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1 **Diurnal influences of fasted and non-fasted brisk walking**
2 **on gastric emptying rate, metabolic responses, and**
3 **appetite in healthy males**

4
5 Victoria J McIver¹, Lewis R Mattin¹, Gethin H Evans¹, and Adora MW Yau¹.

6 ¹Department of Life Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK.

7
8 **Corresponding author**

9 Adora MW Yau

10 Department of Life Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester,
11 Greater Manchester, M1 5GD.

12 Tel: +44 (0)161 247 5504

13 Email: a.yau@mmu.ac.uk

14
15 **Running title**

16 Metabolic and appetite responses to fasted exercise

17 **Disclosure**

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22 **Abstract**

23 Growing evidence suggests circadian rhythms, nutrition and metabolism are intimately
24 linked. Intermittent fasting (IMF) has become an increasingly popular intervention for

25 metabolic health and combining IMF with exercise may lead to benefits for weight
26 management. However, little is known about the diurnal variation of fasted exercise.
27 This study aimed to investigate the diurnal influences on gastric emptying rate (GER),
28 metabolic responses, and appetite to fasted and non-fasted exercise. Twelve healthy
29 males completed four 45 min walks in a randomised order. Walks were completed in
30 the morning (AM) and evening (PM) and either fasted (FASTED) or after consumption
31 of a standardised meal (FED). GER of a semi-solid lunch was subsequently measured
32 for 2 h using the ^{13}C breath test. Blood glucose concentration, substrate utilisation,
33 and ratings of appetite were measured throughout. Energy intake was also assessed
34 for the following 24 hours. GER T_{lag} was slower in PM-FASTED compared to AM-
35 FASTED, AM-FED, and PM-FED (75 ± 18 min vs. 63 ± 14 min, $P=0.001$, vs. 65 ± 10
36 min, $P=0.028$ and vs. 67 ± 16 min, $P=0.007$). Blood glucose concentration was greater
37 in the FED trials in comparison to the FASTED trials pre-lunch ($P<0.05$). Fat oxidation
38 was greater throughout exercise in both FASTED trials compared to FED, and
39 remained higher in FASTED trials than fed trials post-exercise until 30 min post lunch
40 ingestion (all $P<0.05$). No differences were found for appetite post-lunch ($P>0.05$) or
41 24 h post-energy intake ($P=0.476$). These findings suggest that evening fasted
42 exercise results in delayed GER, without changes in appetite. No compensatory
43 effects were observed for appetite, and 24 h post-energy intake for both fasted
44 exercise trials, therefore, increased fat oxidation holds positive implications for weight
45 management.

46 **Keywords:** Appetite, brisk walking, diurnal variation, fasting, gastric emptying rate

47 **Introduction**

48 Growing interest in nutrition and the circadian system has produced many
49 insights within recent years, with circadian rhythms, metabolism, and nutrition
50 suggested to be intimately linked (Johnson et al. 2016; Wehrens et al. 2017).
51 Intermittent fasting (IMF) has become an increasingly popular dietary strategy for
52 metabolic health and inducing weight loss by increasing insulin sensitivity and fatty-
53 acid mobilization, reducing inflammation, and by creating a state of negative energy
54 balance (Mattson, Longo, Harvie, 2017). Exercise-induced health benefits alone are
55 favorable for reducing a range of risk factors and preventing the onset of metabolic
56 diseases (Borghouts and Keizer 2000; Mann, Beedie and Jimenez, 2014; Rennie et
57 al. 2003; Speakman and Selman, 2003; Steig et al. 2011; Thompson et al. 2001;
58 Whelton, Chin, Xin, He, 2002). Therefore, combining intermittent fasting with exercise
59 may lead to benefits for weight management. Emerging evidence also suggests that
60 morning-loaded energy distribution is a beneficial strategy for weight management
61 (Garaulet *et al.* 2013; Jakubowicz et al. 2013). Morning calorie consumption was also
62 associated with greater improvements in fasting glucose, insulin and triglycerides, and
63 decreased hunger scores (Jakubowicz *et al.* 2013; Sutton et al. 2018) and serum lipid
64 levels (Yoshizaki et al., 2013). Therefore, combining eating patterns with exercise that
65 reduce or eliminate eating at particular times of the circadian cycle may result in
66 sustained improvements in human health (Johnston, 2014; Longo and Panda, 2016;
67 Mattson et al. 2014).

68 Many circadian rhythms exist within the human organism that are governed by
69 'clocks' located centrally and in most peripheral tissues. These central and peripheral
70 clocks are based on clock genes and their protein products (Cermakian and Boivin
71 2009). Clock genes in peripheral tissues are primarily regulated by the central 'master

72 clock' located in the suprachiasmatic nuclei (SCN) which is predominantly
73 synchronized by the light/dark cycle (Albrecht, 2012). External factors such as food
74 intake and exercise are also known to influence clock genes (Morris, Yang and
75 Scheer, 2012). Clock genes have been established in various organs and tissues,
76 regulating the timing of physiological processes, specifically those involved in the
77 digestion of food, nutrient uptake, and nutrient metabolism (Ruddick-Collins et al.
78 2018). There has been a considerable amount of interest in the role of clock genes in
79 regulating biochemical pathways and metabolic processes (Marcheva et al. 2014;
80 Sahar and Sassone-Corsi, 2012). However, less attention has been given on
81 examining how the circadian system affects eating patterns combined with exercise,
82 and how this may affect gastric emptying rate (GER) and appetite regulation.

83 Diurnal variations are evident in gastrointestinal absorption rate and GER, by
84 acting to control food intake differentially at different times of the day. Previous studies
85 have observed slower emptying of the stomach in the evening (Goo et al. 1987;
86 Grammaticos, Doumas and Koliaskos, 2015; Orr et al 2004). Thermic effect of food
87 has been shown to follow a time of day variance, with elevated levels in the morning,
88 which may contribute to the diurnal variation observed for GER (Morris et al. 2016).
89 GER influences the release of nutrients into the intestines for absorption, affecting
90 hormonal and metabolite responses essential for nutrient digestion and storage
91 (Romon et al. 1993; Ruddick-Collins et al. 2018). Therefore, GER may play an
92 important role in metabolic health. However, although the above-mentioned studies
93 are informative there are some notable limitations, with very low sample size recruited
94 (Goo et al. 1987; Grammaticos, Doumas and Koliaskos 2015), mice studies which
95 may not translate to human physiology (Kentish et al. 2014), and none of the
96 aforementioned studies included exercise. Consequently, it is still unknown how

97 circadian variations in GER following subsequent food and energy intake may
98 differentially influence postprandial energy metabolism and on appetite regulation.
99 Particularly, on the diurnal variation of fasted versus fed exercise on gastrointestinal
100 function and appetite. Therefore, there is a largely unmet need to explore how meal
101 timing along with exercise may impact GER, appetite and metabolic health.

102 The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of brisk walking in the fasted
103 and non-fasted state on metabolic responses, appetite and GER of a subsequent meal
104 at two different times of the day. It was hypothesized that (a) GER would be slower
105 during evening trials in comparison to morning trials (b) evening and morning trials
106 would result in differences in appetite and metabolic responses post-exercise (c) fat
107 oxidation would be higher during fasted exercise, and carbohydrate oxidation would
108 be higher during non-fasted exercise, regardless of time of day and (d) there would be
109 no compensatory effects for appetite post-exercise.

110 **Material and Methods**

111 **Participants**

112 Twelve recreationally active men (Mean \pm SD; age 25 ± 3 years; height 178 ± 6 cm;
113 body mass 83 ± 12 kg; body fat $21 \pm 6\%$; body mass index 26 ± 4 kg/m²; $\dot{V}O_{2peak}$ $39 \pm$
114 4 ml/kg/min) volunteered to participate in this study. Sample size was determined by
115 a power analysis based on data that would result in a detectable change in GER and
116 fat oxidation with 80% power and at a significance level of 5%. Participants were not
117 taking regular medication or with any known history of respiratory, cardiovascular, or
118 chronic gastrointestinal disease as assessed by a health screen questionnaire. All
119 participants were free from musculoskeletal injury and non-smokers. Participants were
120 also classified as moderate or intermediate chronotypes according to the Munich

121 chronotype questionnaire by Roenneberg, Wirz-Justice, Mellow (2003). This ensured
122 the exclusion of participants with an early diurnal phase also known as extreme
123 morning chronotypes and extreme evening chronotypes since it is known that morning
124 and evening types differ in the daily phase (Roenneberg, Wirz-Justice, Mellow, 2003).
125 Participants recorded a 7-day habitual sleep diary leading up to each trial and the
126 midpoint of sleep (sleep duration x timing of sleep) was calculated. Participants were
127 not involved in shift work and did not report any disturbances to their normal sleep-
128 wake cycle during the 1 week prior to data collection. All participants were informed of
129 the details of the study both verbally and in writing prior to providing their written
130 informed consent. The study was approved by the Faculty of Science and Engineering
131 Research Ethics and Governance Committee (Reference: SE1617158).

132 **Preliminary trial**

133 All participants attended a preliminary trial at least 7 days prior to the first experimental
134 trial. During this visit, participants completed a physical activity and dietary habit
135 questionnaire, Munich chronotype questionnaire, Pittsburgh sleep quality
136 questionnaire, and the Epworth sleepiness scale questionnaire (Buysse Reynolds,
137 Monk, Berman, Kupfer 1989). This visit also involved the collection of anthropometric
138 measures of height, weight, body fat percentage, as well as familiarisation of the
139 breath sampling procedures. Height was measured to the nearest 0.1 cm using a wall-
140 mounted stadiometer and body mass to the nearest 0.01 kg using electronic scales
141 (GFK 150; Adam Equipment Co. Ltd., Milton Keynes, UK). Body fat percentage was
142 approximated using bioelectrical impedance analysis (Omron BF306; Kyoto, Japan).

143 Following this, all participants completed a peak oxygen uptake ($\dot{V}O_{2peak}$) test on a
144 motorised treadmill. Initially, the treadmill speed was adjusted until a suitable brisk
145 walking pace was determined. Participants were advised that brisk walking is defined

146 as an exercise intensity yielding a mild shortening of breath yet still enabling to
147 converse. Participants then maintained this speed for five minutes. The speed of the
148 treadmill was then increased to 8-12 km·h⁻¹ and the gradient increased by 2.5% every
149 3 min until volitional exhaustion. Expired air was continuously collected using a breath-
150 by-breath gas analyser (Oxycon Pro, CareFusion, Leipzig, Germany) and $\dot{V}O_{2peak}$ was
151 calculated by averaging the maximum rate of oxygen consumption output consumed
152 over the final 1 min period. Heart rate was measured continuously using a heart rate
153 monitor (Polar H7, Kempele, Finland) and participants rating of perceived exertion
154 (RPE) (Borg, 1895) was recorded every 3 min.

155 Before leaving the laboratory, participants were provided with food weighing scales
156 and asked to record their physical activity and food intake in the 24 h before the start
157 of their first experimental trial. Participants were then asked to replicate their activity
158 and diet the day preceding their subsequent trials. In addition, participants were
159 requested to refrain from alcohol consumption, strenuous exercise and caffeine
160 ingestion 24 h before trials.

161 **Experimental Trials**

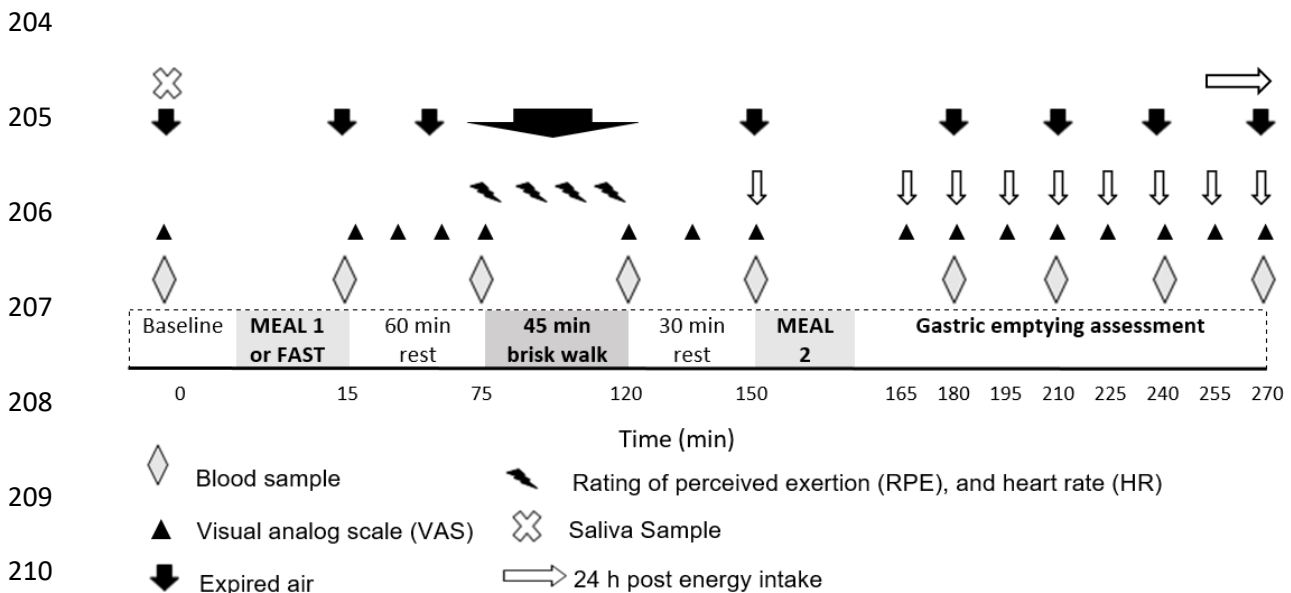
162 Participants completed four 5 h experimental trials in a randomised crossover fashion;
163 two morning trials fasted (AM-FASTED) and non-fasted (AM-FED), and two evening
164 trials fasted (PM-FASTED) and non-fasted (PM-FED). All morning trials commenced
165 at 08:00 and evening trials commenced at 15:00. Randomisation of trials was achieved
166 using the randomise tool within Microsoft Excel. All trials were separated by at least 7
167 days.

168 On the morning trials, participants were required to fast from 00:00 the evening before,
169 and on the evening trials, participants were required to have breakfast and then fast

170 from 07:00 with the exception of plain water consumption. Ninety minutes prior to
171 arrival at the laboratory, participants were asked to drink 500 ml of plain water to
172 ensure an adequate and consistent level of hydration status and not drink anymore
173 water after this point. Upon arrival at the laboratory, participants were asked to empty
174 their bladder before body mass was recorded. Baseline assessments of appetite
175 (hunger, fullness, prospective food consumption (PFC) and satisfaction) were made
176 using 100 mm visual analogue scales (VAS) (Flint, Raben, Blundell and Astrup, 2000).
177 Expired air samples were also collected for 10 min for the calculation of substrate
178 utilisation. The average $\dot{V}O_2$ and $\dot{V}CO_2$ measurements from the last 5 min of expired
179 air collection was used to calculate fat and carbohydrate oxidation rates using
180 stoichiometric equations (Péronnet and Massicotte, 1991). This sampling method for
181 expired air was adhered to for all resting expired air samples throughout.

182 Following baseline measurements, participants ingested the test 'breakfast' in FED
183 within a 15 min period, or remained fasted in FASTED. The test 'breakfast' (meal 1)
184 consisted of 30 g of breakfast cereal with 125 mL of semi-skimmed milk, and a
185 croissant, which provided in total 1,438 kJ (341 kcal), and contained 10.2 g fat, 48 g
186 carbohydrate and 11.2 g protein. This amount was chosen based on the
187 recommended breakfast serving being of approximately 300-400 kcals (Public Health
188 England, 2018). Participants consumed all of the breakfast within the 15 min window.
189 Post breakfast ratings of appetite and substrate utilisation were measured at the end
190 of the 15 min breakfast period. Participants then rested for 1 h before commencement
191 of the exercise protocol. During this 1 h rest period, further measures of appetite were
192 taken every 15 min and substrate utilisation every 30 min. The exercise protocol
193 involved 45 min of brisk walking on a level motorised treadmill at the speed determined
194 in the preliminary trial (range 5.9–7.0 km·h⁻¹). The relative exercise intensity was 55 ±

195 0.8% VO_{2peak} . Heart rate and RPE were measured every 15 min throughout the
 196 exercise, with expired air measured continuously. The last 10 min of each 15 min
 197 segment was used to calculate substrate utilisation. After completion of the exercise
 198 bout, participants recovered for 30 min (showered if desired) before they ingested a
 199 standardised 'lunch' meal (meal 2). The meal was 800 g (2 cans) of vegetable soup
 200 (1584 kJ (376 kcal)), containing 6.8 g fat, 66.4 g carbohydrate, 8.8 g protein. Subjective
 201 feelings of appetite and substrate utilisation were measured every 15 min post
 202 ingestion for a total period of 2 h. The food served for AM and PM trials were identical.
 203 A schematic diagram of the experimental protocol is presented in figure 1.



211 Figure 1: Schematic diagram of the experimental trial protocol.

213 Blood sampling

214 Blood glucose concentration was measured via a capillary blood sample from the tip
 215 of the finger, with the participant in a seated position. Capillary blood samples were
 216 taken at baseline, post breakfast period, pre-exercise, immediately post-exercise, pre-
 217 soup ingestion, then every 30 min post soup ingestion. A 23-gauge single use sterile

218 lancet (Unistik-3, Owen Mumford, Oxford, UK) was used to create a small incision
219 (approx. 3mm puncture) on the fingertip. From this incision a free-flowing capillary
220 blood sample was collected in microvettes (Hemocue Glucose 201+ Microcuvettes,
221 Ångelholm, Sweden) containing anticoagulant EDTA, lithium heparin. The blood was
222 analysed immediately using a desktop plasma glucose analyser (Hemocue Glucose
223 201+ analyser, Ångelholm, Sweden).

224

225 **Saliva melatonin sample and analysis**

226 A saliva sample was collected at the beginning of all trials (AM trials 08:00; PM trials
227 15:00) by the passive drool method, in which the participant allows saliva to pool in his
228 mouth and then drools (rather than spits) through a collection aidstraw into the
229 collection tube (5016.02-SAL, Salimetrics Europe Ltd, Newmarket, Suffolk, UK).
230 Saliva samples were immediately stored at -80°C until analysis. On day of analysis,
231 saliva samples were thawed, vortexed and then centrifuged at $1500 \times g$ for 15 min at
232 4°C . Melatonin concentrations were determined in duplicate using ELISA (Kit assay
233 #1-3402, Salimetrics, State College, PA, USA).

234

235 **Gastric emptying assessment**

236 The vegetable soup contained 100 mg of ^{13}C -sodium acetate for the assessment of
237 GER using the ^{13}C breath test method. A basal end-expiratory breath sample was
238 collected pre-meal ingestion then at every 15 min intervals post meal ingestion for 2
239 h. Breath samples were analysed for the ratio of $^{13}\text{CO}_2:^{12}\text{CO}_2$ by non-dispersive infra-
240 red spectroscopy (IRIS Dynamic, Kibion, Germany). The difference in the ratio of
241 $^{13}\text{CO}_2:^{12}\text{CO}_2$ from baseline breath to post-ingestion breath samples are expressed as

242 delta over baseline (DOB). Half-emptying time ($T_{1/2}$) and time of maximum emptying
243 rate (T_{lag}) were calculated utilising the manufacturers integrated software evaluation
244 incorporating equations of a previously described formula (Ghoos et al. 1993).

245

246 **Statistical Analysis**

247 A three-way (trial x time of day x time across trial) repeated-measures analysis of
248 variance (ANOVA) to assess trial (fasted vs. fed) x time of trial (morning vs. evening)
249 x time across trial differences for blood glucose concentration, gastric emptying DOB,
250 substrate oxidation, and VAS ratings. A two-way repeated measures ANOVA was
251 used to assess trial (fasted vs. fed) x time of trial (morning vs. evening) differences for
252 gastric emptying $T_{1/2}$ and T_{lag} data, melatonin concentration and 24-hour energy intake.
253 A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was used to assess midpoint of sleep and
254 body mass across trials. Sphericity for repeated measures was assessed, and where
255 appropriate, Greenhouse–Geisser corrections were applied for epsilon <0.75, and the
256 Huynh–Feldt correction adopted for less severe asphericity. Significant *F*-tests were
257 followed by dependent Student's *t*-Tests or one-way repeated ANOVA and Bonferroni
258 adjusted pairwise comparisons as appropriate. All analyses were carried out using
259 IBM SPSS statistics (v25.0 for Windows; SPSS, Chicago, IL). The level of significance
260 was set at $P < 0.05$. Descriptive data are expressed as mean \pm standard deviation (SD).

261 **Results**

262 There were no significant differences between trials (AM-FASTED vs. AM-FED vs.
263 PM-FASTED vs. PM-FED) for midpoint of sleep (Mean \pm SD; 02:40 \pm 0.2 vs. 02:25 \pm
264 0.4 vs. 02:32 \pm 0.5 vs. 02:42 \pm 0.5 respectively; $P = 0.159$). Sleep-wake times for the
265 four trials were; 22:50 - 06:30 vs. 22:30 - 06:20 vs. 22:45 - 06:20 vs. 22:50 - 06:35

266 respectively. There were also no significant differences between trials for pre-trial body
267 mass (82.94 ± 12.53 vs. 82.87 ± 12.55 vs. 82.79 ± 12.47 vs. 82.92 ± 12.55 kg for AM-
268 FASTED, AM-FED vs. PM-FASTED, PM-FED; $P = 0.230$).

269

270 **Melatonin**

271 Two factor ANOVA demonstrated a main effect of time of trial ($P = 0.002$), no main
272 effect of trial ($P = 0.345$) and no interaction ($P = 0.159$) for salivary melatonin
273 concentration. Salivary melatonin concentration was significantly different between
274 morning and evening trials (AM-FASTED, AM-FED vs. PM-FASTED, PM-FED; $21 \pm$
275 $6, 23 \pm 13$ vs. $15 \pm 12, 9 \pm 5$ pg/mL; $P = 0.002$).

276

277 **Gastric Emptying rate**

278 Two factor ANOVA demonstrated no main effect of time of trial ($P = 0.128$), no main
279 effect of trial ($P = 0.111$) and no interaction ($P = 0.430$) for $T_{1/2}$ (Figure 2a). Two factor
280 ANOVA demonstrated a main effect of time of trial ($P = 0.021$), no main effect of trial
281 ($P = 0.256$) and an interaction ($P = 0.023$) for T_{lag} (Figure 2a). T_{lag} was slower in PM-
282 FASTED compared to AM-FASTED, AM-FED and PM-FED (75 ± 18 vs. 63 ± 14 min,
283 $P = 0.001$, vs. 65 ± 10 min, $P = 0.028$ and vs. 67 ± 16 min, $P = 0.007$). No trial x time
284 interaction ($P = 0.341$) or main trial effect ($P = 0.332$) was observed for DOB, although,
285 a main effect for time was found ($P < 0.001$; Figure 2b). Mean incremental area under
286 curve (iAUC) for DOB were 2633 ± 978 vs. 2541 ± 1082 vs. 3343 ± 840 vs. $2774 \pm$
287 613 $^{13}\text{CO}_2$: $^{12}\text{CO}_2$ over 5 h for AM-FASTED, AM-FED, PM-FASTED, and PM-FED,
288 respectively. No significant effect of trial ($P = 0.226$), time of day ($P = 0.075$), or
289 interaction effect ($P = 0.177$) was observed.

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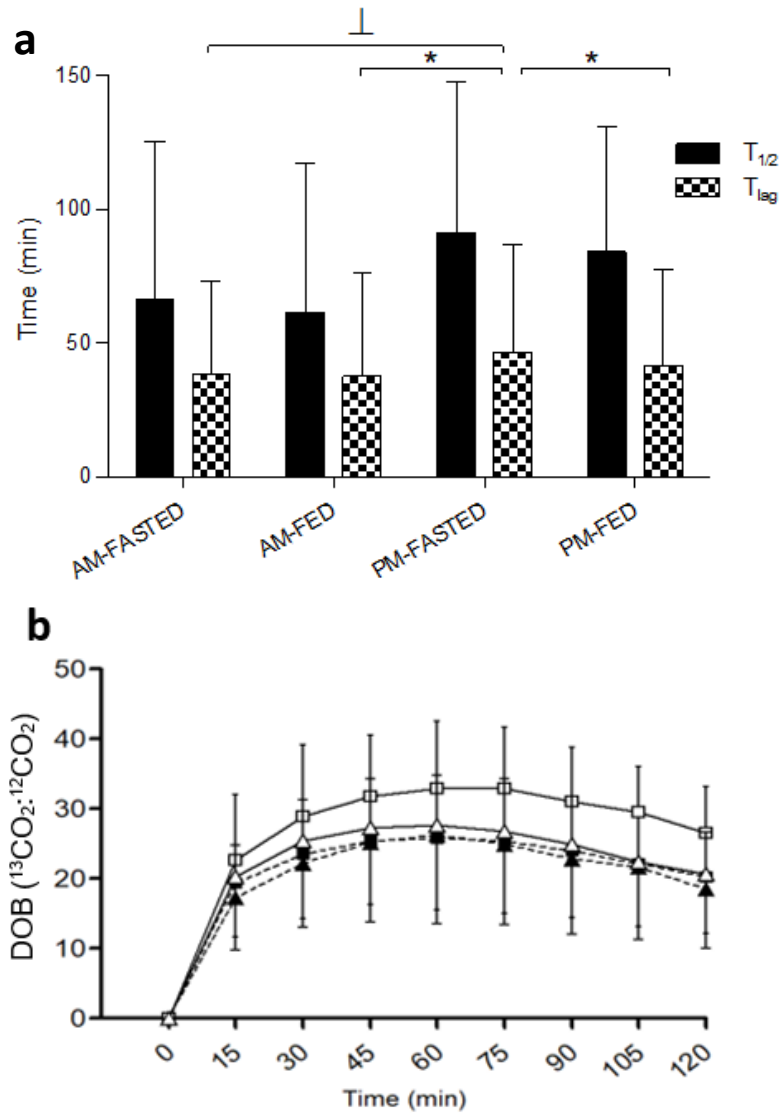


Figure 2: Gastric emptying assessment, AM-FASTED (■), AM-FED (▲) PM-FASTED (□) PM-FED (△). a) Gastric emptying half time ($T_{1/2}$) and time of maximal emptying rate (T_{lag}) b) Gastric emptying delta over baseline (DOB) for all four trials of MEAL 2 (800 g vegetable soup). *Indicates significance ($P < 0.05$) versus corresponding condition (i.e. FASTED vs. FED), ⊥ indicates significance versus corresponding time of day (i.e. FASTED AM vs FASTED PM). Values represent mean \pm SD; $n=12$.

Subjective feelings of Appetite

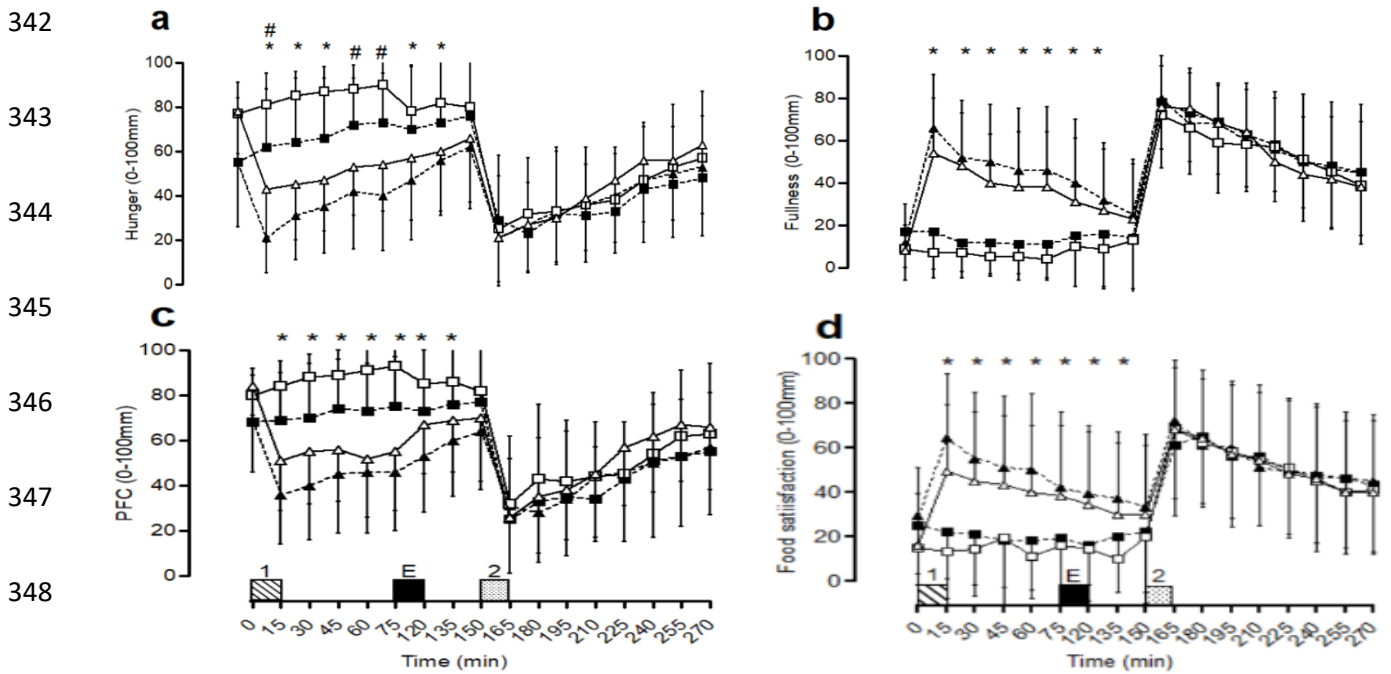
315 A main effect of trial (FASTED vs. FED; $P < 0.001$), time of day ($P = 0.003$) and time
316 ($P < 0.001$) was observed for hunger, although no trial x time of day x time interaction
317 effect was observed ($P = 0.855$). Subjective feelings of hunger were generally lower
318 during the FED trials compared to the FASTED trials following ingestion of breakfast
319 with a number of time points showing significant differences ($P < 0.05$; Figure 3a).
320 However, there were no differences in subjective feelings of hunger between trials
321 following ingestion of lunch.

322 A main effect of trial ($P < 0.001$) and time ($P < 0.001$) was observed for fullness,
323 although no main effect for time of day ($P = 0.057$), or trial x time of day x time
324 interaction ($P = 0.074$) effect was observed. Subjective feelings of fullness were
325 generally greater during the FED trials compared to the FASTED trials following
326 ingestion of breakfast with a number of time points showing significant differences (P
327 < 0.05 ; Figure 3b). However, there were no differences in subjective feelings of
328 fullness between trials following ingestion of lunch.

329 A main effect of trial ($P = 0.008$), time of day ($P < 0.001$) and time ($P < 0.001$)
330 was observed for PFC although no trial x time of day x time interaction effect was
331 observed ($P = 0.577$). Subjective feelings of PFC were generally lower during the FED
332 trials compared to the FASTED trials following ingestion of breakfast with a number of
333 time points showing significant differences ($P < 0.05$; Figure 3c). However, there were
334 no differences in subjective feelings of PFC between trials following ingestion of lunch.

335 A main effect of trial ($P = 0.003$) and time ($P < 0.001$) was observed for food
336 satisfaction, however no main effect for time of day ($P = 0.078$), or trial x time of day x
337 time interaction effect ($P = 0.679$) was observed. Subjective feelings of food
338 satisfaction were generally greater during the FED trials compared to the FASTED

339 trials following ingestion of breakfast with a number of time points showing significant
 340 differences ($P < 0.05$; Figure 3d). However, there were no differences in subjective
 341 feelings of food satisfaction between trials following ingestion of lunch.



350 **Figure 3:** Appetite ratings during trials, AM-FASTED (■), AM-FED (▲) PM-FASTED
 351 (□) PM-FED (△). Appetite was assessed by 100 mm visual analogue scale (VAS); a)
 352 hunger, b) fullness, c) prospective food consumption (PFC) and d) food satisfaction.
 353 Values represent mean \pm SD; $n = 12$. *Indicates significance ($P < 0.05$) versus
 354 corresponding condition (i.e. FASTED vs. FED), # indicates significant difference at
 355 one time-point compared to all trials. 1 = Meal 1, in which participants ingested a
 356 prescribed breakfast during the FED trial and remained fasted during the FASTED
 357 trial, E = Exercise period, where participants completed a 45 min brisk walk, 2 = Meal
 358 2, where 800 g vegetable soup was ingested.

359 **24 h post energy intake**

360 Two factor ANOVA demonstrated no main effect of time of day ($P = 0.170$), no
 361 main effect of trial ($P = 0.564$) and no interaction ($P = 0.718$) for 24-hour energy intake
 362 (Table 1).

363

364 Table 1: 24 h post trial energy intake and macronutrient breakdown for participants (n
 365 = 12; mean \pm SD).

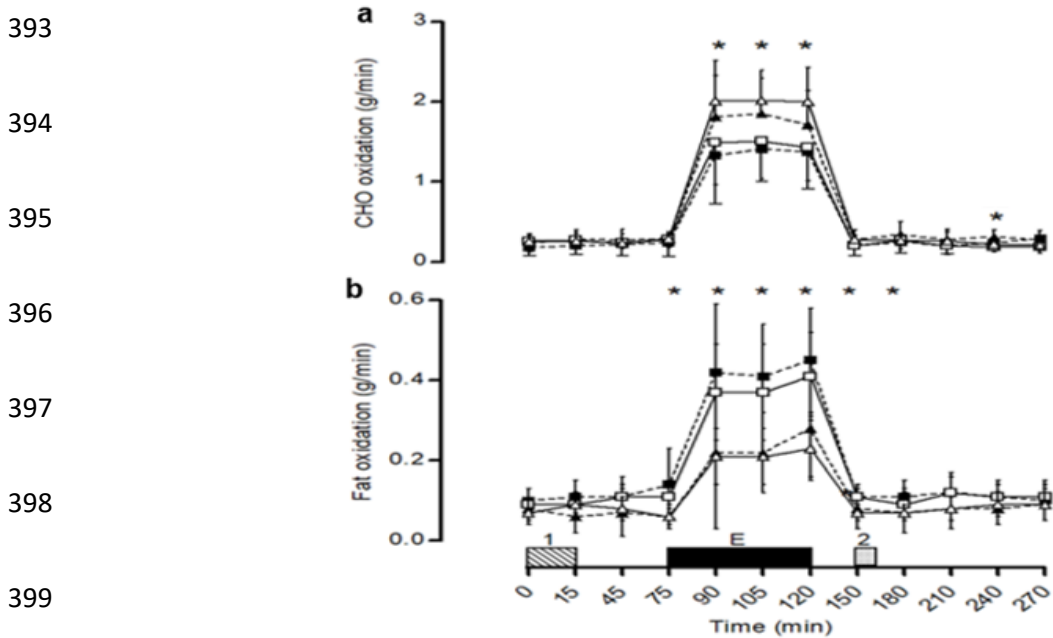
	AM-FASTED	AM-FED	PM-FASTED	PM-FED
Energy intake (kcal)	2789 \pm 520	2704 \pm 655	2639 \pm 668	2490 \pm 749
Protein (g)	138 \pm 33	145 \pm 70	126 \pm 54	127 \pm 59
Carbohydrate (g)	332 \pm 106	296 \pm 71	237 \pm 119	273 \pm 83
Fat (g)	104 \pm 43	110 \pm 43	134 \pm 80	101 \pm 49

366

367 **Substrate oxidation**

368 A main effect for trial ($P < 0.001$), and time ($P < 0.001$) was observed for CHO
 369 oxidation, however, no main effect for time of day ($P = 0.296$) or trial x time of day x
 370 time interaction effect was observed ($P = 0.366$; Figure 4a). CHO oxidation was
 371 greater in PM-FED compared to AM-FASTED and PM-FASTED, and AM-FED
 372 compared to AM-FASTED throughout exercise at 15 min ($P = 0.004$; $P = 0.007$; $P =$
 373 0.021 respectively), 30 min ($P < 0.001$; $P = 0.003$; $P = 0.006$), and 45 min ($P = 0.001$;
 374 $P = 0.001$; $P = 0.005$). CHO oxidation was higher in AM-FED compared to PM-FED
 375 and PM-FASTED at 1.5 h after soup ingestion (240 min; $P = 0.005$; $P = 0.022$) (Figure
 376 4a). Mean iAUC for CHO oxidation was 72.4 \pm 34.6 vs. 93.3 \pm 30.7 vs. 59.3 \pm 33.1 vs.
 377 96.2 \pm 31.3 g/min over 5 h for AM-FASTED, AM-FED, PM-FASTED, and PM-FED,
 378 respectively. A significant effect of trial ($P = 0.001$) was observed but no significant
 379 time of day effect ($P = 0.581$) or interaction effect ($P = 0.368$).

380 A main effect of trial ($P < 0.001$) and time ($P < 0.001$) was observed for fat
 381 oxidation, however, no main effect for time of day ($P = 0.469$) or trial x time of day x
 382 time interaction effect was observed ($P = 0.740$; Figure 4b). Fat oxidation was greater
 383 pre-exercise in PM-FASTED compared to PM-FED (0.11 ± 0.04 vs. 0.06 ± 0.02 g/min;
 384 $P = 0.003$), and greater throughout exercise for both FASTED compared to FED trials
 385 (all $P < 0.05$). At pre-lunch, fat oxidation was also greater in AM-FASTED and PM-
 386 FASTED than PM-FED ($P = 0.018$; $P = 0.020$), and AM-FASTED remained higher
 387 than PM-FED 30 min post soup ingestion ($P = 0.041$) (Figure 4b). Mean iAUC for fat
 388 oxidation was 18.8 ± 10.2 vs. 8.7 ± 7.7 vs. 19.5 ± 9.2 vs. 9.3 ± 9.7 g/min over 5 h for
 389 AM-FASTED, AM-FED, PM-FASTED, and PM-FED, respectively. A significant effect
 390 of trial ($P = 0.002$) was observed with fat oxidation being higher in the FASTED trials
 391 compared to FED trials. No time of day ($P = 0.774$), or interaction effect ($P = 0.991$)
 392 was observed.



400 **Figure 4:** Substrate utilisation during the trials AM-FASTED (■), AM-FED (▲) PM-
 401 FASTED (□) PM-FED (△). a) Carbohydrate oxidation and b) fat oxidation. Values
 402 represent mean \pm SD; $n = 12$. *Indicates significance ($P < 0.05$) versus corresponding

403 condition (i.e. FASTED vs. FED), \perp indicates significance versus corresponding time
404 of day (i.e. FASTED AM vs FASTED PM). 1 = Meal 1, in which participants ingested
405 a prescribed breakfast during the FED trial and remained fasted during the FASTED
406 trial, E = Exercise period, where participants completed a 45 min brisk walk, 2 = Meal
407 2, where 800 g vegetable soup was ingested.

408 **Blood glucose concentration**

409 A main effect of trial ($P = 0.007$) and time ($P < 0.001$) was observed for glucose
410 concentration, although no main effect for time of day ($P = 0.854$), or trial x time of day
411 x time main interaction effect ($P = 0.058$) was observed. Baseline glucose
412 concentrations were higher in the morning AM-FED trial in comparison to PM-FASTED
413 trial ($P = 0.001$), no further differences during baseline collection. Blood glucose
414 concentration pre-exercise was greater in AM-FED compared to PM-FASTED ($5.80 \pm$
415 1.30 vs. 4.34 ± 0.31 mmol/L; $P = 0.014$), and greater in PM-FED compared to AM-
416 FASTED and PM-FASTED (6.38 ± 1.15 vs. 4.69 ± 0.58 ; $P = 0.005$ and 4.34 ± 0.31
417 mmol/L; $P = 0.001$). No differences between trials were seen post- exercise ($P > 0.05$),
418 however, blood glucose concentration was greater at 150 min pre-lunch in AM-FED
419 compared to AM-FASTED (5.28 ± 0.63 vs. 4.71 ± 0.40 mmol/L; $P = 0.042$) (Figure 5a).
420 A significant time of day effect ($P = 0.024$) for iAUC for glucose concentrations was
421 observed, but no significant trial ($P = 0.915$), or interaction effect ($P = 0.677$) (Figure
422 5b).

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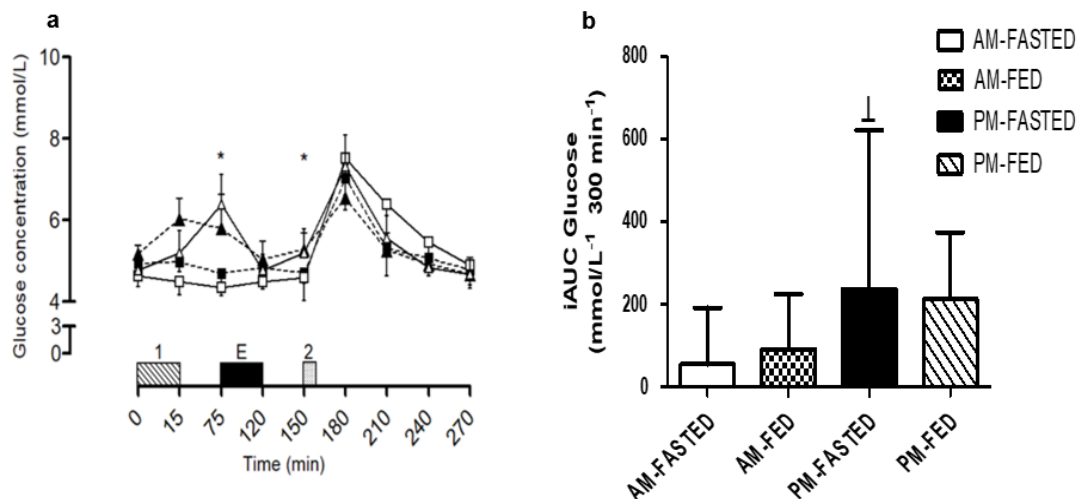
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436 **Figure 5:** Blood glucose responses. a) Blood glucose concentrations during trials, AM-
437 FASTED (■), AM-FED (▲) PM-FASTED (□) PM-FED (△) and b) Incremental area
438 under curve (iAUC) over the trials. Values represent mean ± SD; n = 12. *Indicates
439 significance (P < 0.05) versus corresponding condition (i.e. FASTED vs. FED). ⊥
440 indicates significance versus corresponding time of day (i.e. FASTED AM vs FASTED
441 PM). 1 = Meal 1, in which participants ingested a prescribed breakfast during the FED
442 trial and remained fasted during the FASTED trial, E = Exercise period, where
443 participants completed a 45 min brisk walk, 2 = Meal 2, where 800 g vegetable soup
444 was ingested.

445 Discussion

446 A meal in the evening following fasted exercise elicits a slower maximal gastric
447 emptying rate in comparison to a meal following morning fasted and evening non-
448 fasted exercise. Appetite does not follow a diurnal variation following fasted low
449 intensity exercise, and regardless of the time of day, fasted exercise favors fat
450 oxidation which may help induce a negative energy balance without a subsequent
451 compensatory response in energy intake. This study adds novel insights into the

452 diurnal variation of GER, appetite and metabolism in response to fasted versus fed
453 exercise.

454 To the authors knowledge, this is the only study that has investigated the diurnal
455 variation of GER response from a subsequent meal following fasted versus fed
456 exercise. Previous studies that have examined the effect of GER between morning
457 and evening have found half time was significantly delayed in the evening (Goo et al.
458 1987; Grammaticos, Doumas, and Koliaskos, 2015; Orr et al 2004). The current study
459 only found a significance in maximal emptying time only, not half time. This may be
460 due to the meal context in the current study in comparison to others when measuring
461 gastric emptying. Goo et al (1987) found that in 16 healthy males, only gastric
462 emptying half-times for the evening (20:00) meal were significantly longer for solids
463 but not liquids when compared with morning (08:00) emptying half-times. The present
464 study used a soup meal that contained a large liquid component, which may be an
465 explanation for the lack of difference in half time as a greater delay of emptying with
466 solid food compared with liquids is commonly observed (Hellstrom, Gryback and
467 Jacobsson, 2006). In addition to this, it is well known that variations in gastric emptying
468 can have a major impact on the postprandial glycemic profile, and incretin hormone
469 secretion (Marathe et al. 2013; Trahair et al. 2014). Whether a delayed gastric
470 emptying in the evening versus morning would be more beneficial for appetite
471 regulatory hormone in response to weight management is unknown and requires
472 further study. This may be of particular importance for some clinical populations, such
473 as overweight and type 2 diabetes, with research providing a number of strategies to
474 optimise postprandial glycemic control based on modulation of GER (Jones et al.
475 2001; Marathe et al. 2013; O'Keefe, 2011; Philips et al. 2015). It is suggested that a
476 slower rate of nutrient delivery to the small intestine would be desirable to compensate

477 for the delay in insulin release and the resistance to its actions (Marathe et al. 2013).
478 However, it is difficult to draw accurate comparisons due to no existing studies
479 measuring gastric emptying at different times of day in response to exercise.
480 Therefore, more literature is required to build a clearer understanding, and also to
481 explore whether appetite regulatory hormones are affected between morning and
482 evening exercise.

483 Similar to gastric emptying, it is well documented that fat, carbohydrate (CHO), and
484 glucose metabolism display a time-of-day dependent rhythms, which align with daily
485 rhythms in behaviours, such as sleep/wake, feeding/fasting, and activity cycles
486 (Bailey, Udoh and Young 2014; Kalsbeek, Fleur and Fliers, 2014; Kessler et al. 2017).
487 Previous evidence has observed higher fat oxidation rates in the evening in
488 comparison to morning (Darakh et al. 2014; Mohebbi and Azizi, 2011), while in
489 contrast, CHO and glucose metabolism are higher in the morning in comparison to the
490 evening (Kessler et. 2017; Qian and Scheer 20176). However, these conclusions do
491 not translate on to the current study findings, with no time of day effect observed in
492 any of the energy metabolism measures, only between trials (fasted versus. fed
493 exercise). A possible explanation for the lack of time of day variance may be due to
494 the exercise elicited within the current study (55% $\dot{V}O_{2peak}$). Previous studies that
495 observed a time-of-day variance in fat/CHO oxidation conducted higher exercise
496 intensities (Mohebbi, Azizi and Tabari 2011; Suk, 2015). It is thought that during
497 periods of increased physical activity, non-insulin mediated glucose utilisation
498 increases, and the relative contribution of aerobic to anaerobic utilization being
499 dependent upon exercise intensity (Alberts et al. 2006; Calvo, et al. 2008; Melzer,
500 2011; Rohling et al. 2016; Rose and Richter 2005). Nevertheless, energy metabolism
501 is predominantly dependent on feeding behaviours, and regardless of time of day,

502 fasted exercise favoured fat oxidation, while eating before exercise elicits a greater
503 CHO oxidation response (Achten and Jeukendrup 2004; Bachmen, 2016; Iwayama,
504 2017). This corresponds with existing literature, that fasting elicits fat metabolism,
505 while feeding induces a greater CHO metabolism. It would be interesting to examine
506 the energy metabolism of time-of-day on an intensity/mode of exercise that elicited a
507 greater energy response.

508 The present study hypothesised that evening and morning trials would result in
509 differences in appetite and metabolic responses post-exercise. However, appetite
510 stabilised across all trials post-exercise, which corresponds with the substrate
511 utilisation and glucose findings. This may be due to a suppression of appetite which
512 has been reported during and briefly following moderate-to-high intensity bouts of
513 running exercise (Broom, Batterham, King and Stensel 2008; Vatansever-Ozen,
514 Tiryaki-Sonmez, Bugdayci and Ozen 2011). The combined lack of differences in
515 hunger and energy metabolism post exercise, followed by no differences in 24 h post-
516 energy intake, could suggest that regardless of an increased energy expenditure being
517 incurred from exercise there will likely be no compensatory increase in energy intake
518 post-exercise to account for the omission of energy intake prior to exercise. This may,
519 therefore, create a small short-term negative energy balance and if sustained in the
520 long-term, the cumulative effects may have an important role in weight maintenance,
521 which has been found in previous studies from fasted exercise. Previous studies have
522 found that alternate day fasting combined with endurance exercise was effective for
523 weight loss for obese participants following 12-week training programme (Bhutani et
524 al. 2013) and fasting before morning exercise decreased 24-hour energy intake
525 (Bachman, Deitrick and Hillman, 2016). Further research on both the shorter-term
526 effects of an acute bout of exercise and the cumulative effects of frequent fasted

527 exercise at various times of day over a period of time is required to fully understand if
528 compensatory effects occur.

529 In conclusion, these findings demonstrate that GER is sensitive to time of day variation
530 in response to a meal following fasted exercise. In the postprandial stages, regardless
531 of time of day, appetite, blood glucose concentration, substrate utilisation, and 24 h
532 post energy intake is not sensitive to an acute bout of low-intensity exercise in the
533 fasted state compared to the fed state. Fasted exercise favors fat oxidation, whilst
534 eating before exercise favors CHO oxidation. The indication that no compensatory
535 increase in energy intake will occur post exercise potentially holds positive implications
536 for fasted brisk walking in the long-term control of weight management. Future
537 research is warranted to investigate how appetite regulatory hormones associated with
538 gastric emptying respond to fasted versus. fed exercise at different times of day.

539

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543

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545 and designed the experiments; VJM and LRM performed the experiments; VJM
546 analysed the data; VJM wrote the paper with contributions from AMWY and GHE. All
547 authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

548

549 **Conflict of Interest**

550 The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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