



Healthy In Ramadan

Updated & Edited
Info for pregnant &
breastfeeding mothers
included

Pre-Ramadan, Ramadan
Exercise Tracker & Meal Planner
included with the relevant sahih
hadiths related to the topics

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Introduction

A **physically healthy body** is essential not only in Ramadan but every time and every day! We are encouraged to stay healthy in our everyday life.

How does it **affect our Ramadan**, specifically? A physically healthy body is vital to help us gain the motivation and strength to perform our best in performing ibadah in this blessed month of Ramadan. Do you remember the famous hadith about how the strong believers are more beloved to Allah?

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace, and blessings be upon him, said, "**The strong believer** is more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, but there is goodness in both of them. Be eager for what benefits you, seek help from Allah, and do not be frustrated. If something befalls you, then do not say: If only I had done something else. Rather say: Allah has decreed what he wills. Verily, the phrase 'if only' opens the way for the work of Satan." (Sahih Muslim 2664)

To be physically **healthy and fit in Ramadan** has to start months earlier. But not to worry because it is always not too late to start ourselves on whichever day, including today!

There are few **factors to consider to stay physically healthy** to welcome Ramadan and maintain our health throughout the blessed month. Besides the things that we are ought to do in Ramadan, which includes drinking an adequate amount of water for hydration, eating healthy food during sahoor and break of fast (iftar), and get enough sleep, we should also practice an active lifestyle with the right amount of physical activities even before Ramadan, through the month and continue throughout after.

It is recommended that we **plan our meal for sahoor and break** of fast to remind us about a balanced diet. It can also help us save a lot of quality time planning and preparing food and avoiding food wastage.

Dua during Iftar

Allah loves and encourages us to make dua to Him. He encourages us to do that in everything. We should always ask him even for good health. Making dua for good health is one of the vital parts of our effort to stay healthy. Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) has taught us that one of the best time to make dua for a fasting person is during a break of fast. It is a sunnah to break the fast with the dua as narrated in the hadith.

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ وَثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

Say 'Bismillaah,' followed by a dua:

"Dhahaba al-'zama' wa abtallat al-'urooq wa thabata al-ajr insha'Allah (the thirst is gone, the veins have been moistened and the reward is assured, if Allaah wills)."

(Narrated by Abu Dawood, 2357; al-Bayhaqi, 4/239; classed as Hasan in al-Irwa', 4/39).

The above
dua should be
accompanied by
other dua, which
includes asking Allah
for our good health.

Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) narrated that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Three prayers are not rejected: the prayer of a father, the prayer of a fasting person, and the prayer of a traveler.

(Narrated by al-Bayhaqi, 3/345; classed as Saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Saheeh 1797)

Take sahoor
is important
because there is
a blessing in it.

Anas ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Eat sahoor for in sahoor there is a blessing."

(Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1923; Muslim, 1059)

Dates for Iftar & Sahoor

Dates or Tamar (in Arabic) is a must and not to be missed in Ramadan. It is one of the fruits mentioned in the Quran. It is highly recommended to consume it due to its great benefits. Fasting empties the stomach of food, and there is no nourishment to be sent to the different parts of the body. Sweet foods are quickest to be absorbed and processed, especially if they are fresh, so they are more readily digested. Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) has advised us to eat it during sahoor and iftar for good health.

Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to break his fast with fresh dates before praying; if there were no (fresh dates) then with dry dates, and if there were no (dried dates) then he would take a few sips of water.

(Narrated by Abu Dawood, no. 2356; al-Tirmidhi, 696; classed as hasan in al-Irwa', 4/45)

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spoke highly of dates and said: "What a good sahoor for the believer dates are."

Narrated by Abu Dawood (2345); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Very nutritious. Every 100 grams of dates contains: Calories: 277

Carbs: 75 grams

Fiber: 7 grams

Protein: 2 grams

Potassium: 20% of the RDI

Magnesium: 14% of the RDI

Copper: 18% of the RDI

Manganese: 15% of the RDI

Iron: 5% of the RDI

Vitamin B6: 12% of the RDI

Health benefit of dates:

- ✓ High in antioxidants
- ✓ Improve brain function
- ✓ High in fiber
- ✓ Helps to prevent osteoporosis
- ✓ Healthy substitute to white sugar
- ✓ Promote Natural Labour

Eating & drinking habit In Ramadan

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) has shown us many examples of healthy eating and drinking habits for good health. Below are some of the sunnah habits that are crucial for us to emulate to maintain our health, especially in the blessed month of Ramadan.

According to research done in 2009, high-temperature foods and beverages may increase a person's risk of developing oesophageal cancer. That is why Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) advised us not to take a hot meal.

From 'Asma bint Abu Bakr, that if she used to cook a broth she would cover it with something until the hot bubbling steam had left, then she said: verily I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessing be upon him) say: 'Indeed it is greater Baraka (blessings) the food from which is not bubbling and steaming.' No. 392/659

Taken from Silsilah Ahadeeth As-Saheehah of Shaykh Al-Albaani

Prophet Muhammad said, "A man does not fill any vessel worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat enough to keep him alive. But if he must do that, then one-third for his food, one-third for his drink, and one-third for his air."

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 2380; Ibn Maajah, 3349; classed as Saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi, 1939).



Eating & drinking habit In Ramadan

Moderation in eating and not filling the stomach:

Allah has created our stomach with its right size. The stomach of an adult is about the size of a fist. However, it can expand as much as 40 times its original capacity to hold a big meal or large fluid intake. Continuous and persistent big meal habits can disrupt its normal function.

**Drink
in 3
sips**

Anas ibn Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: "When he (Prophet Muhammad) drink, he would take a breath three times, and he said, that is more enjoyable and healthier."

(Narrated by Muslim. Al-Silsilah al-Saheehah, hadeeth no. 385, 386.)



Water & Beverages In Ramadan

Water Intake In Ramadan

Water intake should be sufficient for a fasting person. Enough water should be consumed during iftar and sahoor, combined with low fat and salt meal to maintain hydration. A fluid requirement for every person differs from one to the other. Water plays a significant role in weight loss and maintenance because it helps to eliminate toxins and reduce hunger. That is why it is important to drink small quantities of water throughout the night.

The guidelines differ from one country to the other, taking the amount of water depending on their individual needs and circumstances, including activity, heat, altitude, climate, individual diet, and sodium intake.



Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said,
“When one of you breaks your fast, let him break on with dates. If he does not have any, let him break it on the water for water is pure”

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 658)

Besides water, coconut water is a great source of electrolytes with simple sugars and minerals that replenish water loss.

The Health Benefits of Coconut Drink

According to ‘Medical News Today’ written on 12th July 2017, among the health benefits of coconut drink includes:

- It is a natural sports drink.
- It is low in calories.
- It contains potassium, magnesium, and calcium.
- It acts as an anti-oxidant to neutralize oxidative stress and free radicals.
- It contains more amino acids than the cows’ milk to help the body respond to stress.
- It contains cytokinins that have anti-aging and anti-cancer properties.



Hot Beverages In Ramadan

Can our favorite drinks and beverages affect the iron absorption in our bodies?

Yes! The acid content in the caffeine can deplete iron absorption. Iron is an essential component in the production of blood cells in our body. The low amount of iron absorption in our body can cause anemia. Scientists examined the effect by having people eat a regular meal and then measuring their iron levels after the meal was combined with various drinks. It was found that when the subjects consumed the meal with tea, there was a 62 percent reduction in iron absorption. Drinking coffee resulted in a 35 percent reduction. Where else, orange juice increased iron absorption by about 85 percent. activity, heat, altitude, climate, individual diet, and sodium intake.



Take away note: Drinking coffee or tea should be avoided during iftar and sahoor because of its effect on iron absorption, but orange juice is an ideal beverage during meals other than water.

Can I drink a cup of tea or coffee in Ramadan?

Yes, but in a small amount. Tea and coffee contain caffeine, an addictive substance that causes severe headaches on withdrawal. If you are a coffee or tea drinker during the day, reducing the intake should be done 1 or 2 weeks before Ramadan. Caffeine can cause dehydration due to diuresis or, in other words, frequent urination.

Take away note: Tea can be drunk in moderation during Ramadan. Please do not drink it while eating or mixing it with milk.

Hot Beverages In Ramadan

Is drinking tea with milk is a better option?

Tea has its own health benefit, and the caffeine content is very little compared to coffee. Tea is the best drink on its own and benefits the heart, rather than mixing it with milk. Milk blunts the heart benefits of tea. A study showed that milk removes the valuable effects of antioxidants caseins, available in tea. Milk decreases the catechin concentration, which is the flavonoids in tea responsible for its protective effects against heart disease.

Take away note: Tea can be drunk in moderation during Ramadan. Please do not drink it while eating or mixing it with milk.



Pre-Ramadan & Ramadan Meal Planning

'You Are What You Eat.' This phrase can be traced back to Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, in 1826 and I agreed with it. The type and portions of the meal are essential in determining our health and fitness status. It also reflects our attitude and responsibility towards our body health. One of the best ways to monitor what we eat is **proper meal planning**.

Few factors to consider when planning the meals for Ramadan for a healthy body and fitness are **meal portions** and the **type of food** we prepare. We should eat in a small amount. An adult's stomach is about the size of a fist, but it can expand as much as 40 times its original capacity to hold a big meal or large fluid intake. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "A man does not fill any vessel worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat enough to keep him alive. But if he must do that, then one-third for his food, one-third for his drink, and one-third for his air."

[Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 2380; Ibn Maajah, 3349]

It is good to start early before Ramadan to reduce our food on our dinner plate, avoiding gastric complications like acute gastritis, especially in Ramadan.

We also need to be aware of the food we snack on and the snack timing and place.. We have to only snack on healthy food such as vegetables, nuts, and fruits, avoid fast food or sugary snack, snack in small portions and avoid sitting in front of the TV, laptop, or mobile phone while snacking. It is what is called '**A Smart Snack.**' Insha-Allah will help us prepare ourselves from the thought of food and snacks during fasting in Ramadan. We have provided the Pre Ramadan and Ramadan Meal Planner to help us achieve better health for ourselves in performing in the blessed month and continue after that, inshaaAllah.

Month of **Rejab** **Meal Plan**

Suggestions: Plan a different protein type each day with the correct amount for each family member like fish, chicken, lentils, and meats. Take sugary and oily foods to minimum. The meal plans' smart snack choices include nuts, dried fruits, less sugar yogurt drinks, and ice cream. Please ensure that the meals contain all the food portions in their right proportions

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Month of **Shaban** **Meal Plan**

Suggestions: Plan a different protein type each day with the correct amount for each family member like fish, chicken, lentils, and meats. Take sugary and oily foods to minimum. The meal plans' smart snack choices include nuts, dried fruits, less sugar yogurt drinks, and ice cream. Please ensure that the meals contain all the food portions in their right proportions

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Ramadan Meal Plan

Suggestions: Plan a different protein type each day with the correct amount for each family member like fish, chicken, lentils, and meats. Take sugary and oily foods to minimum. The meal plans' smart snack choices include nuts, dried fruits, less sugar yogurt drinks, and ice cream.

	Sahoor	Iftar	Smart Snacks	Fruits
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Week 1- Plan your meal in Ramadan. Please ensure that the meals contain all the food portions in their right proportions.

Ramadan Meal Plan

Suggestions: Plan a different protein type each day with the correct amount for each family member like fish, chicken, lentils, and meats. Take sugary and oily foods to minimum. The meal plans' smart snack choices include nuts, dried fruits, less sugar yogurt drinks, and ice cream.

	Sahoor	Iftar	Smart Snacks	Fruits
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Week 2- Plan your meal in Ramadan. Please ensure that the meals contain all the food portions in their right proportions.

Ramadan Meal Plan

Suggestions: Plan a different protein type each day with the correct amount for each family member like fish, chicken, lentils, and meats. Take sugary and oily foods to minimum. The meal plans' smart snack choices include nuts, dried fruits, less sugar yogurt drinks, and ice cream.

	Sahoor	Iftar	Smart Snacks	Fruits
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Week 3- Plan your meal in Ramadan. Please ensure that the meals contain all the food portions in their right proportions.

Ramadan Meal Plan

Suggestions: Plan a different protein type each day with the correct amount for each family member like fish, chicken, lentils, and meats. Take sugary and oily foods to minimum. The meal plans' smart snack choices include nuts, dried fruits, less sugar yogurt drinks, and ice cream.

	Sahoor	Iftar	Smart Snacks	Fruits
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Week 4- Plan your meal in Ramadan. Please ensure that the meals contain all the food portions in their right proportions.

Pre Ramadan & Ramadan Exercise

We all know the benefits of exercising for our health and avoiding lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. One of the great exercises to do is walking. Studies showed that it improves the heart's ability to get oxygen to our muscles and how effectively our muscles use that oxygen. Walking has to be done, at least when we feel that our heart is working, but we can still converse, known as **moderate-intensity walking**. It will increase our aerobic fitness and, more importantly, enable us to carry out activities for longer with less fatigue. It also helps us maintain body weight, body flexibility, and balance. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends 250 minutes or more exercise for an effective result.

The minimum that we can do is to walk for **30 minutes each day for five days**. We can either space out the walking time to 10 minutes 3 times a day or for 30 minutes each time five times a week. Insha-Allah, after 90 days, we will find ourselves fit and stay awake to do Ramadan activities for a longer time.

Secondly, **10 minutes of strength exercise** at least two times a week is an essential complement to moderate-intensity walking. For better health and body fitness, a moderate-intensity activity like what is mentioned above should be accompanied by a strength exercise. It is recommended that we do strength exercises **2 to 3 times a week**, which involves our body's major muscles. There are many free apps that we can download to guide us on how to do them. We should do ten minutes of strength exercise with at least 1 set (eight repetitions per set) of 6 strength exercises. The practices should involve all major muscle groups to increase our muscle bulk and strength for more substantial muscles, doing Ramadan activities.

Exercise In Ramadan

Fasting should not stop us from exercising. However, it should be pointed out that doing exercise or playing sport, especially in Ramadan, should not distract us from what is a more important thing that is ibadah towards Allah.

Physical exercise timing depends on your preference, either 1 hour before iftar or 2 hours after iftar.

We have provided the three-month Exercise Planner to help us achieve better health through routine exercise for ourselves in performing in the blessed month and continue after that, in-shaaAllah. Please use them to plan and keep track of your training for the whole month of Ramadan.



Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace, and blessings be upon him, said, "The strong believer is more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, but there is goodness in both of them. Be eager for what benefits you, seek help from Allah, and do not be frustrated. If something befalls you, then do not say: If only I had done something else. Rather say: Allah has decreed what he wills. Verily, the phrase 'if only' opens the way for the work of Satan."

Sahih Muslim 2664

Rejab Exercise Planner

The minimum that we can do is to walk for 30 minutes each day for five days. It is also recommended that we do strength exercises 2 to 3 times a week, which involves our body's major muscles.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
7	8	9	10	11	12
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
13	14	15	16	17	18
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
19	20	21	22	23	24
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
25	26	27	28	29	30
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout

Circle the activities that you managed to do on any particular days on the planner.

target for every weeks

30 minutes moderate intensity walk for 5 days.

Ten minutes of strength exercise with at least 1 set (eight repetitions per set) of 6 strength exercises which involves all major muscle groups.

Shaaban Exercise Planner

The minimum that we can do is to walk for 30 minutes each day for five days. It is also recommended that we do strength exercises 2 to 3 times a week, which involves our body's major muscles.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
7	8	9	10	11	12
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
13	14	15	16	17	18
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
19	20	21	22	23	24
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
25	26	27	28	29	30
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout

Circle the activities that you managed to do on any particular days on the planner.

target for every weeks

30 minutes moderate intensity walk for 5 days.

Ten minutes of strength exercise with at least 1 set (eight repetitions per set) of 6 strength exercises which involves all major muscle groups.

Ramadan Exercise Planner

The minimum that we can do is to walk for 30 minutes each day for five days. It is also recommended that we do strength exercises 2 to 3 times a week, which involves our body's major muscles.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
7	8	9	10	11	12
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
13	14	15	16	17	18
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
19	20	21	22	23	24
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout
25	26	27	28	29	30
Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk	Walk
Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout	Workout

Circle the activities that you managed to do on any particular days on the planner.

target for every weeks

30 minutes moderate intensity walk for 5 days.

Ten minutes of strength exercise with at least 1 set (eight repetitions per set) of 6 strength exercises which involves all major muscle groups.

Fasting for pregnant & breastfeeding mothers in Ramadan

"The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them"

[al-Baqarah 2:233]

Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers who want to fast during Ramadan should seek their doctor's advice to ensure that fasting is not affecting their baby's growth and health. While fasting, they should frequently rest throughout the day and get the right nutrients and calories when they break their fast and during sahoor. They should also ensure to consume an adequate amount of water at sahoor and Iftar, depending on the season and temperature. Sweets and other sugary snacks should be limited after Iftar.

Rulings on fasting for pregnant & breastfeeding mother in Ramadan

The scholars differed concerning the ruling on a pregnant woman and breastfeeding mothers if they do not fast. There are several opinions as below:

The view of Imam al-Shafie and Imam Ahmad. Al-Jasas also narrated this from Ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him).

If they fear for themselves, they have to make up the fast only

If they fear for their children then they have to make up the fasts and feed one poor person for each day

The view of Imam Abu Haneefah (may Allaah have mercy on him). Among the Sa-haabah, it was the view of 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allaah be pleased with him)

They have to make up the fasts only.

Sleeping In Ramadan

Ramadan is a time when there is a change in our sleeping pattern. It is said that performing night prayer and waking up early for sahoor may affect our sleeping duration. Alhamdulillah, a study showed that there is no evidence that this can increase sleepiness during day time. However, it is recommended that we take a short nap (if possible) during the daytime and sleep as early as possible at night after performing our night prayer to maintain good health and alertness.

According To Aisyah (may Allah be pleased with her) that Prophet Muhammad used to sleep early at night, and get up in its last part to pray, and then return to his bed. When the Muadhdhin pronounced the

Adhan, he would get up. If he needed a bath, he would take it; otherwise, he would perform ablution and then go out (for the prayer)."

(Sahih Bukhari 247)

May this info help us maintain our health, especially in this blessed month of Ramadan, to help us remain energetic and healthy in doing our ibadah towards Him. Ameen.

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Have a blessed Ramadhan and may Allah accept from you and me. Ameen

Acknowledgement:

Ilm Institute is highly grateful to Dr. Fadzidah Ariffin for her unwavering support and hard work put behind in compiling the **Healthy In Ramadan** booklet. It is our hope and prayer that this booklet will prove to be beneficial and provide our honorable readers with some knowledge and food for thought regarding various ways one can stay healthy during the blessed month of Ramadan and break the unhealthy and bad eating habits which the Muslim masses have associated Ramadan with.

About the Author:

Dr. Fadzidah Ariffin is a medical doctor who graduated in 2000 and has four years of working experience as a medical officer. She decided to give up her career in 2009 before relocating with her family to Muscat, Oman. Dr. Fadzidah has lived in 7 different countries, learning about other cultures and raising her six children.

She is currently staying in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and is pursuing her Postgraduate Certificate in Islamic Studies (Bridge to MAIS) from the International Open University. She is also known for her commendable work that she is doing for her website named "Knowledge Dunes."

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