



Muslim Community Association of Ann Arbor and Vicinity

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Healthy Ramadan

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The fast of **Ramadan** is rigorous during the best of times. During long and hot summer days, it may be required to observe the fast for as many as sixteen or more hours at a time. To ensure adequate nutrition and continued **good health**, follow these tips:

- Prior to Ramadan, a Muslim should always **consult with a doctor** about the safety of fasting in individual health circumstances (such as pregnancy, diabetes, heart issues, kidney issues, and other general health issues).
- Even if you are generally healthy, recognize that Ramadan will take a toll. Plan your schedule and meals ahead of time in order to make sure you get the **nutrients, hydration**, and rest that you need.
- Eat **suhoor** just prior to dawn. Yes, it's hard to get up at that hour, which is why it has many benefits and rewards. It will help you to wake up for the Fajr prayer. The **suhoor** meal is **Sunnah**. And this morning meal is generally recognized as the single **most important meal of the day**. **Do not overeat**, though. Focus on taking in foods that are rich in complex **carbohydrates, protein, and good fat**: fruits or vegetables, and plenty of water.
 - Try to calculate your daily caloric intake using the **BMR** calculator which can be easily found on Google and based on height, weight, age, and gender then use the **Harris Benedict Equation** using the appropriate per day activity factor to help you determine your total daily calorie needs noting that your meal need to have **45% Carbs, 30% Protein, and 25% Fat**.
 - For example: an egg on whole-grain toast, a few crackers with peanut butter, some orange slices, and two glasses of water.
- During the hottest part of the day, stay in cool areas (indoors or in shade) and limit your physical activity. Rest if possible.
- Avoid gorging yourself when breaking the fast at sunset. Follow the **Sunnah**: break your fast with dates and either milk, water, or fruit juice. After the Maghrib prayer, continue with a light starter such as soup and salads. After a long period of fasting, you need to bring your fluids and blood sugar level up without overdoing it.
- During the early evening (after maghrib), have a healthy and balanced dinner. **Do not overeat**, and be sure to **drink a few more glasses of fluids**. During the evening hours, resist the temptation to drink tea, coffee, and soda. When visiting friends or family, ask for glasses of water.
- Serve yourself, your family, and guests a "dessert" of fresh fruit and unsalted mix nuts. There are lovely choices available in this season, and they are much more healthy than traditional sweets.
- Sip on water throughout the evening. Aim for 8 glasses by bedtime. To help you keep track, fill and refill a water bottle with a measured amount of water, and be sure to finish it.
- Light exercise, such as walking for 15-20 minutes, is best done in the evening hours.
- Avoid fried and spicy foods as they may cause heartburn or indigestion.
- Speak to your doctor about an appropriate multi-vitamin.
- Continue to brush and floss your teeth after your meal.
- Wash your hands regularly, and avoid those who cough or sneeze. This is important to prevent the spread of viruses (such as seasonal flu) and bacteria which may cause illness.
- **Quit smoking!**
- Organize your schedule so that you get enough sleep.

Have a Blessed and Healthy Ramadan