

## HEALTHY FASTING DURING RAMADAN

The month of Ramadan gives an opportunity to focus on healthy eating and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### IS FASTING HEALTHY?

During fasting the body enters into a “fasting state” 8 hours after the last meal. During this process, the body uses glucose as an energy source and once the glucose supply ends, the body then utilizes the stored fat to power the body functions. In case of prolonged fasting and depletion of fat reserves, the body may consume protein for energy which is unhealthy.

During Ramadan, there is ample opportunity to replenish energy stores during suhoor (breakfast) and iftar (dinner) meals, thus with a balanced diet containing carbohydrates, fats, nutrients and salts, breakdown of muscles and proteins for energy can be prevented.

Fasting also contributes to detoxification of the body whereby harmful toxins from the body are removed.

### IMPORTANCE OF SUHOOR

Suhoor during Ramadan may seem difficult to consume, as one has to get up from deep sleep to eat. However, it is very important not to skip this meal to help sustain energy levels throughout the day.

### WHAT TO HAVE FOR SUHOOR

- Take foods that release energy slowly, e.g. grains and seeds like barley, wheat, oats, millets, semolina, beans and lentils wholemeal flour and basmati rice.
- Choose fibre-rich foods including bran, cereals, whole wheat, grains and seeds, potatoes with skin, vegetables such as green beans and almost all fruits, including apricots, prunes and figs.
- Drink plenty of fluids except caffeinated beverages like coffee, tea, energy drinks or cola

### WHAT TO HAVE FOR IFTAR

- Start with fruits, dates and fresh juices, as they are good sources of glucose.
- Have a light meal and not a feast, to avoid overburdening the digestive system.
- Avoid drinking too much water as it may lead to fatigue and stomach pain.

### EXERCISE DURING RAMZAN

During fast our body is less active due to reduced food intake. Therefore, strenuous exercises should be avoided. Instead choose to take a light walk or do yoga.

### SMOKING

Smoking is major cause of cancers. Ramadan is a good opportunity to quit smoking. Talk to your doctor for the best way to eliminate this habit.



References:

<http://mams.rmit.edu.au/eb2o3u6ccqfu1.pd>