

DANIEL FAST FAQ

BY KRISTEN FEOLA

1. WHY ISN'T YEAST ALLOWED ON THE DANIEL FAST?

In the Bible, yeast is often a symbol for sin, and God often required the Israelites to give up leavened bread (contains yeast) during certain times as a way of setting them apart from neighboring peoples. By not having yeast, we're making a statement against sin and that's in keeping with Jewish tradition by refusing to eat leavened bread as we seek the Lord.

2. WHAT ABOUT NUTRITIONAL YEAST SINCE IT'S DEACTIVATED AND NOT A LEAVENING AGENT?

Whether or not to use nutritional yeast, which is an inactive form of yeast, is really matter of personal conviction. Some people may choose to have it, while others do not. Personally, I don't use any type of yeast in my recipes.

3. CAN I HAVE WHOLE GRAIN PRODUCTS?

Yes, whole grains are allowed, as long as the other ingredients are Daniel Fast friendly. The modern-day Daniel Fast is based on Daniel's fasting experiences, which involved denying himself certain foods while he sought the Lord in prayer. Scripture gives us some insight (such as in Dan. 10:3) into what he ate and didn't eat; however, we don't know all the specifics. Refer to my [Daniel Fast Food List](#) for foods to eat and foods to avoid.

4. CAN I HAVE BREAD? WHAT ABOUT EZEKIEL BREAD?

Whole wheat and whole grain breads, but the bread must be made without yeast or sugar (these are restricted on the fast; see #1 under Food). In other words, any bread needs to be unleavened, otherwise known as flatbread. Ezekiel bread is not allowed because it contains yeast. You can try to make your own [Flatbread](#).

5. CAN I HAVE PROTEIN POWDER ON THE DANIEL FAST?

Yes, as long as the product falls within the Daniel Fast guidelines. See my blog post, ["Protein Powder on the Daniel Fast"](#) for more information.

6. IS FISH ALLOWED ON THE FAST?

No. Animal products aren't part of the Daniel Fast, including seafood. However, some people may choose to modify the guidelines for medical or nutritional reasons. Whether or not to include fish is a matter between you and the Lord.

7. WHAT ABOUT VEGAN (PLANT-BASED) PRODUCTS, SUCH AS VEGGIE BURGERS, CHEESE, AND MAYONNAISE?

It all depends upon how strictly you plan to follow the Daniel Fast. Some store-bought vegan products are better quality (and more nutritious) than others. Yes, you can have them, but I encourage you to find ones with the least amount of ingredients.

Two things to keep in mind regarding store-bought vegan products: 1) Are all of the ingredients Daniel Fast friendly? Check the label to be sure. 2) Since one of the goals of the fast is to avoid highly processed foods, it is a healthy choice? There are some vegan products that are better than others.

Also, if you're craving a burger, you can make your *own*: [Chipotle Black Bean Burger](#), [Taco Burger](#), and [Two-Bean Burger](#).

8. CAN I HAVE VINEGAR? WHAT ABOUT APPLE CIDER VINEGAR AND BALSAMIC VINEGAR?

The process of creating vinegar involves fermentation, and the oxidation of ethanol produces an alcohol-containing liquid. However, one particular vinegar, **apple cider vinegar**, has many nutritional benefits, so some people may choose to include it on their fast. The idea of the fast is to deny yourself as an act of worship to the Lord. We don't want to be so legalistic about every single thing that we put into our mouths that we miss the whole point of the Daniel Fast, so I would encourage you to seek the Lord for direction. (*Note: Fresh lemon juice is a good substitute for vinegar.*) Since **balsamic vinegar** isn't produced with alcohol like regular vinegar, only grapes, it can be used on the Daniel Fast.

9. WHAT ABOUT HONEY OR AGAVE NECTAR?

No added sugars are allowed on the Daniel Fast, including agave nectar, honey, brown rice syrup, molasses, maple syrup, raw sugar, table sugar, and artificial sweeteners.

10. CAN I HAVE STEVIA OR MONKFRUIT?

Some people will use stevia on the fast since it's plant-based. Monk fruit is a similar type of situation. The decision of whether or not to use natural sweeteners (plant or fruit-based) is a matter of personal conviction.

11. IS COCONUT SUGAR ALLOWED?

I'd consider coconut sugar to be an added sugar. You could use unsweetened coconut flakes instead. Some people may disagree with that position and not see a problem with using it on the fast. That's OK. Not everyone's fast will look the same. It's between you and the Lord.

12. CAN SOY SAUCE BE USED ON THE FAST?

Some people choose not to use soy sauce because of the fermentation process that's involved (involves alcohol, which isn't allowed on the fast). Others don't have a problem with using it. A good substitute for soy sauce is [Bragg's Liquid Aminos](#) or [Coconut Aminos](#) (my preference). I hope this information helps!

13. MANY CANNED ITEMS CONTAIN ASCORBIC ACID OR CITRIC ACID. CAN I HAVE THESE PRODUCTS?

On the Daniel Fast you should avoid additives, chemicals, and preservatives as much as possible. However, there are some ingredients in canned foods that are considered "natural" preservatives. Examples are salt, lemon juice, and ascorbic acid, which is a form of vitamin C. So, yes, foods with ascorbic and/or citric acid are allowed. However, keep in mind that fresh is always best. Frozen foods are next highest in nutrients, and then canned.

14. HOW MANY MEALS DO I EAT PER DAY? CAN I HAVE SNACKS?

The number of times you eat throughout the day is a personal decision. Some people choose to eat three meals. Some might add a snack or two in between. Others may skip a meal to pray.

There isn't a particular formula for the frequency of meals. Let God guide you as to what your fast should look like.

15. WHAT ABOUT PORTION SIZES?

Sometimes you'll hear people say, "On a Daniel Fast, you can eat as much as you like because it's all healthy!" That's not true. Even though this is a partial fast, it's still a fast, which involves self-denial. I recommend that you let the Holy Spirit lead you in this area. The idea is to have enough food for sustenance and energy, but not so much that you're overeating.

16. ARE SALT AND PEPPER ALLOWED? WHAT ABOUT HERBS AND SPICES?

Yes, you can use salt and pepper to flavor your food. Also, herbs and spices are allowed. However, you need to make sure any store-bought seasonings are Daniel Fast friendly. Read the ingredients list on the label to be sure. Watch out especially for added sugar.

17. CAN I HAVE CHOCOLATE, COCOA POWDER, OR CACAO?

Unfortunately, no. All caffeinated products are restricted, including chocolate, unsweetened cocoa powder, and cacao. As someone who appreciates quality dark chocolate, I wish it *was* part of the Daniel Fast! Some people use carob powder as a substitute for unsweetened cocoa. It has a chocolate-like flavor but without the caffeine.

18. IS POPCORN ALLOWED?

Yes, as long as it's air or oil popped. No butter or cheese!

19. I'M WORRIED ABOUT NOT GETTING ENOUGH IRON ON THE FAST SINCE WE CAN'T HAVE MEAT. WHAT ARE VEGAN SOURCES OF IRON-RICH FOODS?

"Dried beans and dark green leafy vegetables are especially good sources of iron, even better on a per calorie basis than meat. Iron absorption is increased markedly by eating foods containing vitamin C along with foods containing iron" (Source: "Iron in the Vegan Diet"). Here

are a few suggestions: 1) [Soybeans \(edamame\) – Garlic-Sesame Edamame](#), 2) [Lentils – Blackened Lentils and Onions](#), 3) [Spinach – Sweet Spinach Salad](#), and 4) [Tofu– Strawberry-Banana Smoothie](#). You can also use the search bar in the header (top right) to find other Daniel Fast recipes with these ingredients.

20. CAN I HAVE GRITS?

Grits are usually refined. They've have had the hull and germ removed, which means the grits have been stripped of most nutrients. However, stone-ground grits are allowed.

21. WHAT ABOUT CONDIMENTS LIKE KETCHUP AND MUSTARD?

Both ketchup and mustard contain vinegar, which isn't included in the Daniel Fast. See #8 (above) for an explanation about vinegar.

22. WHERE CAN I FIND MEAL PLANS?

I provide weekly meal plans and grocery shopping lists in my book, [*The Ultimate Guide to the Daniel Fast*](#).

BEVERAGES

1. CAN I HAVE COFFEE? IS DECAF ALLOWED?

Caffeinated products aren't part of the Daniel Fast. Even decaf coffee usually contains small amounts of caffeine. That being said, some people may choose to include decaf on their fast. It's really a personal decision and a matter between you and the Lord.

2. WHAT ABOUT HERBAL AND FRUIT TEA? DECAF AND GREEN?

The main beverage on the Daniel Fast is water, so whether or not to include **herbal or fruit tea** is a personal decision. Some people choose to set tea aside for the fast, while others may decide to include it. Another reason teas are restricted is based upon Daniel's example in the Bible and the fact that he drank only water during his fasts (Daniel 1:12 and 10:3). For some

people, having tea is a daily treat, so they may choose to give it up for a period of fasting as a sacrifice to the Lord. Perhaps this is not the case for you and maybe you might choose to include herbal tea on your fast. When I first started doing the Daniel Fast, I felt that I should give up even herbal tea, not because there's anything wrong with it but as a sacrifice. I really enjoyed my morning cup of tea, and it had become a habit. So when I committed to the fast, I didn't drink it. I'm glad I did, too, because I realized I *could*. God will guide you and give you peace in the direction you need to go. Caffeinated products aren't a part of the Daniel Fast, and, even though **decaf tea** sounds like it doesn't contain caffeine, it does. So, no, it isn't fast friendly. **Green tea** is also not allowed because of its caffeine content.

3. CAN I HAVE JUICE?

The recommended beverage on the Daniel Fast is water. You should drink it most of the time. Fruit juices (100%, unsweetened – read ingredients to make sure) CAN be used on the Daniel Fast, such to flavor recipes and occasionally as a drink. But I don't recommend drinking a lot of fruit juice (unless you're doing a juice fast and are using freshly extracted juice from a juicer).

4. WHAT ABOUT SPARKLING WATER?

Yes, you can have regular (unsweetened) sparkling water, such as San Pellegrino or Perrier, on the fast.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. I HAVE DIABETES. IS IT SAFE FOR ME TO DO THE DANIEL FAST?

The Daniel Fast is an extremely healthy way of eating, and many people with diabetes have done the fast with success. However, you're free to modify the fast if you need to do so according to the specific needs of your body. I would recommend staying away from foods that are problematic and tend to spike your blood sugar levels. If you have concerns about specific foods, consult a nutritionist or doctor.

While the Daniel Fast does contain a good amount of carbohydrates, many foods also supply protein. One idea to increase protein content is to supplement with plant-based protein powder.

You don't have to follow the food guidelines exactly to get the physical and spiritual benefits of the fast. The most important thing is that you're committing the time to pray, so God will honor whatever sacrifices you can make.

For more information, check out my blog post, ["The Daniel Fast and Diabetes."](#)

2. WILL I EXPERIENCE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

Some people do experience side effects, such as bloating, headaches, fatigue, and muscle soreness as your body adjusts to the changes in your eating habits. Typically, these unpleasant symptoms will subside after the first few days. By the second week, many people feel a surge of energy once they've settled into the fast. *Note: Drinking water can help flush out your system and bring relief more quickly.* Read my blog post, ["Side Effects on the Daniel Fast,"](#) for more information.

3. I'M EXPERIENCING STOMACH DISTRESS FROM THE BEANS AND HIGH-FIBER FOODS. WHAT CAN I DO?

Yes, the increase in fiber while on the Daniel Fast can be problematic for people, so digestive enzymes can help. They help to break down food into nutrients so that our bodies can absorb them more easily. I've had success with using [Digest Gold by Enzymedica.](#)

4. CAN I HAVE SEX WITH MY SPOUSE WHILE ON THE DANIEL FAST?

The Bible says, "Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control" (1 Cor. 7:5). The New Living Translation of that verse is, "Do not deprive each other of sexual relations, unless you both agree to refrain from sexual intimacy for a limited time so you can give yourselves more completely to prayer. Afterward, you should come together again so that Satan won't be able to tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

Husbands and wives shouldn't deny each other physical intimacy, except when they're both in agreement that they should abstain in order to focus on prayer. But that kind of situation should only be for a limited time and not so long that the abstinence becomes a problem.

I believe Scripture is saying couples might want to set aside sexual relations temporarily during a time of fasting, but it's certainly not a requirement to do so. Therefore, the decision is up to you and your spouse and what you think is best.

5. I'M FOUR MONTHS PREGNANT. CAN I STILL PARTICIPATE IN THE DANIEL FAST?

First of all, congratulations on your pregnancy! You must be excited to welcome a little one into your family. Yes, you can certainly participate in the Daniel Fast, but how strictly you adhere to the guidelines is up to you. Some pregnant women have completed the fast without any modifications. Others have chosen to add protein sources (eggs, yogurt, etc.). I would encourage you to pray about what your fast should look like. If you're married, you and your husband should be in agreement as well.

6. CAN I DO THE DANIEL FAST WHILE BREASTFEEDING?

The Daniel Fast provides a wide range of nutrients for you and your baby. You can follow the plan without fear that you're depriving your baby of important vitamins and minerals. Most moms are concerned about a lack of protein, which is understandable. But, if you're intentional about it, you can actually consume a good amount of protein on the fast (15-20%) without taking in restricted foods (such as eggs, meat, yogurt, and cheese). However, some moms may choose to modify the fast to boost the protein (such as having yogurt as an exception). It really becomes a matter between you and the Lord. Here are some things to keep in mind:

1) **Drink plenty of water.** Adequate water intake is very important when you're nursing.

2) **It may take a few days for your body to adjust as it goes through a detoxification.** If you feel weak, have a headache, or just plain lethargic, you *will* feel better! Usually after 3-4 days, people get a surge of energy and the side effects are minimal. Some fortunate people don't even have side effects at all!

3) **Examples of Daniel Fast friendly protein-rich foods:** Beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, peas, kale, and tofu. Beans and rice together form a complete protein, so that gives you an extra boost.

4) **Be sure to get your husband's thoughts on this issue as well.** You both should be in agreement as to how you should approach the fasting guidelines. It's important that you're unified in the decision.

7. DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO DO THE DANIEL FAST WITH CHILDREN?

Yes, I do. I'll share a little about how we handle that situation. My husband and I have two daughters (ages 12 and 10). Every year is different when it comes to their level of participation. For the [January 2015 Online Daniel Fast](#), my oldest decided to do a sugar fast for one week instead of the full Daniel Fast (nothing with added sugar). My youngest chose to do a three-week Daniel Fast along with Justin and me. It was her decision. I recommend trying to include children as much as possible. They don't have to follow the fast 100% for it to learn about the discipline of prayer and fasting. Also, seeds of faith will be planted that will grow over the years. Here's an article I wrote a few years ago that might be helpful: [Fasting as a Family](#).

8. CAN I EXERCISE AND DO WEIGHTLIFTING WORKOUTS DURING THE DANIEL FAST?

Yes, you can, but you may experience some weakness on the first few days of the fast. After that, your body should settle in, giving you more energy. You might want to supplement with plant-based protein powder for smoothies. For more direction on this topic, read my blog post, ["Protein Powder on the Daniel Fast"](#).

9. CAN I TAKE MY MEDICATION ON THE DANIEL FAST?

Absolutely!

10. ARE VITAMINS ALLOWED ON THE DANIEL FAST?

Yes. Vitamins, minerals, and supplements are fine.

11. AM I SUPPOSED TO PRAY AND EAT AT CERTAIN TIMES THROUGHOUT THE DAY?

There isn't a schedule for prayer or for meals (see #14 and #15 under "Food" for more information). The number of times you pray is completely up to you and will be different for everyone on the fast. However, you might want to use the [Ultimate Daniel Fast Prayer Points](#) to guide your prayer time.