

# NURASUNNA™

REDISCOVER WELLNESS

*My drive to find a cure for my allergic reactions from various foods, opened up a gateway of knowledge. I had no understanding of food, medicine, traditional healing, Prophetic Medicine prior to this, except what I had learned in Western public schools about modern medicine, food and nutrition.*

*With every new sickness I endure, I seek to learn to understand my body and how it is meant to function. The more I learn about our human creation, the more I am in awe of the perfection of our Creator. The more I learn about the healing attributes of plants and foods, the more I begin to understand that Allah <sup>سبحانه</sup> و تعالی did not create anything in vain.*

AIMAN ATTAR

THE  
RAMADAN  
REMEDY

# KNOWLEDGE

Abu Nu'aym narrates in Al-Hilyah that Mu'adh bin Jabal رضي الله عنه said:

“Knowledge is a comforting friend in times of loneliness, it is the best companion during travels, and it is the inner friend who speaks to you in your privacy. Knowledge is the discerning proof of what is right and what is wrong, and it is the positive force that will help you surmount the trials of comfort, as well as those of hardships. Knowledge is your most powerful sword against your enemy, and finally, it is your most dignifying raiment in the company of your close companions.

Through knowledge, Allah, blessed be His Name, raises some people in rank, and He makes them leaders in righteousness and models in morality. The vestige of their faith is avidly sought, their deeds are emulated perceptively, and people will seek and sanction their opinions solicitously and unequivocally. The heavenly angels seek their company and anoint them with their wings, every fresh or withered life they pass by implore Almighty Allah to forgive them their sins, even the fish in the oceans, the beasts of the lands and every bird of prey and migratory bird pray and solicit the mercy of Almighty Allah on their behalf. This is because knowledge revives the dead hearts and drives them out of darkness into light, and because knowledge is the light of the inner eyes that cures one's blindness and restores his inner sight”

# RECOMMENDATIONS

“At a time when we are struggling with so many conflicting messages about what to eat and what not to eat, increased pressure to live up to beauty ideals and body goals, Aiman Attar's book is a breath of fresh air. Cool, balanced and sure-footed, with an unmistakable enthusiasm for the subject matter, Attar challenges our concept of health, nutrition and wellbeing and challenges us to truly return to the Sunnah to achieve real 'baseerah' (insight). A sophisticated — and very beautiful — labour of love.”

*Na'ima B. Roberts, Author, Founding editor SISTERS magazine*

[www.muslimahwriters.com](http://www.muslimahwriters.com)

“A well written and thought provoking book. In searching for a solution to her own ongoing health issues, Aiman Attar comes to the realization that in today's world of modern medicine and conveniences, perhaps we are approaching health and nutrition from the wrong perspective. Drawing from ancient wisdoms, she begins her journey to health wellness and shares her discoveries with us along the way. The Ramadan Remedy presents a fresh approach to health and nutrition and definitely should find itself be on the reading list of people from all faiths — Muslim and non-Muslim alike.”

*Karen O'Malley, Office Manager AGENTC*

“I've been an avid reader of Aiman's work. With an ocean full of articles and journals that talk about the same things regarding health; Aiman tackles a more personal and relatable approach with her readers. I find her work steers away from the redundancy of “text book” definitions related to health and wellness. Aiman uses her personal experiences by thorough research from health experts in both modern and traditional medicine and balances both healing approaches. This eBook is very well written, thoughtfully outlined, and engages the interest of the reader by means of understanding your body and its natural way towards healing.”

*Bahjeh Rizeq, Hijamah Specialist*

[www.NourishedHealing.com](http://www.NourishedHealing.com)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا  
عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

**They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is The Knowing, The Wise."**

Al-Baqarah, 32

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# NURASUNNA™

REDISCOVER WELLNESS

*O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious)"*

Al-Baqarah, 183



There are two common approaches from scholars and experts on how to make the Ramadan fasts count. One approach focuses on Ibadah (acts of worship), while the other approach focuses on what you should eat to maximize nutrients. We live in a time where we are bombarded with food postings, videos, images and blogs, so much so that this onslaught has been dubbed and hashtagged as "foodporn".

Imagery, what the eyes consume, evokes desire, which creates and unleashes a ravenous beast within ourselves – and the food industry loves it. Our insatiable appetites are what is driving this trillion-dollar industry. I'm not here to tell you to give up gluten or meat, dairy, and not even desserts. You can still eat your samosas, biryani and kunafa.

Instead, I'm inviting you to learn about your body as it was designed by Allah سبحانه وتعالى. Put aside everything you have learned from school, nutritionists, doctors, trendy fads and even what your parents might have taught you.

NURASUNNA means the light of Prophetic guidance. It is a guide to nutrition and medicine according to traditional wisdom of the past Prophets, doctors, scientists, dentists, and the Qur'an.

This Ramadan give your body the ultimate remedy.

Bismillah.

*Aiman Attar*



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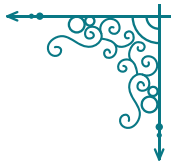
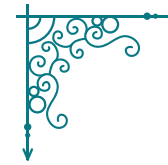
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*“Who created me, and He [it is who] guides me.  
And it is He who feeds me and gives me drink.  
And when I am ill, it is He who cures me  
And who will cause me to die and then bring me to life  
And who I aspire that He will forgive me my sin on the  
Day of Recompense.”*

Ash-Shu'ara, 78-82



## MY JOURNEY



Shortly after giving birth to my third child, I developed a severe allergy to peppers. Not the kind of allergy where you get hives, but the full blown anaphylactic allergic response, my blood pressure drops, I experience heart palpitations, bowels flushing, difficulty breathing, and my throat closes up.

I remember the first time it happened very clearly. It was Ramadan and I had made shami kebobs for my husband to break his fast. We ate while our newborn slept and within 15 minutes, my nose felt completely blocked and my throat started swelling. I sat on the floor shaking my head in an attempt to breathe for maybe 5 or 10 seconds while struggling with complete airway obstruction. At that point, adrenaline started pumping through my body due to the fear of what I was experiencing, and alhamdulillah (Thank God), adrenaline is our body's natural way of responding to fight-or-flight life-threatening situations.

After I began to breathe again, the rest of the allergic responses continued until my husband and I decided that I needed to go to the ER. I took an antihistamine before going to the hospital, and by the time the doctor saw me at 3AM, my symptoms had completely subsided. I was sent home and told to get checked by an allergist.

Over the next few days and weeks, I continued to have reactions to any type of peppers I ate, not just spicy chillies.

I met with my family doctor, two allergists, and a naturopath. None were able

to give me any answers about my newly diagnosed allergy. I was told not to worry about it, that it was just one of those things that happens and that there is no known cause or explanation. Basically, the established protocol of modern medicine was that I was expected to just live with it, give up peppers and walk around with an EpiPen® and antihistamine at all times.

May not seem like a big deal, right? Here's the thing: peppers, in one form or another, are in EVERYTHING! Pasta sauce, salad dressing, mustard, marinades... Even Doritos chips are enhanced with peppers (paprika). Did I also mention that my husband is Pakistani? Meaning that peppers are a staple in my cooking. So it is a big deal to me.



It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

***“Allah has not sent down any disease but He has also sent down a cure for it.”***

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 5678.



## The Turning Point

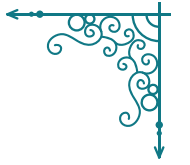
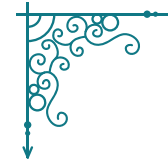
Maybe it seems odd to think that peppers were the turning point for me, but it is true. As I learned to adjust my diet and struggled with accidentally ingesting peppers from restaurants or foods prepared by anyone other than myself, I knew I did not want to spend the rest of my life like this. I knew that there had to be a reason why my body was rejecting peppers. And I also believed there must be a way to heal whatever was causing this adverse reaction.

When I had my first child, I was 24, in good health, alhamdulillah (Thank God). I did not fast that year due to childbirth, but I did not have any negative effects from not fasting. Fast forward to my third child and the year of my allergy scare, I was 38 and I did not fast again due to childbirth. This time, however, the fact that I did not fast meant my body was not getting the much needed recovery it needed.

Since that fateful Ramadan, I have had another child and so I have not been able to fast yet again. I have missed out on four years due to pregnancies, nursing and health issues. Additionally, not coincidentally, I have become allergic to a lot more than just peppers. Today, I can no longer eat peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, and eggplants (all are from the nightshade family). I cannot eat sweet potatoes and have shown some signs of inflammation when eating flax seeds and pistachios.

The less I was able to fast, the more my health deteriorated, and the more allergic I became to “healthy” foods. I was adamant that there had to be a way to heal all of this and to restore my body and my health once again. What I have uncovered is the missing link — the Divine link — that has been taken out from modern medicine and nutrition.

That was the beginning of my journey...



# ANATOMY 101

*O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.*

Al-Baqarah, 31



## DIGESTION ACCORDING TO MODERN MEDICINE



**Y**ou cannot help but marvel at the ingenious design of our human body. The more you learn about how it REALLY functions, the more your heart feels in awe towards your Creator.

Food is the basic foundation of our survival. Food is mechanically and chemically deconstructed in our digestive system in order to extract the nutrients and energy needed to nourish every living cell we have. This is done by breaking down everything we ingest by chewing and propulsion, and then by soaking it in digestive enzymes that further breakdown the carbohydrates, fats, proteins and nucleic acids into smaller molecules that can be absorbed on a cellular level.

The digestive system is incredibly precise, efficient and knows when to break down which nutrient, at the right time.

Despite the advancements of modern medicine, our collective health and the quality of foods we eat have been on a steep decline. The disease that plagues every household is not cancer or diabetes as much as it is the insatiable foodie Nafs (appetite) that is eating 3-4 large meals a day, and grazing in between.

According to the food pyramid, our daily diet is supposed to be made up of:

- 6-11 servings of grains
- 5-8 servings of vegetables
- 2-4 servings of fruit
- 2-3 servings of dairy
- 2-3 servings of protein
- With fat being used sparingly




The food pyramid has been replaced recently with MyPlate (above right) to show how your plate should be divided with different food groups.

However, according to Prophet guidance on nutrition and medicine, this is far too much food for what the body really needs. The overburdening of our digestive system has actually decreased our ability to metabolize and absorb the nutrients we need, as well as wreaked havoc on maintaining a balance in our health.

### Do not eat to your fill

Miqdam bin Madikarib  said:

*“I heard the Messenger of Allah  say: ‘A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink and one third for air.’”*

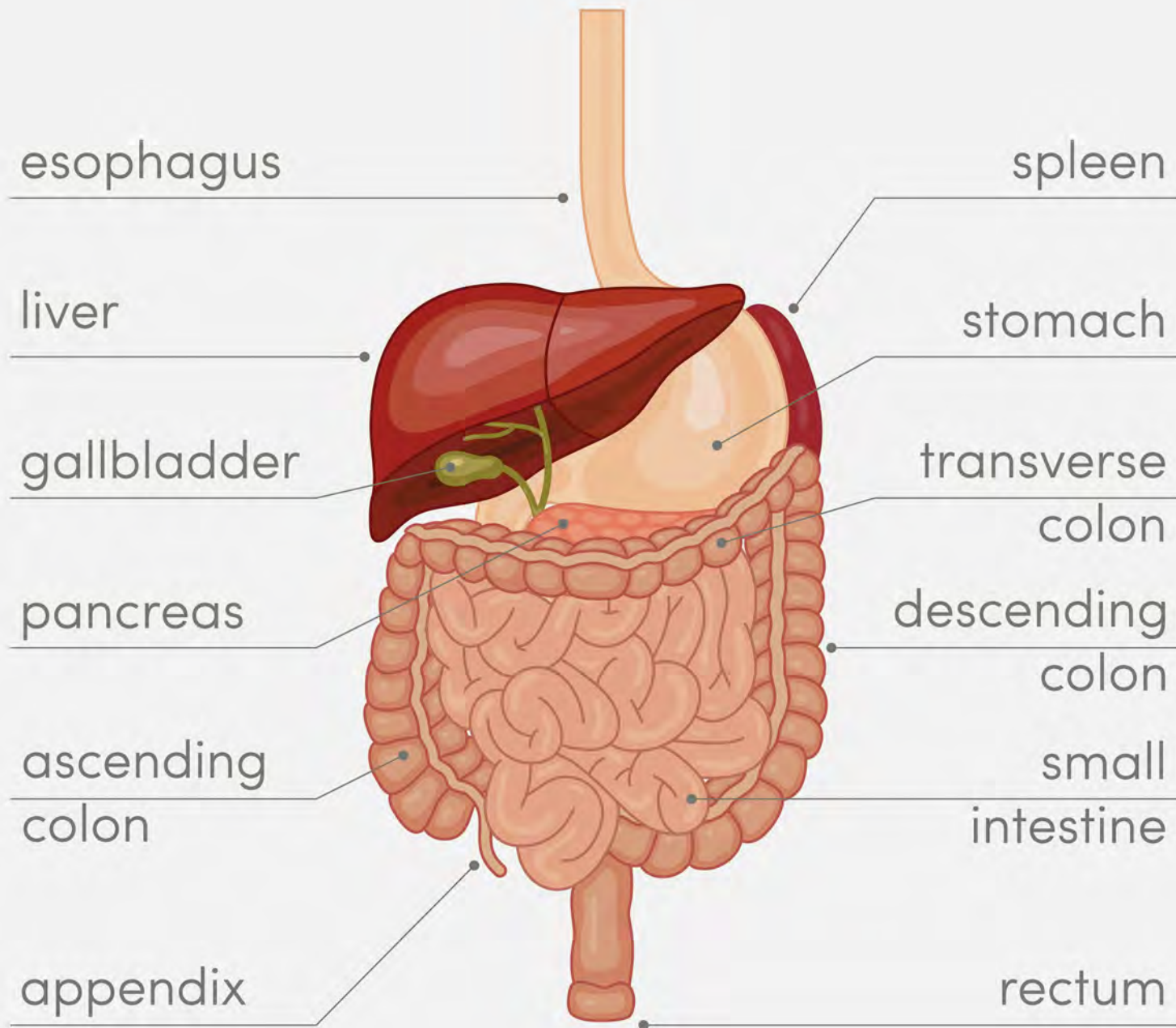
(Graded Sahih, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 4, Book 29, Hadith 3349)

What is the wisdom behind eating so little?





# DIGESTIVE TRACT



## DIGESTION ACCORDING TO TRADITIONAL MEDICINE



The primary focus of the modern diet is what to consume and how much, whereas the primary focus of traditional diets is clean digestion.

What do I mean by clean digestion?

Traditional medicine and nutrition was not concerned by how many calories we need to consume, and from which food groups. It was more concerned with how your body would digest and metabolize the nutrition consumed.

A cup of food taken once a day, properly broken down and absorbed by the body, is far more beneficial for our health than seven cups of food a day that fill the belly, satiate the desire temporarily, but leave us robbed of nutrients and energy. I should add here that when I say 'food', I am referring to REAL food: dairy, fruits and vegetables, meats, and breads. Potato chips and packaged noodles are fun, but they are not really food.

Now, back to the concept of clean digestion: think of your laundry. Would you mix whites with colours (that run)? Would you mix bleach needed to keep whites clean with your beautiful red shirt? Would you stuff the machine to the rim, leaving no room for water or space to move the clothes around during agitation?

This is precisely how your stomach works. It needs water and it needs space. Exactly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of each. So when you fill  $\frac{1}{3}$  with food, add  $\frac{1}{3}$  water and allow your stomach to churn, digestion happens efficiently.

How much is  $\frac{1}{3}$  of your stomach? I asked the very same thing. From my research, I figured out that the stomach in its natural size is about 750ml to 900ml. We have the tendency to overfill it causing it to expand in order to properly function but the optimal size is its natural size. [www.encyclopedia.com/medicine/anatomy-and-physiology/anatomy-and-physiology/stomach](http://www.encyclopedia.com/medicine/anatomy-and-physiology/anatomy-and-physiology/stomach)

That means... are you ready for this? Your food portion should be 250ml (the size of a cereal bowl), plus 1 cup of water. That is it. That is considered the MAXIMUM. The hadith states a few morsels would suffice, but if you must, then  $\frac{1}{3}$ .

BUT here's the thing. The hadith does not limit how often a day you can eat. Sigh of relief.

However, there is one caveat to the lack of a limit: you must wait for food to completely empty from your stomach before starting your next bowl! That is a 3 hour wait if you consumed anything with meat. It is only about a 90-minute wait if you only ate a salad.

Now, I do not think the intention of limiting our food consumption to one bowl means that we are required to be living from bowl to bowl and eating every 2-3 hours, like a newborn baby. Our focus should not be to constantly fill the belly.

Eating a bowl that is properly balanced ensures you are sufficed and nourished without starving yourself. Believe me, I tried it and it works. It resets your hunger thermostat, so you will feel less hunger within a matter of days.

Portion size is not the only thing to consider when choosing your next meal. Your body type and your metabolic fire are also important factors in this scientific equation.

## BODY TYPES ACCORDING TO TRADITIONAL MEDICINE



### Your Digestive Fire

In Ayurveda, Greek Medicine and Islamic Medicine, your metabolism is known as your digestive fire and is the central home of good health. Your metabolism is responsible for various acids and enzymes that break down foods by heating them up for assimilation. Proper absorption (assimilation) of nutrients and efficient functioning of organs are dependent upon the heat of metabolism.

If your digestive fire is too cold or too hot, an imbalance will arise that will begin manifesting itself as common, often-ignored ailments such as:

- Dry or oily skin, dry hair, dry nails.
- Digestion - bloating, indigestion, belching, abdominal aches, excessive gas, gas with foul odor.
- Intestines and stool — hemorrhoids, intestinal polyps, constipation, diarrhea, foul odor, yellowish stool, loose form of stool.

- Breast tumors, ovarian cysts
- Food allergies
- High cholesterol, high blood pressure
- Fatty liver, IBS, leaky gut
- Cancer, benign tumor growths.

We do not all metabolize foods the same way. Each person's metabolism is dependent upon his/her body type/body constitution.

In Ayurveda, there are three body constitutions known as Pitta, Vata and Kapha. In Greek and Islamic Medicine, there are four body types known as Sanguine, Yellow Bile, Phlegmatic and Black Bile. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, there are five body types. It is not possible to list every traditional medicine, and each body type, but I want to clearly illustrate that the notion of body constitutions and metabolism dates back to thousands of years and continues to this day.

Some people can eat horribly and remain thin because their metabolism is so fast. A lot of calories ingested is simply flushed out and very little remains in their body. This does not mean that they are healthy because weight is not the only indicator of health. Likewise, someone can eat a very healthy diet and still struggle to lose weight.

By understanding our body type, we can learn to eat according to our temperament and begin to recognize that our body speaks to us when it is out of balance.

### Four Body Types

In Greek Medicine, it is believed that there are four body temperaments that determine our constitution, and thus how we metabolize food. Although all four humors (or temperaments) — blood, yellow bile, black bile and phlegm — exist in all of us, in different quantities, there is usually one that is the dominating humor and which affects what we crave and how we respond to food. Whichever humor is dominant within a person reflects their body type.

## SANGUINE TEMPERAMENT BLOOD - DAMM

Sanguine (Blood) is considered to be the most natural, balanced constitution, although it can become unbalanced due to our diet and lifestyle.

**Humor:** Blood

**Constitution:** Hot and Wet (warm and moist)

**Traits:**

- Oval faced
- Not too fat or too thin
- Medium frame and build
- Hearty appetite
- Moderate, balanced metabolism
- Good digestion when not eating in excess
- Good elimination (stool), well-formed, neither hard or soft when in balance
- Sweats moderately

**Predisposition:** If out of balance, the following health concerns arise

- Congested liver and pancreas
- Sluggish metabolism
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Gout
- Congested blood, excessive menstruation in women
- Respiratory congestion
- Urinary issues
- Skin conditions

**Foods that aggravate:** excessive consumption of proteins (meats), rich fatty foods and sweets may lead to Sanguine excesses of the blood, like uremia and gout, diabetes or high cholesterol.

[www.greekmedicine.net/b\\_p/Four\\_Temperaments](http://www.greekmedicine.net/b_p/Four_Temperaments)

## CHOLERIC TEMPERAMENT YELLOW BILE - SAFRA

Choleric is considered to be the most catabolic, the hottest and most active of all temperaments. Choleric is already off balance by its nature and thus diet and lifestyle are instrumental in creating balance.

**Humor:** Yellow Bile

**Constitution:** Hot and Dry

**Traits:**

- Broad jaw, sharp nose, high cheekbones, angular facial structure
- Compact, lean, small frame and build
- Sharp, ravenous appetite
- Strong, fast metabolism
- Cast iron stomach / digestion when in balance
- Short transit time for elimination (stool), tends to be loose stool
- Sweats profuse in heat or physical activity

**Predisposition:** If out of balance, the following health concerns arise

- Fevers
- Hives
- Inflammation
- High cholesterol
- Cardiovascular disorders
- High blood pressure
- Headaches / migraines
- Infections
- Middle GI tract conditions (hyperacidity, ulcerative etc)

**Foods that aggravate:** salt and salty foods, fats and cholesterol, fried foods, vinegar, alcohol, excessive sour or fermented foods, aged cheeses, excessive hot spices and chillies, excessive beef and red meat.

[www.greekmedicine.net/b\\_p/Four\\_Temperaments](http://www.greekmedicine.net/b_p/Four_Temperaments)

## MELANCHOLIC TEMPERAMENT BLACK BILE - SAUDA

Melancholic is considered to be the most problematic because it is opposite to our natural balance, but with proper care it can be healthy.

**Humor:** Black Bile

**Constitution:** Cold and Dry

**Traits:**

- Rectangular face, prominent cheekbones
- Tends to be thin, lean
- Variable to poor appetite
- Slow, erratic metabolism, prone to dehydration
- Digestion varies according to mental/nervous/emotional state
- Constipation, irritable bowel is common
- Scanty sweat can be due to poor immunity

**Predisposition:** If out of balance, the following health concerns arise

- Anemia
- Poor appetite
- Nervous colicky digestive disorders
- Blood sugar problems
- Hypoglycemia
- Dizziness, vertigo, ringing in ears
- Depression
- Arthritis, rheumatism

**Foods that aggravate:** old, dry, stale foods, excessive beans, soy, nuts, astringent foods, peanuts, rancid fats and nightshade vegetables such as peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, and eggplants.

[www.greekmedicine.net/b\\_p/Four\\_Temperaments](http://www.greekmedicine.net/b_p/Four_Temperaments)

## PHLEGMATIC TEMPERAMENT PHLEGM - BALGHAM

Phlegmatic is considered to be the coldest, most passive, energy conserving constitution.

**Humor:** Phlegm

**Constitution:** Cold and Wet

**Traits:**

- Round face, full cheeks, often dimpled, double chin, pug nose
- Heavy frame with ample flesh and well-developed, often plump or overweight
- Cool, clammy perspiration especially in hands and feet
- Slow, steady appetite often craving sweets, dairy, and starchy foods
- Slow to sluggish digestion, sleepiness/drowsiness common after eating
- Cold, wet and slow metabolism, anabolic metabolism
- Sluggish bowels, though well-formed but slightly soft and loose
- Sweats profuse in heat or physical activity

**Predisposition:** If out of balance, the following health concerns arise

- Phlegm congestion
- Water retention
- Lymphatic congestion
- Poor venous circulation
- Slow digestion
- Hypothyroid
- Adrenal hypofunction
- Weight gain, obesity
- Frequent colds and flus
- Chronic respiratory conditions

**Foods that aggravate:** milk, dairy products, fresh cheeses, refined sugar, refined starches and flours, wheat and glutinous foods, cold foods, ice cold drinks, and moist, creamy rich foods.

[www.greekmedicine.net/b\\_p/Four\\_Temperaments](http://www.greekmedicine.net/b_p/Four_Temperaments)

## What does Islam say about body constitution?

There is no direct mention of body types/constitutions in the Qur'an or Sunnah, however the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did eat foods together that had opposite energetics — which was accepted medicine of that time — as a method of balancing foods. Energetics does not refer directly to types of foods, but rather to their composition and their effect on the moisture, dryness, heat and coldness of the body. It is important to note that the doctor of the Prophet ﷺ was Al Harith Ibn Kalada ؓ. He was a companion and the oldest known Arab physician who was educated in and practiced Greek Medicine. (Body constitutions were part of their medical practice).

Reference: Sh. Omar Suleiman's lecture on the Prophet's Doctor

Narrated `Abdullah bin Ja`far ؓ:

*"I saw the Prophet ﷺ eating fresh dates with snake cucumbers."*

(Sahih Al Bukhari, Vol. 7, Book 65, Hadith 358)

However, there is clear evidence that the energetics of food was mentioned by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as stated in the following hadith:

Umm Al-Mundhir ؓ said:

*"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered upon me, while `Ali ؓ was with him, and we had a cluster of unripe dates hanging." She said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ began eating, and `Ali ؓ ate with him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to `Ali: 'Stop, stop, for you are still recovering.' So `Ali sat and the Prophet ﷺ ate." She said: "I made some chard and barley for them, so the Prophet ﷺ said: 'O `Ali eat from this, for indeed it will be more suitable for you.'"*

(Graded Hasan, Jami' At-Tirmidhi, Vol. 4, Book 2, Hadith 2036)

It was known that the illness Ali ؓ was suffering from was due to excessive heat in the body, but dates only increase heat, while swiss chards are cooling and reduce this heat.

From the book Healing with the Medicine of the Prophet by Ibn Al Qayyim رحمه الله, the four temperaments are mentioned as well as the energetics of plants and food.

Based on how the book is written, and the casual mention of Phlegm, Blood, Choleric and Melancholic, one can infer that the accepted and practiced medicine of the time was that of Ibn Sina (Avicenna) who adopted the four temperaments from the works of Hippocrates.

Ibn Qayyim رحمه الله writes: There are internal reasons for the abnormal state the body passes through for the body consists of coldness, hotness, wetness and dryness. Also there are external reasons for the abnormal state, which could find the body susceptible and affect it. Abnormal state of the body means illness, or imbalance.

Reference: page 21, Healing with the Medicine of the Prophet.

**It was at this point in my journey, while reading this book, that I began to wonder why the common knowledge of readers 700 years ago about health, nutrition and medicine, differed so vastly from the understanding of our bodies now.**

Today, around the world, medical practice still falls into two, albeit quite different, categories: there is mainstream Western medicine, which slowly deviated

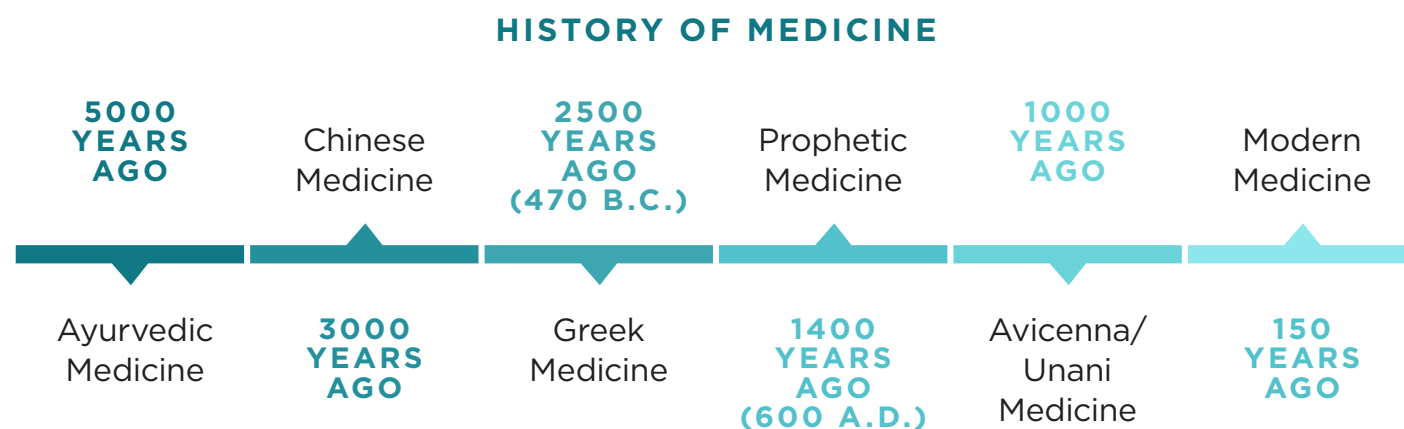
from traditional medicine about 150 years ago; and there are also those who have upheld and preserved traditional medicine. Both are rich in knowledge and advancement, but both would be a lot stronger if they were united and building upon each other's strengths rather than arguing their differences. Modern medicine has strayed so far from its origins that there is little left within its foundations that even remotely resembles its strong beginnings.

The most compelling demonstration of these same beginnings is also one of the most powerful notions in traditional medical systems: *the concept of disease*. Disease is believed to be caused by dys temperament — the imbalance I spoke of earlier — within an individual or an organ. The sameness in the concept of disease that can be found throughout medical history (prior to modern medicine) clearly demonstrates that traditional medical systems all held similar beliefs regarding the human body and its state of balance. Beliefs that distinct medical systems, from different times and places, developed completely independently of one another.

This theory of balance is derived through the human experience in research, experimentation, observation and analysis, by many different specialists across the globe, over a period of thousands of years. Their sameness, despite unique experiences and times, only reinforces the legitimacy of traditional medicine.

**There is an undeniable truth in something when all paths lead to the same door.**

There are four dominant areas of traditional medicine: Ayurvedic, Chinese, Greek and Prophetic. There are many more fascinating and similar medicines that we could examine, such as Mayan or Unani Medicine, as there is literally an ocean of knowledge spread over thousands of years and across the globe.



Even a cursory examination of each of the four areas I mentioned will demonstrate their subtle differences and profound similarities. In the span of 5000 years, these four major medical systems have all shared similar beliefs about maintaining good health and their beliefs are all centered on food, digestion and balance.

A few common threads among all these medicines were:

- The concept of disease;
- Body constitutions;
- The use of herbs as medicine, just to name a few.

Although Ayurveda believes there are only three constitutions and Greek Medicine believes there are four, they are essentially very similar.

The areas in which they differed were: the foods categorized as hot/cold, wet/dry

Each medicine has its own herbal formulas for the same disease, meaning there were different ways to treat the same illness.

However, each system had enough of the same foundation to make them all relatable. Modern medicine does not share any commonalities with any of these medicines. Not the concept of disease, energetics or constitutions.

In fact, the concept of disease was consistent among all systems of medicine until the 1800s. With the advancement of chemistry and the ability to prove or abandon concepts based on a test tube analysis, modern medicine slowly began its deviation. The pivotal moment was with Louis Pasteur's germ theory, which changed how disease was diagnosed and treated for the first time in history. Antibiotics replaced herbal medicine and the arrogance and disrespect for medical history took off.

[www.greekmedicine.net/history/Medicine\\_in\\_the\\_Modern\\_Era](http://www.greekmedicine.net/history/Medicine_in_the_Modern_Era)

**This leads to two other things we need to understand: the energetics of nutrition and the energetics of illnesses.**

### What is energetics?

There is a fascinating concept about the human body that you probably never learned about in biology class, which stems from our knowledge of plants and herbs, and dates back to over 5000 years ago:

Our bodies do not just absorb carbs, proteins, fats and macronutrients. We are designed to respond to the moisture, dryness, heat and cold energetics of everything we consume and our environment around us. This means there is more affecting your health than what meets the eye. Modern medicine does not embrace the concept of energetics, treating the body as separate from its humors and temperaments. Never addressing these elements, and whether or not they are in balance, is a fundamental flaw.

Traditional nutrition was built on wisdom and foods were categorized for simplicity. There is something missing in our modern-day application of the Sunnah. People use prophetic medicine incorrectly, without a full understanding of the energetics of our bodies, the illnesses we endure and the foods we eat. At the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, everyone knew the four elements of the human body: Moist, dry, hot, and cold. So when the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ forbade Ali ﷺ from eating dates while sick, it was because Ali ﷺ was suffering from excessive heat. Dates are heating. He ﷺ told Ali ﷺ to eat swiss chard instead because it is cooling. This was common knowledge at the time but with the emergence of modern pharmaceuticals in the past 150 years, we have lost this knowledge.

There are so many examples from the Sunnah subhanAllah! We are instructed to eat honey or do Hijamah as our Islamic Medicinal Remedies. Honey is heating. Hijama is cooling. And they are each used for different illnesses. There are also contraindications for Hijamah for when it should not be used on ill patients. To make a blanket statement and say that Hijamah is a remedy to be used on all illnesses is completely incorrect.

It will not be long before you can easily recognize (without a checklist) what is heating or cooling with regards to the food you eat. If you actually pay close attention to your body, you will be able to track and measure the thermogenic response.

For example, notice how a cup of ginger tea makes you feel warm and you might even break a sweat, or how eating watermelons cools you off on a hot summer day.

The problem with the way we eat today is that we are very disconnected from food. We do not understand its immediate effect on our bodies and hence do not put much thought into what goes into our mouths. Even worse, we have no idea what time of the year the plants grow and hence which season they are appropriate for.

Once you learn more about the foods you are eating (knowledge that was once



To learn more about your body, you must first learn more about how your fruits and vegetables grow. Know their season, climate and you will quickly understand how they affect your body.

passed on from parent to child), you will be able to eat healthier, more balanced meals, according to your body type.

In the meantime, check out this handy list to help you get started.

#### **List of food that boosts your metabolism**

- Meat and fish: lamb, liver, chicken, goose, duck, eggs, goat (male)
- Dairy: sheep's dairy (milk, cream cheese, cream, clarified butter (ghee))
- Grains: thin-grain rice, basmati, wheat
- Seeds/nuts: sesame, almond, pistachio, apricot kernels, walnuts, pine nuts, chia seeds, flax seed, hemp seed, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, melon seeds, (generally all seeds and nuts are heating)
- Fruits: peach, plum, lime, lemon, rhubarb, banana, red raisins, green raisins, dates, figs, olives, ripe grapes, all dried fruits
- Vegetables: asparagus, beet, radish, onion, mustard greens, kidney beans, leek, eggplant, chickpeas, red pepper, green pepper, all hot peppers, carrot seed, squash, turnip, parsley
- Oil: sesame oil, corn oil, castor oil, mustard oil
- Herbs: basil, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, coriander, cumin, fenugreek, garlic, ginger, marjoram, mint, celery seed, anise seed, rue, saffron, garam masala (blend), senna, frankincense, mustard

#### **Cooling Foods**

- Meat: rabbit, goat (female), beef, fish (general)
- Dairy Products: cow's milk, mother's milk, goat's milk, butter, buttermilk, dried cheeses, margarine
- Vegetables and Beans: lettuce, celery, sprouts (general), zucchini, spinach, cabbage, okra, cauliflower, broccoli, white potato, sweet potato, carrot, cucumber, soybeans, tomato, turnip, peas, beans (general)
- Fruits: apple, melons (general), mulberries, peach, pear, coconut, fig, pomegranate, apricot, orange, carob
- Grains: brown rice, thick-grain rice, barley, lentils
- Oils: sunflower oil, coconut oil
- Beverages: green teas, coffee
- Herbs: coriander (dry), dill, henna, thyme, rose, jasmine
- Other: refined sugar, bitter things, sour things, truffles, water

Thermogenic food list taken from Hakim G.M. Chishti N.D. Traditional Healer's Handbook

## **HEALTH, PREVENTION AND HEALING**



The most bizarre question I hear from doctors when I come into the ER is “are you healthy?” I usually stare blankly at the doctor, unsure of how to really answer that question. Then the doctors always rephrase it and ask: “Are you on any medication?”

Is that what healthy is? To not be on any medication?

That seems like a strange way to look at health. So, I researched, reflected, and even asked around. What does it mean to be healthy? I came to the conclusion that health is not just the absence of illness or prescription medication. Health is a state of balance and prevention of illness, pain and degeneration.

#### **Here are 7 signs of good health:**

- Clear, glowing, warm skin - your skin is a mirror to your inner health: it reflects if it is too dry, or too hot.
- Energy: feeling lethargic, brain fog, heaviness are all your body's way of asking for help.
- Well rested with minimal sleep: believe it or not, your body is designed to wake up at the break of dawn, well-rested and energetic.
- Easy, regular bowel movements: (1-3 times per day), no foul odor, sinks in the toilet and has a snake-like form — yes... that means you need to look before you flush. Mushy poop can indicate inflammation, food allergies and malnutrition.
- Balanced weight, neither underweight nor overweight: Some are unable to gain weight no matter how hard they try, others cannot lose it. Both indicate a disharmony. Did you know that if you are anemic, B12 or Vitamin D deficient, your body cannot lose weight? It goes into SOS mode, demanding more food because of the deficiency and holding onto fat because it is malnourished in micronutrients.
- Absence of ailments, illnesses, pain and growths (tumor/cysts/stones): your body speaks to you. Pain is a form communication, so is fever, so do not ignore it or suppress it. Instead, learn to understand the language of your body's health.
- Proper function of organs and faculties: if an organ is unhealthy, then the entire body is unhealthy. We cannot separate ourselves from our organs.





Do you know what happens if you start listening to your body and become your own health expert? It is not as difficult as you might think. Begin by paying attention to how your body responds to different foods. You might notice eating oranges cause your skin to flare up only at the knuckles. You might notice when you eat wheat, your poop is not solid, nor does it sink. You might notice that sugar causes bloating. Everyone responds differently to the same foods.

Here's another way to look at it: Imagine being in a relationship, if you are not in one now. If you said to your spouse "throw out the garbage" and you noticed his/her face looked unhappy at the command, you might learn to change your tone, or choice of words, in order to better communicate with him/her. But what happens in a relationship where you miss the subtleties? What happens in any relationship, be it with your boss, or co-workers, or your children, when you do not pay attention to the nuances of the reactions people give? You could end up ruining a relationship because you did not pick up on the cues.

We have destroyed our relationship to our bodies. Our bodies cry, scream and put up a fight, and we continue to ignore their pleas.

I once sat across from a man who had a very hard time digesting his meal. He was bloated, and belching, and he looked like he was in a lot of discomfort. His belly was a testament to his pain. It was, protruding out so far in front of him that he could rest his cup on it. His belly was communicating with him; I could hear it, but he wasn't listening. Now I'm not here to judge or shame, but it is an injustice to the body, which is given to us by Allah سبحانه وتعالى as an amanah (trust), to fill it beyond its limit and ignore it when it asks us to stop.

Al-Miqdam bin Ma'diakrib رضي الله عنه, narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

***"A human being has never filled any vessel which is worse than his own belly."***

Related by At-Tirmidhi, who graded it to be Hasan. Bulugh Al Maram, English Book 16, Hadith 1519

## PREVENTION



### So what exactly is healthy eating anyways?

Vegan? Paleo? No Dairy? No Gluten? No Sugar? Raw? Juicing? Smoothies?

What if I told you that you can eat your meat and your wheat and have your milk and cheese and lose weight and live a full and healthy life? Would you believe me?

The modern food pyramid is flawed. The nutritional labels on food packages are misleading. Here's why: nutrition cannot be broken down to just fats, carbs and proteins. That is like saying a car only needs fuel, windshield washer fluid and oil. A car needs so much more to run efficiently, and so do our bodies.

For over 5000 years, nutrition was never about fats, carbs and protein, but rather about food, digestion and balance. How much of each and in what combination is vital for our health — and that is where we have been eating all wrong. Traditionally, foods were categorized as heating and cooling, drying or moistening. The effect of foods on our body was never just about calories. It was more about how our body was able to efficiently digest the food and absorb the nutrients. If foods are difficult to digest, they exert a lot of energy on the body in order to breakdown the nutrients for proper absorption.

Instead of a daily food pyramid that suggests 5-11 carbs a day, 3 proteins a day and reduced fats, we need to look at the energetics of the foods that we discussed earlier. Food either boosts your metabolic force (digestive fire/agni) or diminishes it.

I've put together a few lists to help make this easier to understand.

#### 7 beliefs for healthy living

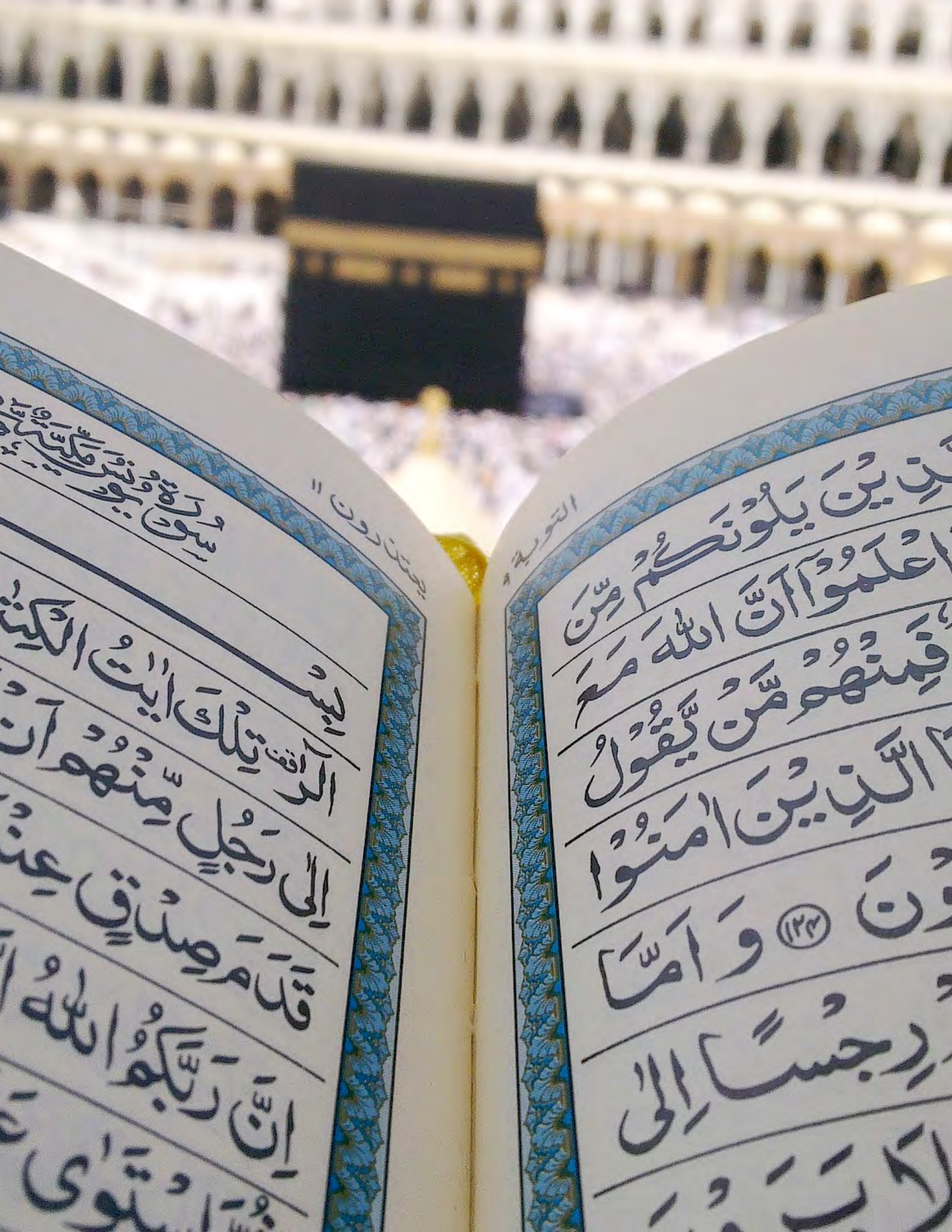
- The digestive system is the breeding ground of almost all diseases and illnesses.
- Your metabolism is the heart of nourishment and must always be in balance.
- Foods are heating or cooling; they are either increasing metabolism or slowing it down.

- Imbalanced metabolism leads to toxic build up, which manifests as many common, often ignored, ailments or pains.
- Long term imbalanced metabolism leads to cancer, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, allergies and so much more.
- You can still enjoy foods you love simply by learning to balance hot and cold temperaments, portions, and frequency of consumption.
- Balanced metabolism leads to thriving health, glowing skin and balanced weight.

#### 7 rules of eating

- Eat foods that are pure and good. Those should include organic, non-GMO, all natural and whole. You want to avoid processed foods and instead prepare your meals according to traditional methods.
- Do not overfill when eating. Your stomach requires  $\frac{1}{3}$  air +  $\frac{1}{3}$  water +  $\frac{1}{3}$  food for proper digestion. A few morsels are sufficient to keep you healthy, but if you must eat more, then  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$  ! Remember ONE BOWL!
- Consume warm foods and drinks. Do not eat or drink cold foods and beverages from the fridge unless the season/temperature warrants it because this affects digestion.
- Rotate your plate. Eat according to the season. Warming foods in winter, cooling foods in summer. Eat locally because your body responds best to things that it is familiar with, items that come from its natural environment.
- Unpasteurized dairy, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, lentils, legumes, meat and fish are all allowed and are excellent, in moderation.
- Boost digestion with herbal teas appropriate for the meal and season.
- Eat with your hands, sitting on the floor from a shared plate. This aids digestion and decreases the size of portions consumed. If you are unable to do this, then follow the "One Bowl" portion.

**The Arabs of old said: The stomach is the home of disease and restraint is the basis of the remedy.**



## Food and Nutrition Immortalized in the Qur'an and Prophetic Tradition

Islam is not just prayers and charity, but a complete way of life. The Prophetic Tradition addresses each aspect of our lives. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught us about food, nutrition, medicine, hygiene, behaviour, marriage, parenting and so much more.

Study the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and you will fall in love with the perfection of Islam.

In all aspects of our lives, we need to refer to the Qur'an and Prophetic Tradition as our guide first. Whether it is medicine, nutrition, or any other matter, the Sunnah must be considered before any non-Muslim guidance.

### Here's why:

Food fads come and go. But the astute Muslim must examine each fad according to Islamic guidance.

- Dairy-Free
- Gluten-Free
- Veganism
- Paleo
- Raw
- Low-fat Diet
- Keto Diet

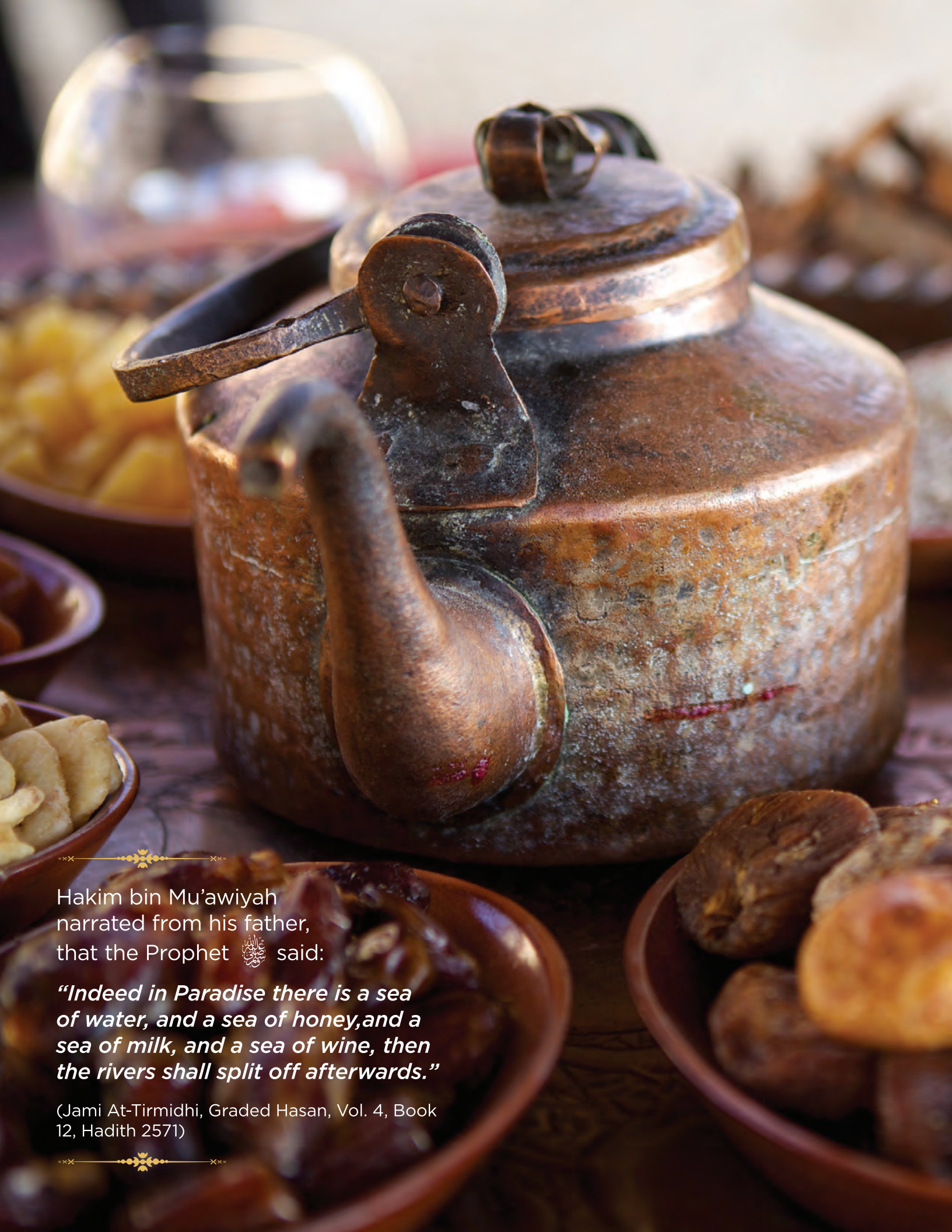
Only adopt these diets if you have food allergies like celiac, or other health issues that the doctor has instructed to follow. All of these fads contain elements that go against the guidance of the Prophetic Tradition. Each one will be addressed separately in the days to come on nurasunna.com and in the full edition Nurasunna book, but for now, I will give you a few simple rules from the Qur'an and Sunnah that will make healthy living a lot easier.

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

*"He it is Who created for you all that is on earth..."*

Al-Baqarah, 29

Everything is created for our use and consumption. As Muslims, we do not subscribe to the notion that killing animals for food is inhumane, when the Most



Hakim bin Mu'awiyah narrated from his father, that the Prophet ﷺ said:

*“Indeed in Paradise there is a sea of water, and a sea of honey, and a sea of milk, and a sea of wine, then the rivers shall split off afterwards.”*

(Jami At-Tirmidhi, Graded Hasan, Vol. 4, Book 12, Hadith 2571)

Merciful, the Most Compassionate designed that some animals are for food and some are for tilling the earth or riding. Everywhere in the animal kingdom, you can see the Mercy and Justice of Allah. The food chain is part of His divine decree and wisdom, and our mercy and compassion is not greater than that of Allah <sup>سبحانه</sup> و تعالیٰ.

We submit to His will and enjoy of the bounties He has bestowed upon us, without arrogance and with complete gratitude for the perfection of His divine plan.

The most merciful and the most perfect example was the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. His way of life is the most humane, the most compassionate. If you truly aspire to live compassionately with the creation of Allah, then follow the guidance and footsteps of the most empathetic man that ever lived. ﷺ

*“O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth...”*

Al-Baqarah, 168

The guidance for food and nutrition is immortalized in the Qur’an and Sunnah, so that despite the changes in trends and traditions, the preservation of our health remains unchanged. Simple rules set the foundation for our own ijtihad (due diligence) when making choices pertaining to food, nutrition and medicine.

*“Say: ‘Who has forbidden the adornment with clothes given by Allah, which He has produced for His slaves, and al-Tayyibaat [all kinds of halal (lawful) things] of food?’...”*

Al-A’raaf, 32

From this, we know that everything that grows from the earth is in principle halal (permitted), and no one should decree it to be haram (forbidden) or makrooh (disliked) without sound Islamic evidence (daleel). [www.islamqa.info/en/1990](http://www.islamqa.info/en/1990)

**Here are 7 simple rules to keep in mind for healthy, nutritious living according to Prophetic Tradition.**

Each of these rules will be explained in further detail, independently on [nurasunna.com](http://nurasunna.com)

#### **1. Eat what is Halal and Tayyib.**

O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy. (Surat Al Baqara, 168)

## 2. Eat and be grateful.

O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship. (Surat Al Baqara, 172)

## 3. Do not eat to your fill.

Miqdam bin Madikarib رضي الله عنه said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink and one third for air.'" (Graded Sahih, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 4, Book 29, Hadith 3349)

## 4. Portion control.

Jabir رضي الله عنه reported Allah's Messenger ﷺ as saying: Food for one (person) suffices two, and food for two (persons) suffices four persons and food for four persons suffices eight persons. (Sahih Muslim, Book 23, Hadith 5112)

## 5. Eat together from one plate.

Narrated Wahshi ibn Harb: The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ said: Messenger of Allah we eat but we are not satisfied. He said: Perhaps you eat separately. They replied: Yes. He said: If you gather together at your food and mention Allah's name, you will be blessed in it. (Graded Hasan, Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 27, Hadith 3755)

## 6. Begin with the Name of Allah.

Narrated Umar ibn Abu Salamah رضي الله عنه: The Prophet ﷺ said: Come near, my son, mention Allah's name, eat with your right hand and eat from what is next to you. (Graded Sahih, Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 27, Hadith 3768)

## 7. End with gratitude.

Mu'adh bin Anas رضي الله عنه reported: Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "He who has taken food and says at the end: 'Al- hamdu lillahi-lladhi at'amani hadha, wa razaqanihi min ghairi haulin minni wa la quwwatin (All praise is due to Allah Who has given me food to eat and provided it without any endeavour on my part or any power),' all his past sins will be forgiven." (Riyadh as Saliheen, Book 3, Hadith 735).

## Relationship with food

Our growing appetite, foodie attitude, and never-ending critique of food are all



indications that our perspective about food has changed from nourishment into desire. The desire for food is insatiable, much like our desire for money, pleasure and sexual fulfillment. And desire is meant to be restrained and disciplined.

Eating is necessary for our survival. It is the permissible pleasure of this dunya (life). Overindulgence is the gateway to sin.

*“O Children of Adam! Take your adornment to every Masjid, and eat and drink, but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not the wasteful”*

Al-Araf, 31

“Extravagance leads overstepping the mark, which means eating beyond the point of fullness. This is not limited to one or two or three meals a day. A person may eat one meal a day and eat extravagantly during that meal. Or he may eat three meals without being extravagant.

The hadeeth of al-Miqdaad encourages eating small amounts of food and being content with that which is enough to keep one going. It does not suggest the number of meals. These few mouthfuls may be eaten at three times, at breakfast, lunch and dinner, and you will be eating little in these meals. If you want to eat more than a few mouthfuls — in his meal — you should leave one third (of your stomach) for your food, one third for your drink, and one third for air. If you need another meal — as is the case for most people — there is nothing wrong with that, but you should pay attention to the same points noted above. The same applies if you need to have three or four meals. The number of meals varies from one person to another, the type of food and the effort necessary to prepare it.

What matters is taking care of the body and not causing any harm, whether by overeating or starving. What also matters is eating to have strength to carry out acts of worship, which is achieved by eating moderate amounts, not by eating heavy amounts or going too hungry.” [www.islamqa.info/en/145160](http://www.islamqa.info/en/145160)

These are the core beliefs that a Muslim must have in order to preserve his health and nourish his body. Following diets that prohibit what Allah has permitted, or permit what Allah has prohibited, are a deviation from the truth. The Creator of the Heavens and Earth is well aware of His creation, and what He has created. Is it not time that we turn to Him for guidance in the matters of food and health?

## HEALING



We create an imbalance within our own bodies partly due to ignorance (jahiliya) when it comes to the truth about nutrition and medicine, and partly due to desire and extravagance.

*Recite in the name of your Lord who created -*

*Created man from a clinging substance.*

*Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous -*

*Who taught by the pen -*

*Taught man that which he knew not.*

*No! [But] indeed, man transgresses*

Al Alaq, 1-6

We will, because of our nature, transgress even if we have knowledge of the truth. No matter how much we know that sugar is unhealthy, or soda is bad, we still transgress the healthy limits set by our Lord. Sugar and soda are not healthy regardless of your body type and even if it does not appear to have immediate effect on you. Long term, it is very damaging to your health.

If the Creator of the Heavens and Earth has made us as repenters, then surely He has also created us to heal when we transgress our own bodies.

**Here is what is truly incredible: the more often something is used in our body, the more often it is restored.**

Here’s a quick list of how long it takes to heal or regenerate something in our body:

- **Digestive Tract (mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, rectum, anus)**

3 days to 3 weeks

“Let’s begin by imagining the surface area of your gastrointestinal tract. If you spread it all out, it would cover about the size of a tennis court! This

internal “court” is covered in special cells called enterocytes that constantly regenerate so that you get an entirely new gut lining every two to three weeks. If you are healthy and do not have any chronic conditions like auto-immunity or inflammation, and if you do not have any food sensitivities, you could heal a not-so-perfect gut in as little as two weeks or as long as 12 weeks, studies suggest.

A study from Harvard, published in the medical journal Nature, found significant changes in gut bacteria actively happening just three days after a dietary change!” writes Dr. Will Cole ([www.drwillcole.com](http://www.drwillcole.com)).

- **Blood**

The Red Cross writes: “The plasma from your donation is replaced within about 24 hours. Red cells need about four to six weeks for complete replacement. That is why at least eight weeks are required between whole blood donations.”

“Red blood cells live for about four months, while white blood cells live on average more than a year. Skin cells live about two or three weeks. Colon cells have it rough: They die off after about four days. Sperm cells have a life span of only about three days, while brain cells typically last an entire lifetime (neurons in the cerebral cortex, for example, are not replaced when they die).” [www.livescience.com/33179-does-human-body-replace-cells-seven-years](http://www.livescience.com/33179-does-human-body-replace-cells-seven-years)

- **Bones**

3 weeks to 10 weeks for healing.

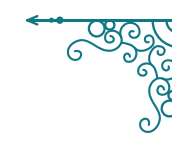
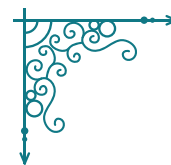
- **Liver**

The liver is able to replace damaged tissue with new cells. If up to 50 - 60 percent of the liver cells are be killed within a 3 to 4 day time span such as in an extreme case like a Tylenol overdose, the liver will repair itself completely after 30 days, if no complications arise. [www.uihc.org/health-library/liver-disease-frequently-asked-questions](http://www.uihc.org/health-library/liver-disease-frequently-asked-questions)

So let’s summarize this: within 30 days, you can expect to have a new liver, complete new cells for your digestive tract, new skin and even some new blood.

Is it any wonder that Allah ﷻ has prescribed 30 days of fasting yearly? It is a means of purifying our souls from desire and aiding our body to heal from our transgressions.





# FASTING



*“Everyone has a physician inside him or her; we just have to help it in its work. The natural healing force within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well. Our food should be our medicine. Our medicine should be our food. But to eat when you are sick is to feed your sickness.”*

- Hippocrates

*“Instead of using medicine, rather, fast a day.”*

- Plutarch

The ancient Greeks were great believers in fasting. Hippocrates advocated it, as is shown in the above quotation. Plato said that he fasted for greater physical and mental efficiency. Aristotle, his pupil, also fasted. Both Galen and Avicenna also prescribed fasts for their patients.

[www.greekmedicine.net/hygiene/Fasting\\_and\\_Purification](http://www.greekmedicine.net/hygiene/Fasting_and_Purification)

Your body is designed to heal and regenerate. Allah ﷻ has created our inner clocks to help our bodies know exactly when to repair themselves. Our job is to facilitate the healing process, to support our system, not suppress it, aggravate it or ignore it.



**Fasting is a means of attaining taqwa (piety, being conscious of Allah), and taqwa means doing that which Allah has enjoined and avoiding that which He has forbidden.**

*“And eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allâh) likes not Al-Musrifûn (those who waste by extravagance)”*

Al-A'raaf, 31

There is a lot of healing that occurs during fasting, so it is no wonder that Allah سبحانه وتعالى prescribed it upon us as He prescribed it upon the nations before us. Are you getting the most out of your Ramadan? Or are your eating habits interfering with the healing process?

There are two profound reasons to fast:

- Spiritual awakening — as mentioned in the Quranic Ayat above.
- Physical healing — which will be discussed in this chapter

We are going to discuss the spiritual awakening in the next section called ‘The connection between food, desire and worship’. For now, let’s focus on the physical healing benefits of fasting.

Fasting is a time of detoxification. Think of your body like a car. If the engine is running and the wheels are spinning, you cannot wash and repair it. The car cannot be fixed while it is in motion. You need to physically stop in order to shift your energy to fixing the car.

Your body works the same way. Breaking down nutrients and assimilating them on a cellular level requires energy. Your body cannot detoxify if it is constantly digesting food. Now you might be thinking, well I’m not eating all day... but that is not entirely true.

The food you had for breakfast at 8am has a long distance to travel. It takes anywhere between 12-30 hours for one meal to exit your body. While it may take as little as 12 hours for really clean, small, easy-to-digest meals to exit your system, particularly for someone with a fast metabolism, or it can take 30 hours for your over-the-top steak dinner to make its way out.

If your digestive system is busy metabolizing food, it cannot spend energy on

cleaning house. That is where intermittent fasting comes in. Intermittent fasting, known as abstaining from food and drink for 16-18 hours a day allows your body to complete digestion and begin its healing process.

But that is not all! Something else occurs that never gets to happen in our normal feeding patterns. Your gallbladder is put to real use, the way it was originally designed. Bile from the liver is sent to the gallbladder where it is concentrated before being dumped into the small intestine. Eating every 2-3 hours means your gallbladder is emptying into the small intestine every 2-3 hours. It never has time to fully concentrate the bile to properly break down the nutrients in the duodenum (the first segment of the small intestine). When you fast for 16 hours, your bile has been concentrating for at least 12 hours and when you break fast, you now have a highly potent digestive enzyme that is going to get to work in your small intestine.

Our body was never designed to graze on food all day, like cattle. Up until a few hundred years ago, humans only ate a proper meal once or twice a day. This is still true in certain parts of the world, though certainly not in North America, where you do not need to look far for evidence of a different style of eating. There are stories of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ living off of dates and water for 3 months, due to poverty. [www.islamqa.info/en/260366](http://www.islamqa.info/en/260366)

Narrated `Urwa:

*Aisha رضي الله عنها “O my nephew! We used to see the crescent, and then the crescent and then the crescent in this way we saw three crescents in two months and no fire (for cooking) used to be made in the houses of Allah’s Messenger. ﷺ I said, “O my aunt! Then what used to sustain you?” `Aisha said, “The two black things: dates and water, our neighbors from Ansar had some milk she-camel and they used to present Allah’s Messenger ﷺ some of their milk and he used to make us drink.”*

Sahih al-Bukhari, 2567

Fasting is the perfect remedy for the body. Allah سبحانه وتعالى has ordained that we all must fast a minimum of 29 or 30 days a year. But it does not stop there! As soon as you finish Ramadan, you are encouraged with great reward to fast an

additional six days in the month of Shawwal. And you are continually encouraged and rewarded to fast three days a month during the full moon phase. And you are encouraged to fast Mondays and Thursdays. Then there are the nine days of Dhul-Hijjah, and three days of Ashoura.

How many days does all that fasting add up to? I was curious so I added it up.

It comes to approximately 170 days a year. We are encouraged to fast for 170 days a year, with a minimum of 29-30 days where we **must** fast. Wow... that is almost half the year, considering that the Islamic year has a maximum of 355 days.

Allah <sup>سبحانه</sup> <sub>وتعالى</sub> is The Most Knowledgeable and He is The Most Wise.

There are benefits to fasting that are immeasurable, both physically and spiritually.

Narrated Abu Huraira <sup>رضي الله عنه</sup>:

*The Prophet <sup>ﷺ</sup> said, "Allah said: The Fast is for Me and I will give the reward for it, as he (the one who observes the fast) leaves his sexual desire, food and drink for My Sake. Fasting is a screen (from Hell) and there are two pleasures for a fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord. And the smell of the mouth of a fasting person is better in Allah's Sight than the smell of musk."*

Sahih al-Bukhari, 7492

Before we delve into the spiritual awakening that comes with fasting, let's examine what fasting does to our body.

The abstinence of food and drink for 12-18 hours (depending on your dawn to dusk) allows your body to do the following, more or less in this order:

- The organs get a much needed rest (aka vacation)
- Your metabolic fire, that constantly needs nutrients, turns to your inner reserve when external food supply is cut off
- Your hormone levels change, allowing for stored fat to become accessible as fuel/energy
- Your inner healing process is initiated, cellular repair and waste removal/detoxification commences. This is known as autophagy.



In hunger there is healing, and in satiety there is sickness.

- Toxins, wastes and superfluous morbid imbalances are consumed by a process called autolysis (traditional medicine refers to fasting as an operation without surgery).
- Insulin levels drop significantly which facilitates fat burning (hence why some people actually lose weight in Ramadan).
- Growth hormones increase, which affects fat burning and muscle building.
- Digestive secretions and enzymes are used to digest, neutralize and eliminate toxic waste from the body via the GI tract.
- The most intense detoxification and rebalancing happens in the first three days, after which your body kicks into ketosis mode, which is a more efficient conversion of fat into energy. This explains why your headaches and energy get better by day four.
- Last one in, first one out. Your body begins to remove the most recent toxins first, then continues to the older, and much older toxins. This is why a 30-day fast offers a much deeper cleanse than just a 3-day fast.

As your body is healing, there are physical side effects that will be experienced. This is known as the Healing Crisis/dying-off phase of morbid humors and toxins.

- **Head/Brain:** headaches, dizziness, vertigo, lightheadedness.
- **Nose, Sinuses:** sneezing, runny nose, itching, stinging, post nasal drip.
- **Throat:** soreness or constriction, hoarseness, scratchiness.
- **Lungs:** chest congestion, wheezing, phlegm discharges, foul breath odours.
- **Skin:** rashes, acne, pustules; excessive or abnormal sweating; strange body odours.
- **Stomach:** sour or nervous stomach, stomach cramping, belching, bad breath.
- **Liver:** sore eyes, bitter taste in mouth, sallow complexion, pain or distension under the ribs on the right side.
- **Gall Bladder:** colic, spasm, tenderness or pain underneath the liver area.
- **Intestines:** foul smelling gas, cramping, diarrhea, spastic colon or irritable bowel.
- **Kidneys:** low back pain and weakness, fatigue; frequent urination, often urgent; strongly colored or smelling urine.

Everything above is taken from [www.greekmedicine.net](http://www.greekmedicine.net)



## BREAKING A FAST



The hardest, and most critical, part of fasting is not the abstinence of food and drink all day. It is how you break your fast. What you do in those short six hours of eating and drinking can nullify the physical benefits of your fasting.

Let me paint this picture in a way that might make more sense:


Imagine being at a job where you are forced to work 16-hour days, everyday of the week, for 11 months of the year. That would be exhausting, but thankfully your boss has agreed to give you the 12th month off. You are still expected to work in that month, but he says you can limit it to only six hours a day. Would you try to cram 16 hours of your “normal” workday into that six hour window?

Similarly, you should not try to cram 16 hours of “normal” food habits into a six-hour window. Fasting is an opportunity to break old habits, form healthier ones, and genuinely allow your body the much needed vacation it deserves.

So if you are used to drinking coffee daily, do not try to sip that coffee in between your evening prayers. Allow yourself to break that habit, so that you are not a prisoner to your desires nor an addict to a particular substance (regardless of whether it is good or bad).

When you first break your fast, refrain from eating everything in sight. The sunnah is a beautiful way of life that truly reflects the best way to live.

Anas bin Malik  narrated that :

***The Messenger of Allah  said: “Whoever has dried dates, then let him break the fast with that, and whoever does not, then let him break the fast with water, for indeed water is purifying.”***

Graded Sahih, Jami At-Tirmidhi, 694

Why dates first? Why dates before water?

Dates are easily digested and their natural sugar quickly reaches the bloodstream before you are even finished eating the rest of your meal. Why water after

dates? Water is purifying and replenishes and rehydrates the body after the extensive detoxification your body just endured.

The best practice is to eat dates and drink water, then fulfill your maghrib prayer before actually commencing your meal. This allows your body to slowly ease into digestion. Dates are heating and will ignite your metabolic fire. For those with excessive metabolic heat, for whom it feels like their stomach is on fire, dates and watermelon might be a better option, so that the dates can stimulate digestion and the watermelon can cool/balance the excessive heat (but this is only really recommended for Choleric/Yellow Bile body types).

Then have your one bowl of food. Whatever you want to eat, go ahead and eat it. So long as the main focus is clean digestion and you limit yourself to one bowl, then your stomach will be supported to properly breakdown and assimilate the nutrients you just ingested.

From an Islamic perspective, the most nourishing food is Tharid, which is meat and bread and this can be taken from the hadith:

Narrated Anas :

***The Prophet  said, “The superiority of ‘Aisha to other women is like the superiority of Tharid to other kinds of food . “***

Sahih Al Bukhari, 5419

Tharid is a meat stew that is served on barley bread. Nutritionally speaking, meat that is stewed is made easier to digest because of the long hours on the stove that breakdown the meat fibers. Meat is also highly prized for its nutritional benefits and the satiety it gives. The water, being a solvent which extracts nutrients, will create a nourishing broth that is soaked up by the barley bread.

If you ate dates, a glass of water and had a bowl of tharid served on one piece of barley bread, then you have completed your nutritional requirements for one meal.

After your evening prayers, which is probably midnight for most people, go ahead and eat again. Again, this should be a one bowl meal with one cup of a beverage. Because you are ingesting this meal before you sleep, try to keep it light with perhaps a banana, nut butter, glass of milk and some dates again.

For your pre-dawn meal, follow the same one bowl and one cup portions, eating eggs, some fruits and maybe some grains.

Two things you will notice when you eat like this. First, your body will feel light because digestion is working really well and does not require a lot of energy. Secondly, your energy levels will be so much higher during the day while you work, and during the night while you pray. Because your body will be humming efficiently, you will not feel the “usual” highs and lows that you normally experience throughout the day, before and after meals.

### 7 Things that will nullify the physical benefits of your fast:

#### 1. Filling yourself until you can barely breathe

When there is no space for water or air to break down your food, you will face belching, reflux, indigestion, bloating and other discomfort.

#### 2. Drinking soda with your meals

Soda is not just bad because of the sugar spikes it causes, but it will interfere with digestion. The chemical reaction that occurs when soda mixes with your stomach acid is clearly demonstrated in a video you must watch in order to fully understand. Check out Molten Science on YouTube, video named [EXPERIMENT POURING COCA COLA IN STOMACH ACID](#).

#### 3. Mixing way too many different foods into the stomach at the same time

Salad, meat dish, fried fish, slice of pizza, ice cream, latte, orange juice all in one meal is a very big no no. Think laundry: you cannot put everything in the same machine. Same goes for your stomach. There are natural, intuitive ways to listen to your body to know what mixes well together.

#### 4. To eat continuously for the entire 6 hour window

Grazing constantly from food, to dessert, to snack, to lattes and to sodas is also frowned upon. Your stomach needs to have a start and end time to a meal, and a 2-3 hour window to process what you have given it. Imagine opening the laundry machine every 20 minutes to add more clothes, when the first wash hasn't even finished. You will not know if you need to start over, or if you should just continue the wash. It messes up the job function of your stomach to not have an end period to food consumption.

#### 5. Filling your plate with “desire” and not nutrition

Eating chips, soda, and cake will not give your body the energy and nutri-

ents it needs. Choose your one bowl wisely. Combine the right foods.

#### 6. Do not drown yourself with fluids

The biggest myth is that if you do not drink, you will dehydrate because you did not drink all day. Fluids are very important, but which fluids and how they improve or impede digestion will make a huge difference as to what you should consume. Honey water, date water, herbal tea, tamarind infused water, licorice root drink, kombucha, yogurt ayran/lassi are all nourishing, hydrating and boost digestion. See recipes in the last chapter.

#### 7. Fasting when you should not be fasting (either due to travel, illness, pregnancy, nursing or menses)

This can nullify the benefits of the fast and actually cause you to become ill. Follow the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for each of these conditions. Allah knows your body better than you know yourself. Trust in His wisdom.

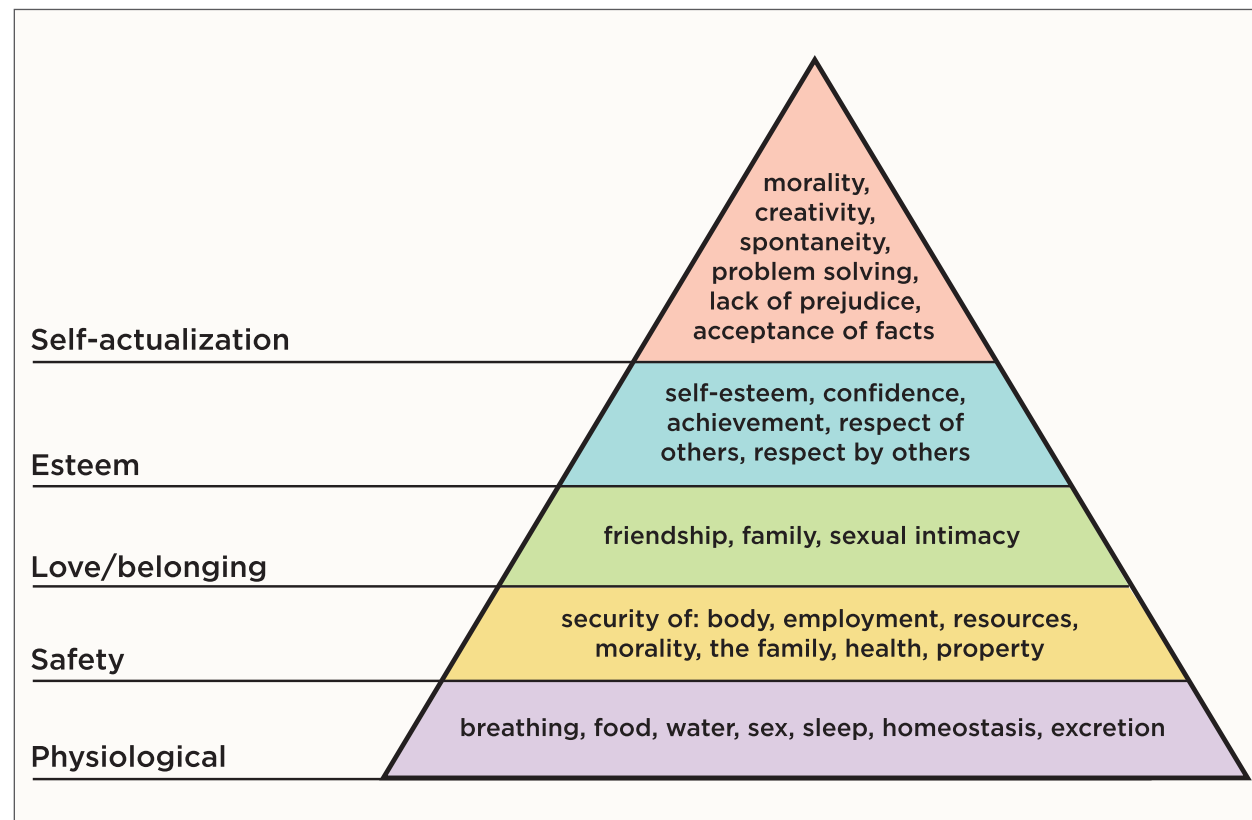


## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN FOOD, DESIRE AND WORSHIP



*“O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious)”*

Al-Baqarah, 183



In Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the most basic human needs include food, water, and sex, which is what ﷻ commands us to restrain from dawn until sunset, for 29 or 30 days each year.

What is the connection between food, desire and worship? What wisdom is there in fasting a minimum of 29 days to 170 days a year?

Fasting is taking that which is permissible and temporarily making it impermissible. The outcome is tawqa: Fasting is a means of attaining taqwa (piety, being conscious of Allah), and taqwa means doing that which Allah has enjoined and

avoiding that which He has forbidden.

Allah teaches us that by giving up our basic physiological needs, we are able to attain self-actualization, a deeper awakening to God’s existence and to the truth – which is not in line with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Likewise, an undisciplined individual who fulfills his physiological needs in impermissible ways gradually loses consciousness to his Creator and to the reality of the afterlife.

There is clear indication that there is a connection between how our physical needs are met and our spiritual enlightenment. A satiated body can easily fall into ghafla (heedlessness).

Al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyaad ﷺ said:

*“There are two qualities that harden the heart: sleeping too much and eating too much.” Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله also said, “As for the five things that corrupt the heart, they are those that are referred to: mixing excessively with people (so as to gossip and talk a lot), wishful thinking (daydreaming), being attached to anything other than Allah, eating one’s fill, and sleeping a lot.”*

*These five are the greatest corrupters of the heart.*

Madaarij al-Saalikeen (1/453).

Eating one’s fill hardens the heart, whereas remembering Allah softens the heart.

Hmmm... food is not just about fulfilling our desire, it is a means of nourishment for our body and soul, but there is a point when eating begins to destroy our body and soul. Balance in food consumption is deeply connected to our spiritual enlightenment.

Remembering Allah (dhikr) brings great benefits, such as spiritual well-being, tranquility and softening of the heart. Allah سبحانه و تعالی says (interpretation of the meaning):

*“Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism), and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah, Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest”*

Ar-Ra’d, 28

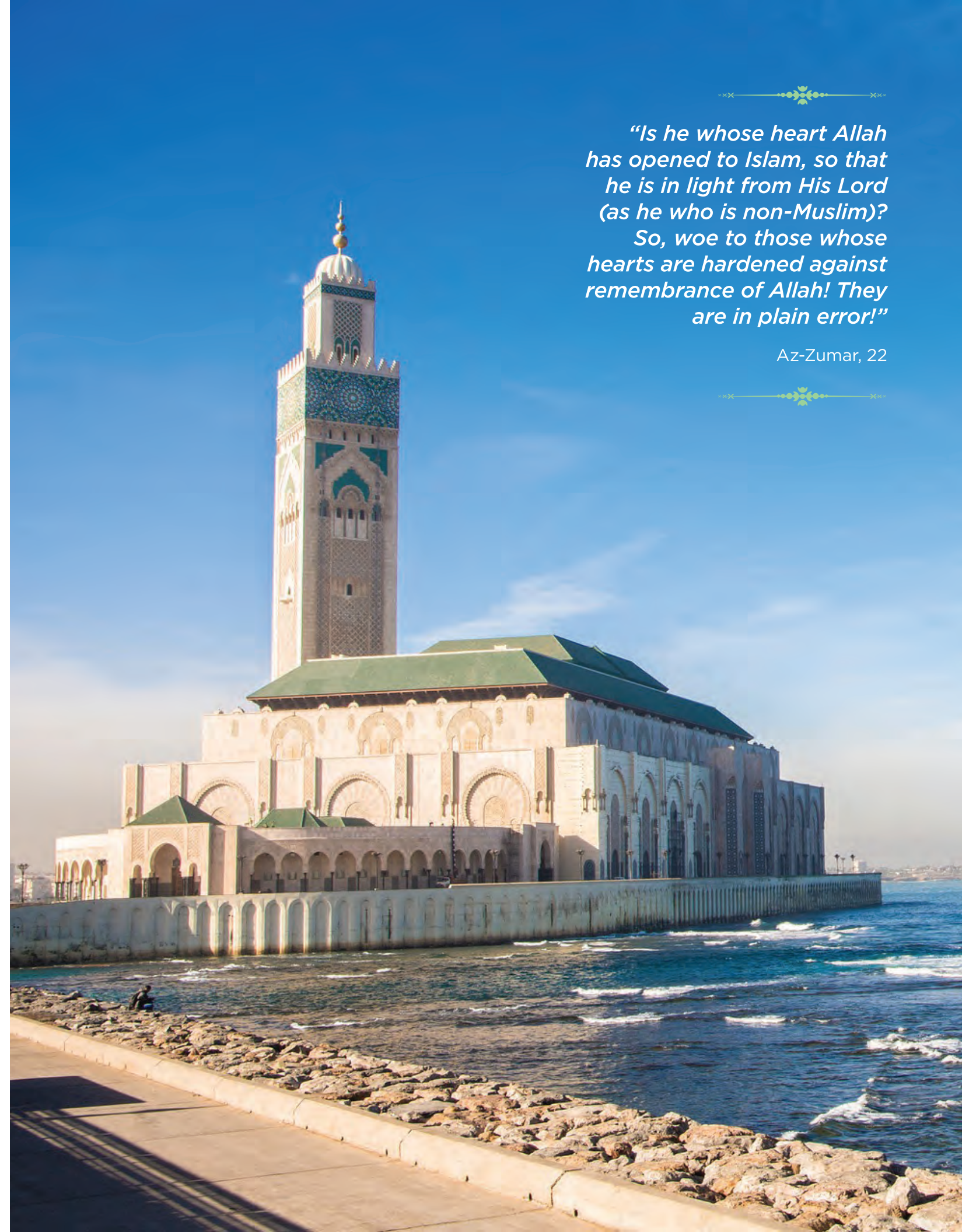
It is narrated by al-Bukhaari (5066) and Muslim (1400) from Ibn Mas'ood d, who said: We were with the Prophet s, young men who had nothing of wealth. The Messenger of Allah s said to us: "O young men, whoever among you can afford it, let him get married, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one's chastity. And whoever cannot afford it should fast, for it will be a shield for him."

Food is not just connected to our spiritual heart, it also greatly influences our sexual desires. The hadith above indicates that to restrain your sexual desire, if you cannot be married and fulfill your desire in a permissible manner, then you must restrain yourself from food and drink through fasting.

Food is fuel. It fuels your sexual energy. Fasting depletes that energy and increases your awareness of your Lord, hence increasing your taqwa and ability to withhold from fornication and adultery.

The scholars have mentioned the benefits of moderation in food and not being extravagant. These include:

- "Purity of heart, mental alertness and deep insight. Satiety generates stupidity and blinds the heart. Hence the proverb says "The one whose stomach is hungry will become able to think deeply and his intelligence will honed."
- Humility and the loss of pride: joy and insolence, which are the foundation of tyranny and neglect of Allah.
- One does not forget the wrath and punishment of Allah, or the people who are afflicted by calamity. For the one who has his fill forgets the one who is hungry and he forgets hunger, but the one who is smart does not see someone else afflicted by a calamity but he is reminded of calamity in the Hereafter.
- One of the greatest benefits is that it puts an end to all sinful desires, and brings control over the self that is inclined towards evil, because the source of all sins is desires and energy, and the fuel for energy and desires, is food. Dhu'l-Noon said: I never ate my fill but I sinned or thought of sinning.
- Warding off sleep and being able to stay up. For the one who eats a lot will drink a lot, and the one who drinks a lot will sleep a lot. Sleeping a lot wastes one's time and causes one to miss out on tahajjud; it makes one



*"Is he whose heart Allah has opened to Islam, so that he is in light from His Lord (as he who is non-Muslim)? So, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against remembrance of Allah! They are in plain error!"*

Az-Zumar, 22

slow and hardens the heart. Time is the most precious gift and it is the person's capital, but sleep is death and sleeping too much shortens one's life.

- Physical health and warding off disease, which is caused by eating too much and mixing foods in the stomach. The doctors say that gluttony is the cause of disease and restraint leads to a cure.”

Summarized from Ihya' 'Uloom al-Deen (3/103-104). [www.islamqa.info/en/102374](http://www.islamqa.info/en/102374)

What is important to understand is that everything is connected. Fasting during the day increases your taqwa, if you restrain yourself from eating your fill when you break fast, you will soften your heart and increase your awareness of your Lord. And if you have more awareness/taqwa, you will reduce the number of sins committed. Everything begins with food.

You need to eat to survive but learning when to stop before you are full is harder than fasting the entire day.

It was narrated from 'Abdullah bin Amr رضي الله عنه that:

*The Prophet ﷺ used to seek refuge (with Allah) from four things: From knowledge that is of no benefit, from a heart that does not feel humble, from a supplication that is not heard, and a soul that is never satisfied.*

Sunan An-Nisa, Graded Hasan, Vol. 6, Book 50, Hadith 5444

The interesting thing about the Arabic version of this hadith is that “soul that is never satisfied” is actually much deeper than the English translation.

Nafsun La Tashba' is what is said in Arabic, and that means a Nafs/Soul/Desire/Hunger that is never fulfilled. An insatiable appetite for life, for achievements, for food, for sex, for recognition, for wealth, and so on, all fall into this dua, this invocation.

We want Allah سبحانه وتعالى to grant us a soul whose hunger is satisfied with what it is given, that is satisfied with little from this world, because the afterlife is what it truly seeks.

This is not to say we should not eat, or have big dreams, or want more out of life, but it all goes back to that balance: enough but not excessive.

*“But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.”*

Al-Qasas, 77

I think it is very important to notice the repeated theme of balance. Our entire body's humors — hot, cold, wet and dry — are built on balance and these are fueled by the foods we eat. If we consume excessive hot foods, then we are going to face illnesses and pain from this excessive heat.

## IS FASTING MAKING YOU SICK?



Traditional doctors prescribed fasting for many different illnesses, but there are some conditions where fasting can further aggravate the illness.

So who should not fast?

Praise be to Allah.

One of the ways in which Allah has made things easy for His slaves is that He has only enjoined fasting upon those who are able to do it, and He has excused those who are unable to fast for a legitimate shar'i reason. The legitimate reasons for which one may be excused from fasting are as follows:

- **Sickness**

“Sickness means anything and everything that indicates that a person is not healthy.

Ibn Qudaamah said: the scholars are agreed that it is permissible for the sick person not to fast in general. The basis of that is the aayah in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

*“but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days”* Al-Baqarah, 184

It was narrated that Salamah ibn al-Akwa' رضي الله عنه said: “When this aayah was



revealed — ‘And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskeen (poor person) (for every day)’ [al-Baqarah 2:184 — interpretation of the meaning] — those who wanted not to fast could do that, and pay the fidyah (i.e., feed one poor person for each day). That remained the case until the following aayah was revealed, i.e., the verse:

*‘And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskeen (poor person) (for every day)’*  
[al-Baqarah 2:185 — interpretation of the meaning] — *so it abrogated it.*”

The sick person who fears that fasting may make his sickness worse, or that it will slow down his recovery or damage a part of his body, has the option of not fasting, and indeed it is Sunnah for him not to fast and it is makrooh for him to complete his fast, because that may lead to his death. So he has to be cautious and protect himself. Moreover, if the sick person is very ill, that makes it permissible for him not to fast. But if a healthy person fears difficulty or tiredness, it is not permissible for him to break his fast, if all that happens to him when he fasts is that he becomes tired.

- **Travelling**

In order for travelling to result in a concession excusing one from fasting, the following conditions must be met:

- The journey must be long enough that prayers may be shortened.
- The traveller must not intend to settle in the place to which he travels.
- His journey must not be for any sinful purpose, rather it should be for a sound purpose, according to the majority of scholars. That is because being allowed not to fast is a concession and relief that the sinner does not deserve on his journey, because the purpose of his journey is to commit sin — such as one who travels in order to commit banditry, for example.

Cancellation of the concession for travelling — this concession of travelling is cancelled by two things:

- When the traveller returns home and enters his hometown, which is the place where he resides.
- When the traveller decides to stay indefinitely, or for a lengthy period in one place, and the place is fit for settling in. Thus he becomes a resident

(or non-traveller), so he should pray his prayers in full and not break his fast in Ramadan, because the rulings on travel no longer apply to him.

- **Pregnancy and breastfeeding**

The fuqaha’ are agreed that pregnant and breastfeeding women may break their fast in Ramadan, on the condition that they think there is a risk that they or their children may become ill or more ill, or be harmed or may die. The evidence for this concession in their case is the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

*“and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasts) must be made up] from other days”*  
[al-Baqarah 2:185]

This does not refer to merely being sick, for the sick person who will not be harmed by fasting is not allowed to break the fast; here sickness is mentioned as a metaphor for any situation where fasting when sick may cause harm. This is what is meant by sickness here. That may be the case in pregnancy and when breastfeeding, so these two cases are included in the concession of breaking the fast. The evidence that women in these cases are allowed not to fast is the hadeeth of Anas ibn Maalik al-Ka’bi رضي الله عنه, who said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah has relieved the traveler of fasting and half of prayer, and He has relieved the pregnant and breastfeeding woman of fasting.”

- **Senility and old age**

Senility and old age refers to one who is old and has lost his strength, or who is approaching death, so that every day he becomes weaker, until he dies, or who is suffering from a terminal or incurable illness and has no hope of recovery. The evidence that it is prescribed for such people not to fast is the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

*“And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskeen (poor person) (for every day)”* Al-Baqarah, 184

Ibn ‘Abbaas رضي الله عنه said that this aayah has not been abrogated, and it applies to old men and old women who cannot fast, so for each day they should feed one poor person.

- **Intense hunger and thirst**

If a person is overtaken by intense hunger or unbearable thirst, then he should break his fast and eat just as much as he needs to ward off that hunger, then he should refrain from eating for the rest of the day, and make up that fast later on.

The scholars added to intense hunger and thirst the fear of weakness when meeting the enemy, or fearing or expecting an attack, such as when one is surrounded. So if a fighter knows for sure or thinks it most likely that there will be fighting because he is facing the enemy, and he fears that fasting may make him weak when fighting, and he is not traveling, then he may break his fast before fighting.

- **Compulsion**

Compulsion means one person forcing another to do something or not to do something against his will, by means of threats.”

Everything above taken from [www.islamqa.info/en/23296](http://www.islamqa.info/en/23296)

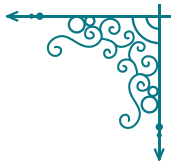
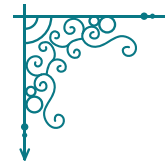
*We have made you (true Muslims) a moderate nation so that you could be an example for all people and the Prophet an example for you.*

Al-Baqara, 143

This ayat is a perfect reminder that Islam truly teaches the balanced approach: do not overfill your nafs/desire, nor starve — fast when healthy, and do not fast when you are ill.

Everything is focused on being balanced.





## THE RAMADAN REMEDY



So this is the critical part. Ramadan is about to begin and you can take this opportunity to extract the full benefit that fasting offers. This is not rocket science, nor do you need a degree in nutrition or medicine to know how to eat.

Reviving lost traditions of the past from doctors, herbalists, dentists, and the Prophets ﷺ is essential to our survival. Do not dismiss old-fashioned ideologies your grandmother may still try to instill. It is treasure to be sought and understood. And if you have grandparents still living, I urge you and encourage you to seek their knowledge before it is lost forever.

Let's get to it.

### 10 Things to do to HEAL your body this Ramadan:

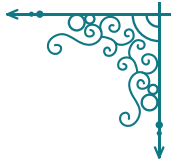
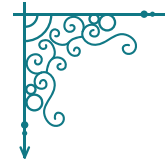
1. Understand that your body will go through the healing crisis in the first five days of fasting. Pay attention to your body. Write it out in a journal if you must, but do not dismiss it, suppress it or feed into it. Withdrawal from caffeine may mean headaches for the first few days, but it is important to allow your body to break-free from this addiction. Think of it this way, do you want to be a prisoner to your desire? Allow Ramadan to set you free.
2. Your bowel movements will slow down if you do not hydrate your body with the proper natural laxatives (see 'recipes' chapter) to support diges-

tion. Dates and water at each meal encourages healthy bowel movements.

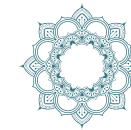
3. Remember:  $\frac{1}{3}$  for food,  $\frac{1}{3}$  for water, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  for air. Note that  $\frac{1}{3}$  of your stomach is no more than the size of a bowl. Even if your stomach has grown over the months and years, it will shrink to its natural size when you fast throughout the month. Most big bellies that people carry are not actually just the stomach, but also the intestines that may have expanded overtime, as well as fecal matter that sits in the colon for much longer than it should. Not to mention that visceral fat that encompasses the organs. Your stomach size will reset to its natural size when you fast, hence why most people feel like they are unable to eat very much when they break their fast.
4. Your eyes may be hungrier than your stomach. Lowering one's gaze with regards to food is just as effective as lowering one's gaze with it comes to the opposite gender. Your eyes are the gateway to your desires/heart and staring at food images all day while you fast, or watching cooking shows, is going to create a ravenous beast. Even worse is walking through the buffet or grocery store when you are hungry. You are bound to overeat when you see more food. A simple rule is to cook less food. It helps the family chef actually rest in this precious month as well. One dish meals are sufficient. Believe it or not, five course meals are what is served at wedding parties, not iftar dinners!
5. Pace yourself when you break your fast. Eat some dates, have a glass of water and perform your maghrib prayers - The sunnah is full of wisdom. This five to ten-minute delay after you break your fast allows the dates to enter into your bloodstream and calm the hunger pangs. When you return to eat, fill one bowl if you prefer to eat separately, or share your plate with one or two people for another beneficial sunnah. Sharing a plate increases the baraqa (blessings) of food and keeps you in tune to how you eat food, going so far as to prevent you from wolfing it down.
6. At the end of your meal, support your digestive system by drinking a beverage that hydrates and supports digestion. Herbal teas, cooling refreshments, and digestives are all included in the next chapter on recipes.
7. Once you have completed your meal, stop eating and drinking, allowing your stomach the space and time it needs for proper digestion. Nothing else enters the mouth for 2-3 hours. Absolutely nothing. If you are thirsty,

sip water slowly. Excessive water will essentially water down your digestive juices, forcing your stomach to work harder and longer to process the food and push it through to the small intestine.

8. Raw foods like raw broccoli, cabbage, and kale are actually hard to digest because cooking begins the breaking down of nutrients for easier absorption. Tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, herbs and fruits are easy to digest raw. Watermelon and other melons are best if eaten separately from your main course, as their water content is high and can affect digestion, especially for those with slow metabolism.
9. Hunger is not dangerous, nor it is bad for you. It is okay to feel hungry and it is okay not to eat to your fill. The flawed programming begins from our early childhood when our parents fill our plate and force us to finish the entire plate. Remember: a few morsels are enough to keep your back straight and if you must eat more, then use the  $\frac{1}{3}$  formula to decide how much to eat. This is not my formula: the Creator of the Heavens and Earth, the One who designed you and fashioned you in the best form, knows what your body needs, more than you know yourself. Believe in His deen (way of life), eat according to His guidance and your body will thank you for it. And for parents reading this, I have the five-bite rule with my toddlers. If they eat five bites and they are full, I do not insist on eating any more. They will get hungry again, and they will eat again. It is better to be fully nourished with minimal food, then fully satiated and unable to absorb any nutrients from impairing our digestion.
10. Your Taqwa is on full alert during the day to not accidentally eat or drink. Maintain that Taqwa when you are about to break your fast. Begin with your duas, Bismillah, dates and water, the dua after breaking your fast and then the maghrib prayer. Returning to your meal, begin with Bismillah again, eating with full consciousness that this meal is not about fulfilling the nafs, but about nourishing your body and giving it the vacation that it so desperately needs. Have mercy on your body for it is the only vessel you have in this life.



# RECIPES



## **Water - The Solvent - The natural laxative**

Honey Water

Date Water - Nabidh

Tamarind Water

## **Herbal Teas and Ice Teas - Caffeine free**

Hibiscus

Licorice Root / Ireq Sous

Sage Tea

## **Digestives - Probiotic Drinks**

Mint Yogurt Lassi (Ayrar)

Kombucha



## WATER



*Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe? (30)*

Al-Anbiya, 30

Water is a solvent, which means that it is capable of dissolving a variety of different substances. Water is also called the “universal solvent” because it dissolves more substances than any other liquid. Water is able to extract chemicals, minerals, and nutrients from anything it touches. This is the reason why you will so often hear never to put water in a plastic bottles: because the water will extract from the plastic some of its chemical properties. This is also the reason why you are able to infuse water with other flavours like mint, lemon or cucumbers, simply by putting these ingredients to just soak in water. And this is also the reason why we soak nuts, pulses and grains in water for a few hours: it extracts all the “bad” properties (like phytic acid) that we cannot digest. Water plays a significant part in detoxification.

*And it is He Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy (rain), and We send down pure water from the sky. (48) That We may give life thereby to a dead land, and We give to drink thereof many of the cattle and men that We had created. (49) And indeed We have distributed it (rain or water) amongst them in order that they may remember (the Grace of Allâh), but most men (refuse to accept the Truth or Faith and) accept nothing but disbelief or ingratitude. (50) And had We willed, We would have raised a warner in every town. (51) So obey not the disbelievers, but strive against them (by preaching) with the utmost endeavour, with it (the Qur’ân). (52) And it is He Who has let free the two seas (kinds of water), one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter, and He has set a barrier and a complete partition between them. (53) And it is He Who has created man from water, and has appointed for him kindred by blood, and kindred by marriage. And your Lord is Ever All-Powerful to do what He wills. (54)*

Al Furqan, 48-54

Narrated Abu Jamra Ad-Dabi:

*Have those who disbelieved I used to sit with Ibn `Abbas in Mecca. Once I had a fever and he said (to me), “Cool your fever with Zamzam water, for Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said: ‘It, (the Fever) is from the heat of the (Hell) Fire; so, cool it with water (or Zamzam water).’*

Sahih al-Bukhari, 3261

## Honey Water



*“And your Lord inspired the bees, saying: “Take you habitations in the mountains and in the trees and in what they erect. (68) “Then, eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for you).” There comes forth from their bellies, a drink of varying colour wherein is healing for men. Verily, in this is indeed a sign for people who think”*

Al-Nahl, 68-69

Ibn Qayyim states in his book Zaad al-Ma'aad, 4/33, 34

If honey is taken on an empty stomach, it takes away phlegm and cleanses the stomach, clearing away waste matter and restoring the correct temperature. It does likewise to the liver, kidneys and urethra.

It is a kind of nourishment, a kind of medicine, a kind of drink, a kind of sweet, a kind of cream. There is nothing that has been created for us for a similar purpose that works better better than honey does, or even comes close. The ancient peoples relied on it, and in most of the books of the ancients there is no mention of sugar at all; it was unknown to them. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to drink honey mixed with water on an empty stomach, and this is the secret of maintaining good health that no one can understand except one who is intelligent and blessed. (Zaad al-Ma'aad, 4/33, 34)

Water takes on the properties of whatever it is infused with, meaning water infused with honey, has become a glass of honey. Since honey is heating and healing, this drink is a potent remedy and detoxifier, and it tastes phenomenal.

Honey water is really easy to make!



### INGREDIENTS

- 1-2 tablespoon of raw (unpasteurized) honey – any kind works well
- 1 glass of water

### INSTRUCTIONS

Put honey in the glass of water at night, cover it and let the water dissolve the honey overnight. (Do not leave spoon in the water overnight). Drink the honey water at the pre-dawn meal or when breaking your fast.

For an enhanced, flavourful iftar beverage that you can serve the entire family, pour 1 cup of honey into a jug of water (6-8 cups), add slices of organic oranges, lemons and mint leaves. Leave it overnight to infuse.

Serve cold.

## Date Water - Nabidh



It was narrated that Anas said:

*Umm Sulaim had a wooden cup and she said: "I gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ all kinds of things to drink in it: Water, honey, milk and Nabidh."*

Graded Sahih, Sunan an-Nasa'i, 5753

So what exactly is Nabidh?

It is a drink made by soaking dried dates, raisins, fresh dates or fresh grapes in water. But you cannot soak all of these together. Dates are heating and when water is infused with it, it makes the drink a digestive and mild laxative. Anyone who consumes a heavy meal, or is suffering from constipation, should drink Nabidh after his meal or first thing in the morning.

I have personally made Nabidh several times. I prefer using dried ajwa dates for maximum health benefit and the most delicious taste. I have tried it with raisins, medjool and sukkari dates, but my favourite is definitely the ajwa. It is extremely effective for gently clearing the bowels, without any irritation or discomfort.

'Abdullah said:

*"I heard Sufyan being asked about Nabidh. He said: 'Make Nabidh at night and drink it in the morning.'"*

Graded Hasan, Sunan an-Nasa'i, 5742

Abu Qatada, on the authority of his father, reported Allah's Messenger ﷺ having said this:

*Do not prepare Nabidh by mixing nearly ripe dates and fresh dates together, and do not prepare Nabidh by mixing grapes and dates together, but prepare Nabidh from each (one of them) separately.*

Sahih Muslim 1988 a





It was narrated that Jabir bin ‘Abdullah رضي الله عنه said:

*“Nabidh would be made for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a vessel of stone.”*

Graded Hasan, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 4, Book 30, Hadith 3400

It was narrated that Abu Hurairah said:

*“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade making Nabidh in (earthenware) jars.”*

Graded Hasan, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 4, Book 30, Hadith 3408

‘A’isha reported:

*We prepared Nabidh for Allah’s Messenger ﷺ in a waterskin, the upper part of which was tied and it (the waterskin) had a hole (in its lower part). We prepared the Nabidh in the morning and he drank it in the evening and we prepared the Nabidh in the night, and he would drink it in the morning.*

Sahih Muslim 2005 b

Nabidh is prohibited if it becomes strong and turns into khamr (wine, intoxicant). But before it becomes strong, drinking it is permissible.

Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

*Is grape juice, orange juice and so on haram or not?*

*The answer is: It is undoubtedly halal, unless it has begun to ferment and developed foam on top, in which case it is haram, or if three days have passed according to the well-known view, even if it has not fermented; it still becomes haram. They said: That is because after three days, juice usually ferments, and because fermentation may not be apparent, the ruling is based on what usually happens, which is that fermentation occurs after three days.*

*But the correct view is something other than that. The correct view is that it does not become haram after three days, especially in cold countries. But if it is in a hot country, then after three days it should be examined, and to be on the safe side it should be avoided and given to animals and the like, because there is the fear that it may have fermented without you realising.*

End quote from ash-Sharh al-Mumti’ ‘ala Zaad al-Mustaqni’ (14/305, 306).

[www.islamqa.info/en/21581](http://www.islamqa.info/en/21581)

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup of dried dates
- 4 cups of water

## INSTRUCTIONS

Soak overnight, strain and drink at pre-dawn meal or at iftar.

Do not discard the soaked dates. Some like to eat them as is (I am not a fan of this option) however they can also be used in your smoothies, for date cookies, or date balls. You can discover many more ideas online for uses for soaked dates..



## Tamarind Water



Tamarind is another heating fruit that works wonders on the digestive system. A Syrian tradition in Ramadan is the drink known as Tamr Hindi which is essentially water infused with tamarind and sweetened with sugar or honey.

I grew up drinking this and not only loved its sour, sweet, replenishing kick but this beverage prevented the painful constipation that is often experienced in the first few days of Ramadan.

As most ancient foods do, tamarind has a long history of medicinal uses. Many involve easing stomach discomfort, aiding digestion, and use as a laxative. Tamarind preparations are used for fevers, sore throat, rheumatism, inflammation, and sunstroke. Dried or boiled tamarind leaves and flowers are made into poultices for swollen joints, sprains, boils, hemorrhoids, and conjunctivitis.

[www.foodfacts.mercola.com/tamarind](http://www.foodfacts.mercola.com/tamarind)



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 package of pressed tamarind (unsalted, without any added herbs/spices) with or without seed
- 6-8 cups of water

### INSTRUCTIONS

Soak tamarind in a jug overnight.

After 12 hours of soaking, you can use a potato masher, a big spoon or your hands to mash apart the tamarind, to release more of its juices and nutrients. The colour of the water will change. Strain the water, disposing of the tamarind, or soaking it again for another infusion for the following day.

Sweeten the strained water with  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of sugar or honey (depending on your preference). Adjust sweetness to your palate.

Drink after your meal to boost digestion and encourage detoxification.



## HERBAL TEAS



Although herbal teas are safer than prescription medication and definitely healthier and more nourishing than store bought soft drinks, beverages and juices, we must know our herbs and their effects and contraindications (when not to use it) before trying something new.

Some herbs are not considered safe during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Some will effect prescription medications you might already be on. Do your due diligence before trying a new herb. Read up on it. Ask a herbalist. Begin with small quantities when trying it for the first time. I would say ask your family doctor but the truth is modern medicine does not teach anything about herbs, their constituents or uses. Doctors barely receive any training on nutrition and food in general (compared to the months and years they are taught about pharmaceutical drugs). So I can guarantee that if you ask your family doctor, the response will be to not take anything herbal because they do not have any knowledge of the effects.

Part of the lost knowledge that we face here in the West is the lost knowledge of herbal use. Traditionally, when to use a herb, how to use it and when not to use it was considered common knowledge, passed down from parent to child. In some of my volunteer work with the Syrian refugees, I learned more about herbal use from their common knowledge in one year, than I had learned all my life living in Canada.

Allah <sup>سبحانه</sup> <sub>وتعالى</sub> has created herbs for our use. Fearing it and abstaining from it out of ignorance is to our own detriment. Reviving the sunnah of herbalism is part of preventing illness and maintaining good health. There are plenty of herbal courses and herbalists around, ready and willing to share their expertise. Seek out the knowledge — it is time well invested.

## Hibiscus Herbal Tea (hot or cold)



The health benefits of hibiscus tea, also known as Agua de Jamaica, include its ability to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol, disturbed digestive and immune system, and inflammatory problems as well. It helps cure liver diseases and reduces the risk of cancer. It can also speed up the metabolism and help in healthy, gradual weight loss. It is rich in vitamin C, minerals, and antioxidants and helps in the treatment of hypertension and anxiety.

[www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/beverage/hibiscus-tea](http://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/beverage/hibiscus-tea)

Hibiscus is cooling and moistening, tangy and packed with healing properties. It is a liquefying expectorant, meaning it will loosen phlegm and mucus buildup in our bodies and get rid of it. It is often drunk in the summer months due to its cooling and hydrating effect on the body, which is why it makes the perfect iftar drink after a long, hot day of fasting.



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon of dried hibiscus flowers (alternatively, 1 hibiscus tea bag)
- 250ml of boiling water

### INSTRUCTIONS

Always pour loose leaf or tea bag into hot water (turn off the stove) and cover for 5-15 minutes to allow it to infuse.

Sweeten with honey or sugar as desired.

Serve hot, or cool it and enjoy.

## Licorice Root - Erk Sous (Syrian Tradition)



This is another tradition I grew up with each and every Ramadan, and quite honestly, I crave it whenever I fast. The traditional way of making it is quite potent and my body can no longer handle it (because it can raise blood pressure and cause edema), so now I replace it with a much milder version. Same great taste, great health benefits, without any concern of negative side effects.

Licorice root is an amazing root with profound health benefits to your stomach, lungs, skin and teeth. It is known as an adaptogen, which means it has the ability to restore the body to a balanced harmony. This is usually done by taking it continually, in small doses, for a period of time.

Licorice root can increase energy and endurance, boost the immune system, and protect the thymus from being damaged by cortisol. It may affect blood pressure and potassium levels, so traditional licorice root is typically recommended in cycles of 12 weeks, although this is not the case when taking DGL licorice, which is considered safe for long-term use. In human volunteers, supplementation with licorice root helped to regulate hormone levels associated with stress, including cortisol. One potential outcome of this is the observed effect of this adaptogenic herb to help prevent ulcers. Other benefits of licorice root include the potential for fat reduction and decrease of androgen and testosterone in women.

[www.draxe.com/adaptogenic-herbs-adaptogens](http://www.draxe.com/adaptogenic-herbs-adaptogens)

Licorice is another liquefying expectorant. Both Licorice and Hibiscus are two of many moistening demulcents that have a beneficial soothing and healing effect on the mucosa of other bodily tracts and system.

**Contraindication:** Anyone suffering from high blood pressure and edema should not consume this herbal tea.



### INGREDIENTS

- 2 inch long licorice root
- 1 cup of water

### INSTRUCTIONS

Roots are different from herbs that only need to be placed in hot water for a short period to be infused. Roots actually need to be boiled in water for about 20-30 minutes to extract as much nutrients and medicinal properties as possible.

Licorice is naturally sweet, yet is sugar and calorie free.

## Sage Tea



Sage is a warming, drying herb that has been renowned as Sage the Savior. It has the ability to soothe a sore throat, reduce excessive sweating, combat infections, move stagnant digestion, reduce type 2 diabetes, calm hot flashes, aid a toothache, relieve sore muscles, and so much more.

The past few months, and even in the days and nights as I was writing this book, I heavily relied on Sage Tea to support me through my overwhelming health issues. While doctors, emergency room visits and medical specialists are still unable to even identify the cause of my health struggles, a Syrian family that recently immigrated to Canada told me to start drinking sage tea and I did. It has worked wonders. I have at least been able to manage and minimize my suffering during this trying time and again found myself humbled at the simplicity of herbs, as well as their endless benefits.

“Sage has an extensive history as a medicinal herb. It was used by the ancient Egyptians to improve fertility, and in the first century CE, Dioscorides, a Greek physician, pharmacologist and botanist (now known as the father of pharmacology), reported that sage can help stop wounds from bleeding, help disinfect sores and promote healing of ulcers. He also used sage juice to treat coughs and hoarseness.

Since then, herbalists have used sage for treating different conditions, such as swelling, sprains, asthma and excessive menstrual bleeding.”

[www.articles.mercola.com/herbs-spices/sage](http://www.articles.mercola.com/herbs-spices/sage)

**Contraindications:** Do not take during pregnancy or breastfeeding, as sage is known to induce contractions and dry up lactation. Caution for those taking medication for high blood pressure.



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon of loose leaf sage (if dried) or 5-7 leaves if fresh
- 1 cup of water

### INSTRUCTIONS

Bring water to a boil, add sage. Turn off the stove, cover and let it steep for 5-15 minutes. Always stir the leaves prior to covering them to ensure that all leaves have been submerged.

Sweeten with honey if desired. Recommended to drink after a meal to aid digestion.



## PROBIOTIC DRINKS



The latest hype in health and nutrition is all about your gut microbiome, or gut flora. However, traditional medicine and nutrition, although they lacked the diagnostics we currently have, had a much better handle on understanding our body.

Our intestines, aka gut, houses millions of different organisms meant to keep the body in balance. These organisms are affected by what we eat and if they are out of balance, they will affect how we feel.

There is a long standing tradition of fermented foods because they are rich in probiotics/prebiotics. Lactic acid is a natural preservative that inhibits the growth of harmful bacteria. Fermented foods like yogurt, some cheese, pickles, kimchi, Kombucha help to keep the bad bacteria down while strengthening the good bacteria. Beyond preservation advantages, lacto-fermentation also increases or preserves the vitamin and enzyme levels, as well as digestibility, of the fermented food. In addition, lactobacillus organisms are heavily researched for substances that may contribute to good health.

[www.culturesforhealth.com/learn/natural-fermentation/what-is-lacto-fermentation](http://www.culturesforhealth.com/learn/natural-fermentation/what-is-lacto-fermentation)

So that yogurt lassi your grandmother used to make was not just for great flavour... it was extremely beneficial for your gut health too.

## Mint Yogurt Lassi (Ayran)



Syrians, as well as most of the Shami (Levant) countries, have a yogurt beverage known as Ayran. The yogurt beverage is usually served with meaty dishes like mashawi (bbq) or mansaf (rice dishes with meat on top, sort of like a non-spicy biryani).

Making it is easy, and there are many different ways to go about it. For the sake of keeping it simple for this ramadan book, I will not include the full recipe of making your own yogurt from scratch, straining out the whey and then using it to make the drink.



### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup water for every cup of Balkan Style (6%) Yogurt
- Pinch of salt to taste
- Fresh mint leaves

### INSTRUCTIONS

Combine in a blender, mix until smooth and silky. Add more water if it is too thick for your liking.

Serve.

Some recipes include putting a clove of garlic in a jug of Ayran (but I would advise against raw garlic in Ramadan as it is hard to digest and the entire masjid will smell it).



## Kombucha



Ancient fermented drinks made an appearance on the dining table long before cola or soda even existed. One can even argue that soft drinks actually originated from fermented sodas like Ginger Bug and Kombucha. Fizzy, slightly sweet and tangy, Kombucha, Ginger Bug and fermented lemonade are an amazing substitute to sugary sodas that interfere with digestion. Fermented sodas are packed with beneficial bacteria, yeasts and acids that boost digestion.

Now, Islamically speaking, I was very concerned because fermentation usually means there is alcohol content. Pickles, vinegar, and fermented sodas all come with some alcohol, and maybe a bit more than just a trace. Kombucha can have as much as 1% alcohol content, so the question begs... is it permissible to drink it?

My trusted source, islamqa.info, is an amazing resource that has answers to almost every question I can think of.

**With regard to the amount of alcohol in this tea, it is a very low amount that does not lead to drunkenness, hence drinking it is not haram because of that.**

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

*Everything that is called water is pure and a means of purification, whether some impurity has fallen into it or not, if it is known that it has dissolved into it and disappeared. As for that in which traces of impurity are apparent, it is haram to use it, because it comes under the heading of using something haram.*

Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 19/236, 237

[www.islamqa.info/en/146710](http://www.islamqa.info/en/146710), [www.islamqa.info/en/184243](http://www.islamqa.info/en/184243)

I have not tried to make Kombucha or any fermented sodas yet myself. I do buy it and I know it is very expensive in comparison to cola, but the health benefits are definitely worth the investment.

Another thing to keep in mind is that fermented soda, like Kombucha, may cost \$8-\$10 a litre, but it is not a beverage you can drink two to three cups a day. Due to its digestive effect, it is recommended that you begin with ¼ cup a day, then work your way up. I do not drink more than 2 cups in a day and I definitely

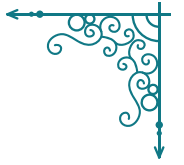
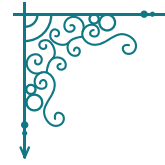
would not drink it daily. I prefer to use it when I have had a heavy meal, something meaty or deep fried that would need a boost to make it more digestible.

Like anything good for your, there are always contraindications.

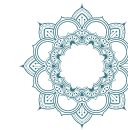
If you are taking medications, are an alcoholic, diabetic, alcohol sensitive, caffeine sensitive, sugar sensitive, or have Candida...kombucha may not be the drink for you. Symptoms of SIBO can be revealed or exacerbated through drinking kombucha. In some cases it can trigger acid reflux or heartburn and possibly irritate ulcers.

[www.fermentationist.com/dark-side-kombucha](http://www.fermentationist.com/dark-side-kombucha)





## THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...



Ask Allah to make this book beneficial to both you, the reader and myself, in this world and the next. If you have benefitted from this e-book, I urge you to share the link [www.nurasunna.com/ramadan-remedy](http://www.nurasunna.com/ramadan-remedy). Please never forward the downloaded PDFs even though it is a free downloadable e-book. Instead by forwarding the link, I can, as the author track how many copies have been downloaded as well as replace this version with a revised version if I choose to in the future.

Please also keep in mind that the e-book is free only to the first 2000 downloads, after which it will be available for purchase on [nurasunna.com](http://nurasunna.com) for a nominal fee to ensure the knowledge is still affordable and accessible to everyone.

I am in the process of writing the full edition of Nurasunna Rediscover Wellness that is scheduled for release for Friday, February 1, 2019 inshaAllah. In that full edition, I will share insights on dairy, meat, wheat, herbs as well as recipes. Bi'ithniLlah, it will be a practical guide to nourishing yourself and your family, according to traditional and Prophetic nutrition and medicine.

As I continue to struggle with my health, I ask Allah to guide me to the truth and make me a means to guide others to the truth. I ask Allah to grant myself and everyone suffering with health issues Shifa' (healing).

Despite all that pain, all the discomfort and all the time that is lost due to these illnesses and allergic reactions, I feel incredibly blessed because of these illnesses.

**Here's why:**

**1. And when I am ill, it is He who cures me (Ash-Shu'ara, 80)**

Every calamity I have ever faced has taught me more about Allah. With each calamity, I learn a new name or attribute of Allah that strengthens my iman and tawheed. When I was poor, I learned that He is Ar-Razzaq. When I fell ill, I learned that it is He alone that can cure me.

**2. Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists), He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not. (Al-Alaq, 1-5)**

My drive to find a cure for my allergic reactions from various foods opened up a gateway of knowledge. I had no understanding of food, medicine, traditional healing, or Prophetic medicine prior to this except what I had learned in Western public schools about modern medicine, food and nutrition. With every new illness I endure, I seek to understand my body and how it is meant to function. The more I learn about our human creation, the more I am in awe of the Perfection of our Creator. The more I learn about the healing attributes of plants and foods, the more I begin to understand that Allah did not create anything in vain.

**3. Narrated `Aisha: (the wife of the Prophet) Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "No calamity befalls a Muslim but that Allah expiates some of his sins because of it, even though it were the prick he receives from a thorn." (Sahih al-Bukhari 5640, Book 75, Hadith 1)**

It is comforting to know that I have hours and days of the week where sins are washing away because I am feeling ill. Whether it is a migraine, fever, abdominal pain from adhesions, or allergic reactions to foods I used to love; all of these things are a means for me to be cleansed of sin, which is great. Would it not be nice to meet Allah on the day of judgement free of sins because I suffered allergies in the spring, or asthma due to someone's perfume or cologne?

"Ibn al-Qayyim said: Were it not that Allah treats His slaves with the remedy

of trials and calamities, they would transgress and overstep the mark. When Allah wills good for His slaves, He gives him the medicine of calamities and trials according to his situation, so as to cure him from all fatal illnesses and diseases, until He purifies and cleanses him, and then makes him qualified for the most honourable position in this world, which is that of being a true slave of Allaah ('uboodiyyah), and for the greatest reward in the Hereafter, which is that of seeing Him and being close to Him."

[www.islamqa.info/en/35914](http://www.islamqa.info/en/35914)

Illness does make day-to-day life just a little bit harder. It does take away from the pleasure and enjoyment of life. However, the knowledge I have gained, the herbs and medicines I am able to concoct with the guidance of Allah, is far more beautiful and sweet for me than what I gave up. My life is far richer and full of purpose after my food allergies.

One final, and very important, lesson I have learned with the multiple doctors visits, hospital trips and various specialists, is that you cannot cure an illness unless you know the cause. Most doctors will not cure it but "manage" or suppress it with medication. The only cure I have found that can be used on any illness, even when you do not know the cause, is the Qur'an.

*And We send down of the Qur'an that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.*

Al-Isra, 82

I ask Allah to enable me to continue to learn. I am currently in the process of learning herbalism and would love to formally study medicine.

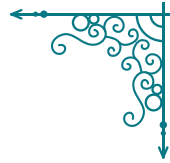
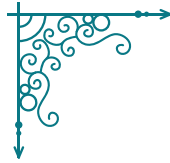
Fi amanAllah,

Assalammu Alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,



Aiman Attar

Friday, May 4th, 2018



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

 iman Attar is a marketing consultant turned into an herbalist-in-training and a researcher in Traditional Nutrition and Prophetic Medicine. As a mother of 4, her objective is to prevent illness as well as heal and nourish herself and her family according to the teachings of Islam. She wasn't satisfied with the Standard American Diet (SAD) or the lack of solutions of modern medicine, so she discovered the path of wellness from traditional nourishment and remedies that can fit our busy, chaotic lifestyle.

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