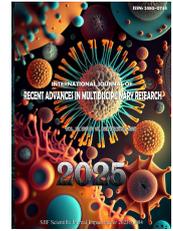




ISSN : 2350-0743



RESEARCH ARTICLE

CROSSREF

OPEN ACCESS

SIGNIFICANCE OF EKADASHI UPAVASA WITH RELEVANCE TO HUMAN METABOLISM AND SPIRITUALITY FOR ATTAINMENT OF HEALTHY LIFE

Sanjivani Dey<sup>1</sup>, Sandip Sinha<sup>2\*</sup>, Tage Simon<sup>3</sup> and Anil Mili<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bachelor of Education, Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh (India); <sup>2</sup>Asst. Professor, Dept. of Physical Education & Sports Science, Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh (India); <sup>3</sup>Asst. Professor, Dept. of Physical Education & Sports Science, Arunachal University of Studies, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh (India); <sup>4</sup>Associate Professor, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Science, Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh (India)

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2025  
Received in revised form  
28<sup>th</sup> July, 2025  
Accepted 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2025  
Published online 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2025

Keywords:

Ekadashi Fasting; Bhakti Yoga; Paran;  
Lord Shri Krishna; Sanatana Dharma;  
Health-Span.

\*Corresponding author:

Sandip Sinha

ABSTRACT

Studies are needed to determine how fasting in humans improves health. Is it a simple replenishment of risk factors related to hypercholesterolemia, smoking, hypertension, hyperglycemia, mediated exfoliation of endothelial cells. Irrespective of the mechanism involved, the current study aims to study the significance of Ekadashi Upavasa with relevance to its wider philosophical, spiritual and physiological aspects. The current descriptive research is qualitative in nature and it recounts the historical evolution of Ekadashi Upavasa and critically analyzing its current medical applications, including benefits and caveats. The current study reveals that fasting on Ekadashi not only holds religious significance but also provides various benefits for our overall well-being through physical, spiritual and mental advantages of detoxification, improved digestion, weight-management, deepening-devotion, seeking divine-blessings, increased mental-clarity, self-awareness, emotional balance, and strengthened willpower. Finally, Ekadashi Upavasa appears to have significant physiological and psychological benefits. The study provides scientific validation for this traditional fasting practice and encourages its inclusion in holistic health strategies; incorporating Ekadashi Upavasa as a regular practice can deepen one's connection to spirituality, strengthen community bonds, and contribute to personal and collective growth.

Copyright©2025, Sanjivani Dey et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Citation: Sanjivani Dey, Sandip Sinha, Tage Simon and Anil Mili. 2025. "Significance of Ekadashi Upavasa with Relevance to Human Metabolism and Spirituality for attainment of Healthy Life", International Journal of Recent Advances in Multidisciplinary Research, 12, (09), 11675-11680.

INTRODUCTION

Ekadashi is popularly observed within "Vaishnavism" one of the major paths within "Sanatana Dharma", commonly known as Hinduism. Followers offer their worship to the "Lord Vishnu" by fasting or just symbolically; the idea was always to receive self-discipline and the benefits of fasting and it was connected to the way of life via 'Sanatana Dharma' practices (Jones, C. & Ryan, J. D., 2006; Melton, J. G., 2011). In Sanatana Dharma, fasting on Ekadashi is to gain control over the mind and bodily senses, and channel it towards spiritual progression. In addition, there are several health benefits to fasting (Suchitra, & Parthasarathy, S., 2021). Ekadashi fast spans for three long days. Devotees take single meal in the afternoon a day before Ekadashi i.e. Dasami (10<sup>th</sup> day) to make sure there is no residual food in the stomach on next day. Devotees keep a strict fast with no food or water on Ekadashi day and break the fast on next day i.e. Dwadashi (12<sup>th</sup> day) only after sunrise. Since this form of fasting is very stringent and may not be possible for people in all walks of

life due to health and life choice reasons, a more liberal form of fasting is followed by most devotees. The timing of each Ekadashi is according to the position of the moon. The Hindu calendar marks progression from a full moon to a new moon as divided into fifteen equal arcs of 12° and each arc measures one lunar day, called as a "Tithi". The time it takes the moon to traverse a particular distance is the length of that lunar day. Ekadashi refers to the 11<sup>th</sup> tithi or lunar day. The eleventh tithi corresponds to a precise angle and phase of the waxing and waning moon. In the bright half of the lunar month, the moon will be exactly 3/4<sup>th</sup> full on the start of Ekadashi, and in the dark half of the lunar month, the moon will be 3/4<sup>th</sup> dark on the start of Ekadashi. Studies indicate that Ekadashi Upavasa showed significant improvements in metabolic markers, including reduced blood glucose and lipid levels, enhanced fat oxidation, and decreased systemic inflammation. Psychological outcomes suggest greater mental clarity, emotional stability, and reduced stress post-fasting appears to have significant physiological and psychological benefits (Khajuria, A. & Singh, G., 2025). There are usually 24

Ekadashi's in a calendar year. Occasionally, there are two extra Ekadashi's that happen in a Hindu leap year. Each Ekadashi day is purported to have particular benefits that are attained by the performance of specific activities. Bhagavata Purana (*Skandha IX, Adhyaay 4*) notes the observation of Ekadashi by Ambarisha, a devotee of Lord Vishnu (Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Swami, 1995).

**Background of the Study:** Since pre-historic times more than 12,000 years ago abstinence from food or drinking or both have been a part of human living. In pre-agricultural era during Paleolithic times, our prehistoric ancestors were exposed to undeliberate intermittent fasting for various periods of time while searching for food, between hunting and gathering. These factors have compelled the human body to incorporate fasting as a physiological (rather than a pathological) process, and to adapt and thrive during both fasting and eating. About 10,000 years ago, during agricultural revolution in Neolithic era, when humans started to domesticate animals such as goats and sheep, and started farming and growing crops, undeliberate fasting disappeared from diurnal human life. At this time, humans learned to store food, and arguably initiated a culture of scheduled meals through the day. *Ayurveda* (*science of life*) has its roots in the *Ajur-Veda* (*science of longevity*); an appendage to the *Atharva Veda* was compiled around 5000 BC, by the priests and the scholars of Ayurveda, including *Dhanwantari*, *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhata*. Deliberate fasting was first introduced; in ancient India with an aim to strengthen the spirit and ensure health wellness; Ayurveda claims "*Langhanam Param Aushadham*", or that fasting is the best medicine.

Intermittent fasting where food intake is restricted to a certain time period, has long been present in many cultures around the world and has been a part of all major religious beliefs and practices. Most prominent religions such as; *Christianity*, *Islam*, *Hinduism*, *Judaism*, *Buddhism*, *Jainism* and *Taoism* promote different types of fasting for spiritual purposes as also for known health benefits and longevity. Numerous health benefits of fasting have been supported by experimental and clinical studies (Di Francesco, A. et al., 2018; Martin, C. K. et al., 2016). Ancient Greek philosopher, Pythagoras promoted fasting (abstinence from all food for a certain period) as a way to enhance physical strength, energy level and concentration in his students (Michalsen, A., & Li, C., 2013; Maifeld, A. et al., 2021; De Cabo, R., & Mattson, M. P., 2019). Over the last decade, various types of fasting have gained popularity as a dietary modification for weight loss and as a part of the non-pharmacological strategy for primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (Hoddy, K. K. et al., 2020). Different types and durations of nutrient restrictions has been a part of cultural and religious practices all around the world. Fasting in Hinduism is commonly practiced, more so during religious festivals as an offering of self-sacrifice to pleasing the Gods. Ayurveda advocated fasting to cleanse the body of toxic materials and eliminating disease. The story behind Ekadashi began with "*Lord Vishnu*" sleeping or in a meditative state. A demon, "*Murdanav*", approached and attempted to attack Vishnu. At that time, a beautiful woman sprung forth from Vishnu's 11<sup>th</sup> sense often called as the "mind". An infatuated Murdanav asked to marry her, to which she responded that she would agree only if he defeated her in battle. As they fought, Murdanav was eventually killed. Vishnu awoke from his sleep, and blessed the woman by naming her "*Ekadashi*", and stated that if anyone were too fast on this day, they would

attain moksha or liberation from the cycle of birth and death (Melton, 2011).

**Significance of the Study:** The global burden of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease continues to grow, and is the most important cause of mortality worldwide (Chandrashekhara, Y. et al., 2020). The deteriorating lifestyles including eating patterns and lack of indulgence in physical exercise have contributed immensely to the growing burden of disease. The increasing prevalence of obesity is associated with increased incidence of metabolic disease, diabetes, hypertension, and fatty liver, all of which contribute to atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease. The need to reduce this global atherosclerotic burden is imperative. Caloric restriction has been demonstrated to be associated with improvement in physical endurance, blood pressure, heart-rate variability, and glucose metabolism (Longo, V. D., & Panda, S., 2016; Helfand, S. L., & De Cabo, R., 2021; Diaz-Ruiz, A. et al., 2021).

### Objectives of the Study

- To understand the correlation between Ekadashi Upavasa and Earth's geo-positioning and orbital pattern.
- To trace the Vedic history of Ekadashi Upavasa.
- To study the Ekadashi Upavasa Niyama scientifically.

## METHODOLOGY

The current descriptive research is qualitative in nature and it recounts the historical evolution of Ekadashi Upavasa and critically analyzing its current medical applications, including benefits and caveats. This narrative review is based on the available secondary data and scientific evidences which include the molecular mechanisms of Ekadashi Upavasa, its types and dietary restriction with the inclusion method of periodicals, review papers, and published theses.

### Findings and Interpretation

**Ekadashi Upavasa and Earth's Geo-positioning and Orbital Pattern:** The earth rotates on its axis relative to the Sun every 24.0 hrs mean solar time, with an inclination of 23.45° from the plane of its orbit around the Sun. Mean solar time represents an average of the variations caused by earth's non-circular orbit and its rotation relative to fixed stars (sidereal time) is 3 min 56.55 sec shorter than the mean solar day, the equivalent of one solar day per year. Forces associated with the rotation of earth cause the planet to be slightly oblate, displaying a bulge at the equator. The moon's gravity primarily, and to a lesser degree the Sun's gravity, act on earth's oblateness to move the axis perpendicular to the plane of earth's orbit. A tithi is the distance covered by the moon in 24 hrs around the earth when the moon moves for about 12.41° in space around the earth. The 11<sup>th</sup> day of the fortnight is known as Ekadashi in Sanskrit, and it is the day when the moon's maximum pull or magnetic pull is on the human body. From centuries, Hindus have been observing fasts twice a month on the Ekadashi days. This fasting is, in general, for everyone. Ekadashi i.e. '*Eka*' means numerical 1, and '*Daśa*' is numerical 10 which is the 11<sup>th</sup> day in the lunar calendar, i.e. counting from the new moon day and also from the full moon day.

**Vedic history of Ekadashi Upavasa:** On Ekadashi, devotees undertake a fast from grains and lentils and consume only fruits, milk, and other non-grain food items. They spend the

completed and broken on the 'Paran' time which comes after the sunrise on the next day of Ekadashi. Devotees break their fast by consuming food stuff which they have refrained from

**Table 1: Describing the types of Ekadashi fall in a year**

Vedic Lunar Month	Presiding Deity	Krishna Paksha Ekadashi	Shukla Paksha Ekadashi
Vaisakha (April-May)	Madhusudana (Vishnu)	Varuthini Ekadashi	Mohini Ekadashi
Shravana (July-August)	Sridhara	Kamika Ekadashi	Shravana Putrada Ekadashi
Phalgun (February-March)	Govinda (Krishna)	Vijaya Ekadashi	Amalaki Ekadashi
Pausha (December-January)	Narayana (Vishnu/Krishna)	Saphala Ekadashi	Pausha Putrada Ekadashi/Vaikuntha Ekadashi
Margashirsha (Agrahayana) (November-December)	Keshava	Utpanna Ekadashi	Mokshada Ekadashi/Vaikuntha Ekadashi
Magha (January-February)	Madhava	Shattila Ekadashi	Bhaimi Ekadashi/ Jaya Ekadashi
Kartik (October-November)	Damodara	Rama Ekadashi	Prabodhini Ekadashi
Jyeshtha (May-June)	Trivikrama (Vishnu)	Apara Ekadashi	Nirjala Ekadashi
Chaitra (March-April)	Rama/Vishnu	Papavimocani Ekadashi	Kamada Ekadashi
Bhadrapada (August-September)	Hrishikesh	Annada Ekadashi	Parsva Ekadashi
Ashvina (September-October)	Padmanabha	Indra Ekadashi	Pasankusa Ekadashi
Ashada (June-July)	Vamana	Yogini Ekadashi	Shayani Ekadashi
Adhika month (once in 2-3 years)	Purushottama	Padmini Vishuddha Ekadashi	Parama Shuddha Ekadashi

Source: <https://www.salagram.net/ekadasi-science-behind.html>

day in prayer, meditation, service and chanting the holy names of 'Lord Shri Krishna'. The basic criteria for fasting on Ekadashi are to abstain from any kind of grains or products or food stuff which can contain grains or cereals. There are primarily 4 stages of fasting which can be observed in accordance to one's health capacity:

- **Anukalpa Upavasa:** Anukalpa ahar (diet) refers to the consumption of non-grain foodstuff which is generally consumed during fasting. It is the easiest and the most basic level Upavasa (fasting) which is recommended for beginners and anyone who cannot observe a full Upavasa or any difficult level of fasting due to medical reason. This follows the basic principle of not consuming any grains or cereals but the person following this first consumes food stuffs which do not contain any grains.
- **Phalahar Upavasa:** This includes the consumption of only fruits and milk. This fasting is one step difficult then the previous one and is usually observed by people who have a few years of experience in fasting or even by beginners who are in better health and can survive a day simply by consuming fruits. This type of Upavasa is not recommended for people with acute gastric or digestive issues.
- **Jalahar Upavasa:** This level of fasting includes the consumption of only water. It is the second most difficult level of fasting and is very effective in cleansing the body but it is not recommended for people who have digestive issues or are very new to fasting.
- **Nirjala Upavasa:** Nirjala Upavasa refers to a complete fast which abstains from the consumption of any kind of food or liquid including water. It is the most difficult level of fasting but is the most effective if observed properly. This fasting is not recommended for people with digestive issues all who are completely new to fasting this requires a lot of experience and pre planning to observe. A person aiming to observe Nirjala fasting should consume lots of liquid's an electrolyte the day before a car the she and should refrain from doing a lot of physical activities on the day of Upavasa.

**Parana: Breaking the Upavasa:** Ekadashi Upavasa is a 36 hrs fasting which usually starts on the day of Dashami that is the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar calendar of the waning and waxing moon and continues till the sunrise of the Dwadashi which is the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the waning or the waxing moon. The Upavasais

consumed during their fasting e.g. for someone who observed 'Anukalpa Upavasa' breaks their fast by consuming grains, people consuming only water during their fasting break their fasting by consuming fruits or "Charanamrit" (Sharon-Amrit) from the temple a light meal of grains, and people who observe 'Nirjala Ekadashi' break their fast by sipping water followed by a meal consisting of grains like rice, lentils and vegetables. The pardon time holds a significant importance both spiritually and scientifically as it determines the way in which your body will react to the fast. Someone who observes a difficult level of fasting must not consume a very heavy meal after breaking the fast and should start with a small portion of food which allows the digestive system to slowly get back on track, oily food stuff should be avoided or breaking a fast

### Scientific Significance of Ekadashi Upavasa

**The Gravitational-Pull Theory:** During the bright and dark fortnights of every month, from Ekadashi until the full-moon day, and from Ekadashi until the new-moon day, there is an increased high tide in the oceans, and the waves rise very high. This is because the moon comes somewhat closer to the earth and pulls the water towards itself by force of gravity. Ninety percent of the human body is fluid in nature. The moon has a strong influence on water during the above-mentioned days. If one eats grains, they absorb water and there is an increased chance of developing diseases due to the moon's gravity attracting the water. The influence of the moon is so strong that it creates a disturbance on the huge water bodies of the planet and therefore it is not much difficult for the moon to influence the water in our body. We are aware of high tide on new moon and full moon days and low tide on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar cycle. This is lunar attraction on the liquid of the earth. The earth and the moon attract each other but on certain days the attraction is more because of their nearness. It is this attraction that causes tides in the ocean and it is certain that there will be biological high tide and low tide too, governed by the moon. The gravitational force of the moon exerts its influence on the water in the human body as it does in the case of the oceans of the planet.

Arnold Lieber, a Miami-Florida psychiatrist, experimented and found that the biological tides affect our moods and behaviours also. From many of the psychiatric hospitals it has been reported that at full moon or new moon days mental

patients' behaviour becomes increasingly disturbed and erratic. In an article, "Does the moon control your moods" Edgar Ziegler writes that the Phoenix Arizona fire department has found that it receives 25-30 more calls on nights of the full moon. There are instances, that on these tidal days when the moon comes closest to the earth, people having weak mind or a weak body specially suffers more. Most people with a weak bowel always complain of the worst suffering on such days.

**The Physio-Psychic aspect of Ekadashi Upavasa:** Studies on the influence of celestial bodies upon ours have shown an imbalance of hormones and fluids can occur, and that these influences can play a greater part on our pathological diseases and psychological behaviour. The physiological glands and hormones concerned relate to the physio-psychic reasons for the various psychic expressions known as *vrittis* (propensities) e.g. fear, greed, hatred, passion and anger etc. There are 50 such expressions and if these hormones get imbalanced, the secretions become abnormal, i.e. hypo or hyper, resulting in abnormalities with these expressions (*Vrittis*). The above experiment of Arnold Lieber was for a few of these *vrittis* only; but all such or many of these *vrittis* can get affected by lunar biological tides. Not only that, the skin of our body is a semi-permeable membrane that permits movement of electromagnetic forces in both directions, maintaining a dynamic equilibrium. Arnold Lieber stated that each nerve impulse generates its small aura of energy for the associated cells, like a miniature solar system, and has its own faint electromagnetic field. It is possible that the gross electromagnetic forces originating with celestial bodies can affect the balance of these microscopic cellular worlds. When there will be extreme tides, there is a chance of heavy bombardment by massive disturbances of grave and surrounding electromagnetic fields. This may cause effects to the nervous system and weaken the nerve fibre. In Lieber's research on a number of manic depression patients, he found recurrences of symptoms of depression, restlessness, insomnia and rapid heartbeat during extreme tidal days. It is commonly found that a range of attacks are more on tidal days and the effect is from Ekadashi to new moon or full moon days. Thus, Ekadashi fast has varied effects on the body and the mind to counter negative effects. The first and foremost is keeping the balance of hormones and other secretions in relation to the glands and cells, as there will be no food and water in the stomach on these fasting' days, the lunar attraction will not affect the intestine, kidney and liver etc. Further, the tendency of the functioning of most of the forces of the body will be centripetal, i.e. towards the inner side of the body. So, the internal gravitational pull will be more powerful to balance the external pull of the lunar gravitational force. This will help in controlled functioning of all the organs, chemical changes, growth of cells and other biological transmutations.

If functioning be normal and balanced, there will hardly be health problem and the longevity will get enhanced many folds. It is good to fast on both Ekadashi days and 'Full Moon' and 'New Moon' days. But at least the Ekadashi fast is a must for all, both male and female above the age of 12 years. As Ekadashi day falls in between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar cycle i.e. the neap tide and high tide days, a day's fast helps balancing the effect of the lunar attraction. The chance of bombardment of celestial electro-magnetic forces on the tiny cells of our body too, will have less or no effect at all thereby the equilibrium can be better maintained.

It has been experimentally seen that manic-depressive patients get cured by such systematic fasts and many abnormalities of the mind which mostly the people of the modern world suffer from today, will get reduced. Excessive sexual excitement, anger, irritation, fear, greed and passion etc. also gets sublimated by these fasts. Even hyper-tension can be controlled efficiently with the help of Ekadashi fast.

**The body's mechanism to destroy damaged cells:** One of the most significant benefits of a 36-hrs fast is the promotion of cellular autophagy. Autophagy is a natural process where the body cleans out damaged cells and regenerates new, healthier ones. This process is crucial for maintaining cellular health and preventing the accumulation of cellular debris that can lead to diseases such as cancer and neurodegenerative disorders. Fasting triggers autophagy, allowing the body to efficiently remove dysfunctional components and enhance overall cellular function. Junk DNA refers to non-coding DNA that has no known function in the body. However, recent research suggests that it may have a role in regulating gene expression and may play a role in disease development. As fasting for 36 hrs during the phase of the moon on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the fortnight known as Ekadashi Upavasa can help reduce the count of junk DNA from the body, as it was discovered through scientific research that avoiding meat, alcohol can reduce the loss of junk DNA.

**Speeds-Up Metabolism:** Fasting has a significant influence on metabolic rate, it improves Insulin sensitivity, weight loss and helps regulate blood sugar level, thus reducing the risk of type 2-diabetes. It gives a break to our digestive system and allows our body to use the stored energy and fat. The body starts the process of ketosis in which it reduces the glycogen level and starts using the stored fat, this in turn aids in weightloss.

Ayurveda describes the toxins of the body as "Ama", which are created due to the residue of the digestive process. If these are not cleared regularly, they build up as "Ama-Visha" (poison) and create vitiations of the "doshas" (body humors). Hence, the origin of most disease is within the digestive tract. From the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the moon phase, onwards to the 5<sup>th</sup> day after the full or new moon, the digestive process is slower than usual. In order to avoid complications, it is imperative to clear up the digestive tract of previous residues every 11<sup>th</sup> day of the moon cycle to prepare for the coming ten days of sluggish digestion. The other benefits of Ekadashi Upavasa are:

- **Improves Cognitive Function:** As fasting has been proven to increase mental clarity and cognitive function. Fasting increases the production of brain derived neurotrophic factors, a protein that supports the growth of neurons. Higher BDNF (*Brain Derived Growth Factor*) level leads to improved memory, better learning and cognitive function.
- **Reduced Inflammation:** Fasting has been shown to reduce markers of inflammation, which is associated with numerous chronic diseases including heart disease and cancer.
- **Improved Digestive Health:** Taking regular breaks from eating can help alleviate stress on your digestive system and promote overall gut health.
- **Increased Autophagy:** Autophagy, the process where cells clean and repair damaged components, is increased during fasting periods. This process is crucial for cellular repair and optimal bodily, mental, and health functions.

**Spiritual significance of Ekadashi Upavasa:** Fasting on Ekadashi involves abstaining from food and focusing on spiritual practices, which helps to cleanse the mind and spirit of negative thoughts and emotions (*mental cleansing*). By withdrawing from the world and its usual demands, individuals become more aware of their inner selves and detach from materialistic desires (*detachment from worldly distractions*). Strengthening the divine bond through dedicating the day to prayer, meditation, and chanting allows for a profound and deeper spiritual connection with the divine i.e. deepening the devotional and spiritual connection (*ISKCON, Dwarka*). Fasting on this day is a way to keep the senses aligned with the *Supreme Lord* or *Lord Shri Vishnu*, fostering devotion and a stronger bond with him. The act of fasting requires and builds self-discipline and control over desires, strengthening willpower and the ability to resist impulses i.e. cultivating self-discipline and restraining willpower. Mastery over senses and consciousness as Ekadashi Upavasa is a form of tapasya (austerity) aimed at gaining mastery over the five senses, the mind, and the ego. The day is considered to have elevated spiritual vibrations, creating an ideal environment for introspection and a deeper awareness of one's true self (higher consciousness). Immersion in spiritual practices like prayer and meditation on Ekadashi brings inner calm, mental clarity, and receptiveness to divine mercy.

## DISCUSSION

The human physiology goes through a cycle called a "*mandala*", approximately every 40-48 days. In this cycle, three specific days, which may be different from person to person and need not come with equal spacing, will arise when the body does not demand food. Forcing oneself to eat food on those days is not a good thing to do. If someone can identify those days in their life and do not provide the body food, a lot of health issues can be handled (Sadhguru, 2021). Mostly people fear that by fasting one will become weak. Such a fear is not genuine. A day's fast gives rest to the machinery of stomach and thereby helps it to function better in the future. Not only that the undigested food material gets proper opportunity for its further digestion, but also by fasting the digestion power increases, better assimilation of food takes place helping in more production of blood and other necessary chemicals, and thereby helping better health and better nutritional effects. It is both a good measure for would be stomach troubles and a cure for a number of ailments. It helps better functioning of the liver, pancreas, intestines and kidney etc., thereby reducing the chance of any ailment relating to these organs. The fast on Ekadashi also helps the transmutation of chemicals in the body into subtler factors like ectoplasmic stuff of the mind i.e., '*Chitta*' or mind-stuff so that the ectoplasmic stuff associates with the still higher spheres. If the science of meditation is practiced by the aspirant, fasting does not only mean not eating anything, it also means not drinking anything in the stricter sense. The meaning of fast i.e. '*Upavasa*' spiritually means staying with divine ideas i.e. living closer to the '*Supreme Conscious Being*'. This can be done only by shunning the activities of the sensory and motor organs (*Indriyas*) extroversally and dwelling instead on the various aspects (*Bhaava*) of the Supreme Consciousness or the Supreme Lord. By not eating and drinking on Ekadashi days along with dwelling on the divine (*Bhagavata-Bhaava*), it will certainly help an aspirant to keep himself or herself perfect physiologically and psychologically and thereby help attain the ultimate spiritual purpose of life. Intermittent fasting during Ekadashi is extremely useful with antioxidant anti-aging and many other beneficial

effects on health. Fortnightly fasting has been scientifically proved to produce hormonal changes. Breaking the fast every time with a combination of amla-raita and agathi leaves with a significantly positive effect on the digestive system is scientifically the near ideal nutritious food. These dietary supplements supply adequate calories having anti-ulcer properties with a probiotic additive. Even though there are rich benefits it is being recommended and advised that Ekadashi should not to be practised among children, malnourished and pregnant women (Suchitra, & Parthasarathy, S., 2021b).

## CONCLUSION

On the day of Ekadashi, the very planet is in a certain state, so if we keep our body light and available, our awareness will turn inward. Forceful denial of food is not the point but the concern is to make everything into a conscious process. Ekadashi Upavasa is a significant observance in '*Sanatana Dharma*', marking the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight. It holds great spiritual importance and is regarded as a day of fasting and devotion. Ekadashi is believed to provide an opportunity for individuals to purify their minds, deepen their spiritual connection, and seek blessings from the divine. Fasting on Ekadashi not only holds religious significance but also provides various benefits for our overall well-being through physical, spiritual and mental advantages of detoxification, improved digestion, weight-management, deepening-devotion, seeking divine-blessings, increased mental-clarity, self-awareness, emotional balance, and strengthened willpower. Finally, in conclusion Ekadashi Upavasa appears to have significant physiological and psychological benefits. The study provides scientific validation for this traditional fasting practice and encourages its inclusion in holistic health strategies; incorporating Ekadashi fasting as a regular practice can deepen one's connection to spirituality, strengthen community bonds, and contribute to personal and collective growth.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors do not have any conflict of interest, and further the authors received no financial support for the research, authorship or publication of this article.

## REFERENCES

- Di Francesco, A. *et al.* (2018). A time to fast. *Science*, 362(6416), 770–775. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aau2095>
- Martin, C. K. *et al.* (2016). Healthy behaviors potentially due to calorie Restriction—Reply. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 176(11), 1724. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.6201>
- Martin, C. K. *et al.* (2016). Effect of calorie restriction on mood, quality of life, sleep, and sexual function in healthy nonobese adults. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 176(6), 743. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.1189>
- Chandrashekhar, Y. *et al.* (2020). Resource and Infrastructure-Appropriate Management of ST-Segment elevation myocardial infarction in Low- and Middle-Income countries. *Circulation*, 141(24), 2004–2025. <https://doi.org/10.1161/circulationaha.119.041297>
- Longo, V. D., & Panda, S. (2016). Fasting, circadian rhythms, and Time-Restricted feeding in healthy lifespan. *Cell Metabolism*, 23(6), 1048–1059. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cmet.2016.06.001>

- Helfand, S. L., & De Cabo, R. (2021). Evidence that overnight fasting could extend healthy lifespan. *Nature*, 598(7880), 265–266. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-01578-8>
- Diaz-Ruiz, A. et al. (2021). Diet composition influences the metabolic benefits of short cycles of very low caloric intake. *Nature Communications*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-26654-5>
- Khajuria, A. & Singh, G. (2025). Physiological and Psychological Effects of Ekadashi Upavasa (Fasting Ritual) on Women: A Prospective cohort study on Metabolism, Immunity, and Mental Clarity. *Research and Reviews: A Journal of Immunology*. Vol. 15 (02). <https://journals.stmjournals.com/rrjoi/article=2025/view=211472>
- Michalsen, A., & Li, C. (2013). Fasting Therapy for Treating and Preventing disease - Current state of evidence. *Complementary Medicine Research*, 20(6), 444–453. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000357765>
- Maifeld, A. et al. (2021). Fasting alters the gut microbiome reducing blood pressure and body weight in metabolic syndrome patients. *Nature Communications*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-22097-0>
- De Cabo, R., & Mattson, M. P. (2019). Effects of intermittent fasting on health, aging, and disease. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 381(26), 2541–2551. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmra1905136>
- Hoddy, K. K. et al. (2020). Intermittent fasting and metabolic health: From religious fast to Time-Restricted feeding. *Obesity*, 28(S1). <https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.22829>
- Google Scholar. (n.d.). [https://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_lookup?Vivekananda%20Swami.%20xvi.%20Penguin%20Books;%20Gurugram:%202021.%20p.%20247.%20\(The%20Feasting,%20Fasting%20Monk\)](https://scholar.google.com/scholar_lookup?Vivekananda%20Swami.%20xvi.%20Penguin%20Books;%20Gurugram:%202021.%20p.%20247.%20(The%20Feasting,%20Fasting%20Monk)).
- Suchitra, & Parthasarathy, S. (2021). Intermittent fasting on the Ekadashi Day and the role of spiritual nutrition. *Current Research in Nutrition and Food Science Journal*, 9(1), 122–126. <https://doi.org/10.12944/crnfsj.9.1.12>
- Suchitra, & Parthasarathy, S. (2021b). Intermittent fasting on the Ekadashi Day and the role of spiritual nutrition. *Current Research in Nutrition and Food Science Journal*, 9(1), 122–126. <https://doi.org/10.12944/crnfsj.9.1.12>
- Ekadashi Fast. *Shri Lakshmi Narayan Mandir Riverside*. (n.d.). Mandir Riverside. <https://www.riversidetemple.org/ekadashi-fast>
- Jones, C. & Ryan, J. D. (2006). Encyclopedia of Hinduism. (n.d.). *Infobase Publishing*. p. 147. ISBN 978-0-8160-7564-5. <https://books.google.com/books?id=OgMmceadQ3gC>
- Melton, J. G. (2011). Religious Celebrations: An Encyclopedia of Holidays, Festivals, Solemn Observances, and Spiritual Commemorations (n.d.). *ABC-CLIO*. p. 490. ISBN 978-1-59884-205-0. <https://books.google.com/books?id=KDU30Ae4S4cC>
- Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Swami (1995). *Srimad Bhagavatam - Canto Nine*. The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. pp. 85–170. ISBN 978-81-8957491-8.
- What is Ekadashi and Why to Fast on Ekadashi | How to Observe and Break the Fast*. (2023, August 11). <https://isha.sadhguru.org/en/wisdom/article/what-is-ekadashi-why-to-fast-on-ekadashi>

\*\*\*\*\*