes patients
- >> Pregnant women
- >> Diabetic pregnant women
- >> Person with prolonged weakness
- >> Those who have had major surgeries
- >> People with hyperacidity and ulcers
- >> Those suffering from depression, stress, during psychiatric treatments.

HEALTHY NAVRATRI DIET PLAN

- >> Start your day with a cup of green tea and two dates with tulsi leaves.
- >> For breakfast, eat fruits with skimmed milk, Amaranth porridge with nuts, fruit shake with five to six soaked almonds.
- >> Have milkshake/ lassi/ lemon water with fruits, coconut water with fruits /green tea with water in mid morning.
- >> For lunch, opt for sabudana khichdi/ rajgira roti with lauki/ arbi sabzi and a glass of chhaas with rock salt/ grilled vadas with mint chutney, kuttu chapatti with vegetables and salad with raita /baked sabudana

- tikkis with veggies / curd samak rice with vegetables and salad.
- >> In the evening, you can go for green tea, fresh fruit juice, smoothies, buttermilk with jeera/pudina/black pepper powder with roasted makhana with roasted mix dry fruits/paneer cubes.
- >> For dinner, start with vegetable soup, a bowl of salad with kuttu ka atta/rajgira roti/samak rice uttapam/idli any one and sabzi /pumpkin or lauki raita followed by low-fat lauki halwa or carrot halwa.
- >> Before sleeping, have a glass of skimmed milk.

al, cultural or religious reasons. Apart from spiritual benefits, fasting is also good for the health. It detoxifies the body, improves digestive system, controls blood sugar levels and most importantly, is helpful for weight reduction.

Navratri fasts occur twice a year, every time during change of season, from winter to summer and second time when the chill starts to set in. During these peri-

>> Keep yourself hydrated by drinking atleast 4-5 litres of water per day. This helps you cleanse your toxins. Also drink a lot of fluids like milk, green tea, coconut water, lemon water, buttermilk and fresh juices.

>> Eat a lot of vegetables and drink juices made out of bottle gourd, tomato, apple and a little bit of ginger, as these provide mega shots of vitamins A, B and

>> Add your favourite toppings like fruits and flaxseeds, to your bowl of curd to make it more filling. Eating fruit salads can actually help you curb your cravings. Fruits contain healthy sugar fructose that fuels your metabolism.

>> Do juice fasting instead of water fasting as it supports the body nutritionally with a lot of antioxidants while cleansing it at

the same time. Also, it helps maintain energy levels while still allowing elimination of toxins.

>> In case of pain in the body or colic (acute abdominal pain), put a few drops of peppermint oil in plain lukewarm water and drink it.

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FESTIVE TIME... BRING IT ON!

IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN! AS THE MERCURY IS DIPPING, THE STATE OF RAJASTHAN SEEMS TO BE WARMING UP TO THE FESTIVE SEASON. BE IT SHOPPING, EATING OUT, DANCING AT DANDIYA NIGHTS, VISITING DURGA PUJA PANDALS, GOING TO RAMLILAS, GETTING READY FOR DIWALI... PEOPLE ARE GETTING READY FOR THE PARTY AHEAD...

Can you feel that zing in the air? Yes, it is that time of the year again. Celebration time! Time to live it up. For that zing in the air is definitely all about the festivities. The Navratras, Durga Puja, Dussehra... you name it. And, then of course, the bigwig of them all, Diwali is to follow in a few weeks.

The festive season lends that extra spring to people's walk. With the beginning of the festive season, celebration is uppermost on everyone's mind. Celebrating in style is the norm these days. Take a look around and notice the elaborately decorated markets, shops overflowing with goodies and religious oblations, the numerous discount offers that have cropped up, and the people who are flocking these bazaars by the dozen. They tell you the story of the festive season.

As the years pass by there has been a marked change as to how the festivals are celebrated. Now the Durga Puja is just not for the Bongs and dandiya just not for the Gujjus. Everyone visits the Durga Puja pandals these days and enjoys the programmes and goodies being sold there. Navratra fasts are now evidently

kept by most keeping in mind the weight they would lose rather than for their sanctity. "Of course I keep Navratras so that I lose a little weight," informs Anjali a collegiate, "That way I keep my weight down and reap the religious benefits too." Many a college going crowd would agree with this. And, no one minds this anymore. It is of course the smart thing to do, kill two birds with one stone.

Talking about the Dandiya, it seems that this traditional dance form of the Gujjus has become quite the rage now. Now big extravagant dandiya parties are held and participants start practicing months ahead for the same. Celebrities too hit the dance floors at these parties in a big way. Says Nandita Agarwal, executive in a corporate firm,

"For me Navratras are all about Dandiya. I get special lehngas made with lot of Gujarati mirror work for this occasion. Me and my friends have mega fun at these parties."

Says Navin Mittal who organises these dandiya bashes, "The grounds are packed up to the brim with well-dressed men and women. The parties go on late into the night. We usually get a DJ for such occasions. These days it is a very professional set up." "The thing uppermost on people's mind is to enjoy," opines Akshay who has been a DJ at many such bashes, "I prepare dance numbers especially for this occasion."

But one thing that hasn't changed over the years is shopping. Shopping seems to be still going strong this festive season. And, the festivals offer an excuse to go ahead and splurge a bit of that moolah you've been earning throughout the year. The Bongs have got it right. They shop for clothes and jewellery for the entire year during the Durga Puja. "We wear new clothes every day of the Puja," says Rakhee, "So you can imagine why shopping takes up a lot of our time." With Diwali due to make its appearance soon, people just have another excuse to shop. So, is it any wonder then that the markets are all set to woo the public in a big way. Just check out the new look they are sporting, which is definitely worth a dekho for their decorations. Evenings are no longer spent at home. Families can be spotted shopping for the festival and savouring the new goodies the markets have to offer.

For the simple mantra these days is - festive time, fun time. So, what are you waiting for... Come join in!