

ALI 362: Fasting and Your Health in Shahru Ramadhan

Dr. Akber Mithani, MD, MCFP,
FOTD

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Goals and Objectives

- Review the effects of fasting on the health of the individual, especially during long fasts
- Precautions to ensure “healthy fasting”
- Maximizing spiritual opportunities by keeping your body healthy
- Special considerations for people suffering from certain chronic diseases
- Opportunities for enhancing health habits in long term

Remember the 5 “M”’s

1. **M**onitoring your health
2. **M**eal Planning
3. **M**aking the most of fasting
4. **M**edication management
5. **M**ovement



Monitoring Your Health

- Measure parameters that are readily available
 - Diabetics – Blood sugar
 - Hypertensives – Blood Pressure
 - Changes in weight
- Warning signs
 - Dehydration
 - Low/High blood sugars in diabetics – trembling, headaches, dizziness, sweating, extreme tiredness, paleness, blurred vision, mood changes, extreme hunger



Meal Planning

- Avoid Greasy fried foods and heavy sweets – sugar peak and then immediate decline
- Avoid increased caffeine and energy drinks
- Maintain diet close to your regular non fasting diet
- Small frequent meal – avoid carbohydrate loading





Meal Planning

- Water, water, water – avoid fruit juices (high in sugar), Cola drinks (high in sugar, caffeine and acid)
- Dehydration is a major concern – can cause thrombosis (blood clots) and constipation
- Caffeine – diuretic – can make dehydration worse

Meal Planning

- Make sure you wake up for Suhoor
 - eat protein, complex carbohydrates such as cheese, rice, yoghurt, whole wheat bread with feta cheeses – will help you throughout the day
- Some cereals have high sugar in it
- Fibre, fruits, vegetables – will avoid constipation and feeling of hunger



Meal Planning

- Prevent heartburn
 - Avoid spicy hot foods
 - Avoid eating just before going to sleep if possible
- A good healthy diet in Ramadhan can have significant impacts on blood pressure and cholesterol
- Maintain the healthy eating habits after Ramadhan



Making the Most of Fasting

- Focus on unhealthy habits that you may be able to give up
 - STOP SMOKING – BEST TIME TO DO THIS
 - USING SMOKING AIDS SUCH AS Nicotine Gum, Patch etc
- Control Junk Food ingestion
- Develop self discipline in areas of health as well as spirituality
- Canada health food guide - http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html



Medication Management

- Make sure you visit your Family Physician BEFORE the Month of Ramadhan
- Certain medications will need to be adjusted and maybe even stopped temporarily depending on the condition and the medication
 - Diabetics
 - Hypertensives
 - COPD
 - Congestive Heart failure
 - Anti depressants and sleeping pills
 - Others



Special Precautions

- Diabetics – Must visit the doctor prior to Ramadhan
 - Will need focused monitoring of blood sugar and will require medication changes
 - Will need to monitor kidney function especially if prone to dehydration
 - Risk stratification – High risk, medium risk, low risk
 - Will require changes to diabetic medications
 - Aggressive meal planning



Special Precautions

- Heart Medications
 - Hypertension – may require medication adjustment
 - Congestive heart failure – may require changes to diuretic
 - Coronary Artery disease – May require minor changes
- **DO NOT ADJUST YOUR OWN MEDICATIONS WITHOUT THE ADVICE OF A PHYSICIAN**



Movement

- Exercise – Important during fasting but need to be smart
 - Avoid intense exercise especially during mid day
 - Try mild exercise such as a walk about 1 hour prior to iftaar
 - Avoid dehydration
 - Park you car a little further away so you are at least walking to the car
 - Continue after Shahru Ramadhan



In Conclusion ...

- Most people will have no problems with their health whilst fasting in Shahru Ramadhan provided you plan it out properly and focus on the 5 “M”s.
- Healthy fasting strategies will allow you to be able to concentrate and focus on the spiritual benefits of this great holy month



A golden minaret and dome of a mosque are visible on the right side of the image, set against a bright blue sky with large, fluffy white clouds. The minaret has a tiered structure with a decorative band and a small red flag on top. The dome is partially visible behind the minaret.

Thank You!!

Questions? Comments?