

How to be Healthy in Ramadan?

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and holds great significance for Muslims around the world. It is a sacred period marked by fasting, prayer, reflection, and community. Ramadan is considered one of the Five Pillars of Islam, which are the fundamental acts of worship and the foundation of a Muslim's faith and practice.

The observance of Ramadan commemorates the month during which the first verses of the Quran, the holy book of Islam, were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. The month is seen as a time of spiritual purification, self-discipline, and an opportunity for increased devotion and closeness to Allah.

How does fasting affect the body?

Fasting impacts the body by utilising stored carbohydrates and fat for energy. While mild dehydration is common, studies suggest it isn't harmful if replenished adequately after sunset. Individuals experiencing severe symptoms should promptly consume moderate amounts of water, preferably with sugar and salt.

The absence of caffeinated drinks during fasting may initially cause headaches, gradually resolving as the body adjusts. Upon breaking the fast, a gradual intake of fluids and low-fat, fluid-rich foods is recommended.

Iftar, a celebratory time, should be balanced, avoiding excessive consumption of fried and sugary foods to prevent weight gain.

Research on Ramadan's health effects, including weight loss, improved cholesterol, and immune system benefits, yields mixed results. Individuals should plan a balanced diet post-Ramadan for sustained health.



Embrace a healthy Ramadan journey:

As the holy month of Ramadan approaches, we are excited to share some valuable insights and tips to help you make this spiritual journey a healthy and fulfilling one. Fasting during Ramadan is not only a religious practice but also an opportunity to focus on self-improvement, mindfulness, and overall well-being.

1. Suhoor: The Key to a Day of Energy

Begin your day with a nutritious suhoor to sustain you throughout the day. Incorporate complex carbohydrates, protein, and healthy fats to provide a slow release of energy. Go for whole grains, fruits, yogurt, and lean proteins to keep you energised and hydrated during fasting hours.

2. Hydration is Essential:

Staying hydrated is crucial, especially during the longer days of Ramadan. Make sure that you drink plenty of water during non-fasting hours to prevent dehydration 2-3 litres per day. Infuse your water with slices of cucumber, mint, or lemon for added flavour and freshness.

3. Balanced Iftar Meals:

Breaking your fast with a balanced iftar is essential for replenishing nutrients. Include a variety of food groups, such as lean proteins, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats. Start with dates and water, followed by a light soup to prepare your stomach for the main meal.

4. Mindful Eating and Portion Control:

Practice mindful eating during iftar and suhoor. Savour each bite, chew slowly and be conscious of your body's hunger cues. Avoid overeating by serving reasonable portions and listening to your body's signals when it's satisfied.

5. Nutrient-Rich Snacking:

Opt for nutrient-dense snacks between Iftar and Suhoor. Include fruits, nuts, and yogurt to keep your energy levels stable and support your overall health.

6. Physical Activity:

Maintain a light exercise routine during Ramadan to promote physical well-being. Engage in activities like walking, stretching, or low-intensity workouts. Be mindful of the timing and choose when your energy levels are at their peak.

7. Spiritual and Mental Well-being:

Use this sacred month for spiritual reflection and mental well-being. Allocate time for prayer, meditation, and self-reflection. Take breaks during the day to relax and rejuvenate your mind.

8. Quality Sleep:

Ensure you get sufficient sleep during the night to support overall health and well-being. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep to help your body recover and rejuvenate.

Medical considerations when fasting during Ramadan

The most important tips to follow during Ramadan:

- For individuals with diabetes, it is recommended to check blood sugar levels five times a day.
- If you encounter symptoms of hypo/hyperglycaemia such as headaches, dizziness, fatigue, poor vision, or if your blood sugar level is below 70 mg/dL or above 300 mg/dL, break your fast.
- Individuals with hypertension should monitor their blood pressure to maintain it below 130/80 during fasting to prevent complications.
- Break your fast if the systolic blood pressure reaches 160 or if you experience symptoms of low blood pressure, such as dizziness, fatigue, or difficulty concentrating.
- Schedule an appointment with your doctor to adjust medication doses and timing during Ramadan.

Wishing you a spiritually uplifting and healthy Ramadan!



Ramadan Mubarak!

Learn more:

<https://www.emro.who.int/ramadan-health-campaign.html>

https://www.heart.org/-/media/data-import/downloadables/0/e/6/pe-abh-how-do-i-follow-a-healthy-diet-ucm_300467.pdf

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/prevention/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/tips-for-a-lower-salt-diet/>

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure>