

भारतीय मानक
उपचारात्मक उपवास - रीति संहिता

Indian Standard
THERAPEUTIC FASTING —CODE OF PRACTICE

Naturopathy Sectional Committee - AYD

Last Date of Comments: 18.08.2025

FOREWORD

(Formal clause shall be added later on)

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine that utilizes the healing properties of natural elements such as soil, water, sunlight, air, space, nutrition, rest, and physical activity to address and prevent illnesses, while also enhancing overall health and well-being. The therapeutic techniques involved in naturopathy are based on the customs and culture of the Indian sub-continent documented in the *Upanishads*, *Purāṇās* and other ancient Indian Scriptures.

Therapeutic fasting is the voluntary abstinence from food for a specified time, carried out under the guidance of a naturopathic physician. Therapeutic fasting serves as a method in naturopathy to gain health benefits. Depending on the condition of individual's and the intended outcomes, fasting can vary in duration, including short fasting, prolonged fasting, and intermittent fasting. The various approaches to therapeutic fasting observable in public necessitate the establishment of a standardized practice; therefore, this document has been developed.

The inputs for formulation of this standard are derived from the information available in the public domain in print and electronic media including authoritative books on Naturopathy published by the National Institute of Naturopathy, Ministry of Ayush, Govt. of India. Technical inputs from subject matter experts are also incorporated while formulating this standard.

Indian Standard

THERAPEUTIC FASTING — CODE OF PRACTICE

1 SCOPE

This standard provides procedure and requirements for therapeutic fasting in naturopathy for treating several health conditions and also for maintaining general well-being.

2 REFERENCES

The standard mentioned below contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision and parties to agreements based on this standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the standards.

<i>Standard No.</i>	<i>Title</i>
IS 19136 : 2025	Glossary of Naturopathy

3 TERMINOLOGY

For the purpose of this standard, the terms and definitions given in IS 19136 shall apply.

4 CLASSIFICATION

Therapeutic fasting in Naturopathy shall be classified as follows:

- a) Short fast;
- b) Long fast, and
- c) Intermittent fast.

4.1 Short-Fast

A short fast is a therapeutic practice as well as a lifestyle modification measure in Naturopathy that encompasses the following aspects:

- a) The duration of short fasting shall be 24 –72 h.
- b) The daily routine does not need to be altered on account of the short fast.
- c) Physical exertion and exposure to extreme temperatures shall be avoided during a short fast.

4.1.2 Preparation

The following preparatory measures shall be taken for short fasting:

- a) A cold abdominal pack shall be applied twice a day (morning and evening for a duration of 10 min);
- b) Enema shall be administered every day in the morning; and
- c) Any other treatments, if required, shall be given as per physician's advice.

4.1.3 Rest

- a) Physical rest shall be ensured by ceasing the individual's physical activity and allowing for periods of rest and relaxation.
- b) Mental rest shall be ensured by curtailing mental activities and emotional unrest.
- c) Sensory rest shall be achieved by relocating to a tranquil environment and refraining from engaging the senses.

4.2 Long-Fast

A long fast is a therapeutic practice as well as a lifestyle modification measure in Naturopathy that encompasses the following aspects:

- a) The daily routine of the individual shall be adjusted to accommodate the demands of an extended fast, which calls for rest at physical, physiological, psychological, and emotional levels.
- b) Techniques for relaxation shall be implemented to promote a profound sense of tranquilization.
- c) The long fasting period shall be exceeding 72 hours, as determined by the Naturopathy physician, based on the individual's health status during the fast.

4.2.1 Preparation

The following preparatory measures shall be taken for long fasting:

- a) Naturopathy physician shall ensure the mental consciousness of the individual undertaking long fast through comprehensive counseling provided by the physician.

b) Prayer/Meditation/Swadhyaya

An individual undergoing long fasting shall practice contemplation or self-actualization twice a day to have a smooth and uneventful fasting experience.

c) Water intake

A naturopathy physician shall examine and ensure hydration is adequately maintained.

d) Bathing

Short-duration baths shall be taken twice a day.

e) Sunbathing

Sunbaths shall be taken for the first three days (for 5 to 10 min) of long-fast.

4.2.2 Treatments

Enema and abdominal mud pack/cold abdominal pack for 10 min shall be administered every day in the morning. A hip bath shall be given daily in the afternoon or as prescribed by physician schedule for a duration of 10 to 15 minutes.

4.2.3 *Breaking the Long Fast*

The naturopathy physician shall look for signs of breaking the fast and instruct the individual to break the long fast with fruits juices and seasonal fruits, 2 to 4 h interval or until to take semi-solid/solid food. The individual shall be encouraged to take vegetable smoothies, vegetable salads, fruits, sprouts and soaked nuts as per the availability.

4.3 Intermittent Fasting

The following points shall define intermittent fasting and outline the essential considerations for its safe and effective practice:

- a) Intermittent fasting is a therapeutic practice as well as a lifestyle modification measure in Naturopathy which consists of a prolonged gap between two meals.
- b) The gap between two meals gradually increased from 6 h to 24 h over a few days, weeks or months.
- c) The daily routine of the individual does not need to be altered on account of intermittent fasting. However, physical exertion and exposure to extreme temperatures should be minimized.

Note: All types of fasts whether short fast, long fast or intermittent fast necessitate a complete comprehension and agreement from the individual engaging in the fast to achieve the intended clinical outcome. Hence, a written informed consent should be obtained as per **Annex A**.

Annex A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM THERAPEUTIC FASTING — CODE OF PRACTICE

I (Name of Patient/Individual)hereby permit (Name of Naturopathy Physician)his/her Associate Attending Physician of the same service and assistants as may be selected and supervised by him/her to perform therapeutic fasting.

The procedure has been explained to me and I have been told the reasons why I need the procedure. The risks of the procedure have also been explained to me. In addition, I have been told that the procedure may not have the results that I expect. I have also been told about other possible treatments for my condition and what might happen if no treatment is received. I understand that in addition to the risks described to me about this procedure, there are risks that may occur with any naturopathy and yoga procedures.

I have had enough time to discuss my condition and treatment with my healthcare providers and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I believe, I have enough information to make an informed decision and I agree to have the procedure. If something unexpected happens and I need additional or different treatment(s) from the treatment I expect, I agree to accept any necessary treatment.

Signature of Patient or Parent/Legal Guardian of Minor Patient

Date

FOR PHYSICIAN PURPOSE

I explained the risks, benefits and alternatives of the therapeutic fasting to the above-named patient. I provided the above-named patient with the opportunity to ask questions.

I have answered the questions asked and it is my professional opinion that the patient understands what I have explained.

Signature of Attending Physician or Authorized Health Care Provider

Date