

Medifast® (high protein meal replacer/Supplemented Fast)
Physician Information Sheet

Jason Pharmaceuticals distribute product, Inc Baltimore MD 21117

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Mechanism of Action

Medifast is one brand of high protein, low carbohydrate dietary supplements. It is used as a part of a “very low calorie diet” or “supplemented fast”. Using this product a patient can reduce their calories to 400 calories per day for weight loss of 5-14 pounds the first week and 2-5 pounds per week thereafter, that spares lean body mass.

Patients who May Benefit

- BMI greater than 25
- Ages 18+.
- Needing motivation or early reinforcement in weight loss
- Needing a simple approach to start weight loss
- Needing to break an automatic eating/feeding habits/impulse
- Needing fast weight loss to prepare for surgery
- Unsuccessful with traditional weight loss approach. Appears to be following a calorie restricted diet that should result in weight loss, but does not lose weight.

Benefits of supplemented fast

- Safe approach to very low calorie intakes of 400-800 calories/day
- Documented weight loss, primarily fat mass, of up to 40 pounds in 13 weeks. Men lose slightly more than women.
- Reduction of health risks with 10% weight loss
- May require office visit to obtain product, providing opportunity for monitoring, follow up
- Possible anorectic effect
- Cost of supplement is less than prescription medicine; cost of supplement no more expensive than comparable calories in food and beverages. Each serving provides 100 calories, 9 grams protein, 15 grams carbohydrate, 1 gram fat, 420 mg potassium and an array of vitamins and minerals.
- Some patients reported increased energy

Disadvantages of supplemented fast

- Unless coupled with behavior change and nutrition counseling, no new eating and physical activity habits adopted; weight regain when stop the supplemented fast
- Possible increased risk of gall stones (as with any type of rapid weight loss)

- Increased urination, at outset
- Possible headache, possible ketosis
- On 400 calorie regimen probably should not do much activity, drive, or conduct activities that take concentration
- Plan cannot be followed by whole family; can be difficult in social and business situations
- Boredom
- Medifast [®] is best rehydrated for 24 hours before serving and served cold.
- Some patients report decreased energy and feelings of tiredness
- At 12 months, weight loss same as those who lose weight without supplement; no evidence that superior to traditional weight loss approaches

Goals

- Depending on calorie intake weight loss in the first month of:
 - 10- 15 pounds on 400-500 calories
 - 5- 10 pounds on 800 calories
- Practice and adopt healthy eating habits and physical activity by 13 weeks

Dosage

The product is available in many flavors. Call 1-866-463-3432 or go to www.medifastdiet.com

Several regimens are possible. Three are described here. For additional possibilities, contact the dietitian.

1. Full liquid. The full liquid 400-calorie daily supplemented fast is **not recommended** unless a patient needs significant weight loss prior to surgery. Consult dietitian for this regimen. This regimen is liquid only for 12 weeks followed by a refeeding phase of 800 calories/day in portioned foods and supplements.
2. 800 calorie Liquid Supplement and Small Meal. The usual approach is an 800 calorie/day supplemented fast, replacing 2 meals per day with the Medifast [®]. A limited variety, low fat, high fiber meal provides 300-400 additional calories. Prescribe 1 packet within an hour of waking, 1 packet to replace lunch or dinner. 1 packet for snack. See patient handout.
3. Rotation approach. Medifast [®] is sometimes used in a rotation scheme. Over the course of 7 days, a patient will select 3 days to use liquids only. The patient will consume 5 – 7 Medifast [®] packets, sipping on shakes throughout the day. On the other days will consume 800 – 1,000 calories per day. This yields a more modest weight loss of 1-½ pounds per week.

Costs

The product is sometimes stocked in the patient education room. It is coded as supplies. Write MEDIDFAST and code 99070 and the dollar value of packets dispensed (\$1.50/packet).

Most insurance will NOT cover the costs of these supplements. A letter describing the FPC policy regarding medical insurance coverage is available.

Suggested laboratory tests

- SMA 12 and CBC T₃ and T₄
- EKG

Possible side effects

- See items under Disadvantages
- If patient consumes high fat meal during this regimen, can experience gas, bloating, diarrhea
- Increased risk of intoxication with any alcohol intake
- Perception of constipation (actually is a low residue diet)
- Lightheadedness, dry skin, hair loss, cold intolerance, irregular periods
- Gout
- Loss of lean body mass
- Electrolyte imbalance

Drug Interactions

- Any affected by change in whole food or caloric intake (e.g. insulin)

Contraindications to very low calorie diets/supplemented fasts

- Significant heart disease or arrhythmia, significant renal disease (serum creatinine should not exceed 1.2 mg/dL)
- Significant lactose intolerance
- Allergies to egg white

Product information

Serving size is 1 packet. 1 packet has 100 calories and is reconstituted in 6 ounces of water or diet soda.

Total fat	1 gram (unsaturated)	Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	280 mg	Potassium	420 mg
Carbohydrate	15 g	Dietary fiber	½ g
Protein	9 g		

Vitamin A	25%	Folic Acid	20%	Vitamin C	35%
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Calcium	25%	Vitamin B ₁₂	10%	Biotin	25%
Iron	25%	Vitamin D	25%	Iodine	10%
Vitamin E	20%	Thiamin	35%	Riboflavin	30%
Niacin	10%	Vitamin B ₆	30%	Magnesium	20%
Zinc	15%	Copper	30%	Phosphorus	20%
Pantothenic Acid	20%				

The product also contains items with RDIs: manganese 1.0 mg; vitamin K 17 mcg; chromium 9 mcg; selenium 5 mcg; molybdenum 35 mcg