

Healthy Ramadan

Ramadan is the 9th month in the Islamic lunar calendar when Muslims all around the world perform strict fasting from dawn to sunset for approximately 30 days. This consists of not consuming any food or drink during daylight hours. One meal is consumed at dawn (Suhoor) and the other after sunset (Iftar). This is a holy month in Islam where Muslims have the chance to reap the many religious benefits and spiritually cleanse the body.

Understanding your Hunger

There are 2 hormones in the body that regulate appetite: Ghrelin & Leptin. During Ramadan, both hormones become more prevalent, but Ghrelin may contribute to an individual or family selecting unhealthier choices at Iftar. Over the duration of Ramadan, a consumption of foods high in salt/fat/sugar can lead to weight gain, an increase in body fat % and a deterioration to existing medical conditions i.e. high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.



Ghrelin the Gremlin!

Ghrelin is the hunger hormone which when released in the body tells us when we are hungry.

Leptin the Leprechaun!

Leptin is the satiety hormone which when released tells us when we are full.



Tips for a Healthy Ramadan

Light exercise can maintain muscle mass, release endorphins to improve mood and maintain good levels of cardio-respiratory fitness. Examples include; chair-based exercise, stretching, gentle body weight exercises.

Reduce the amount of fizzy pop consumed can avoid insulin spikes in the body, prevent teeth enamel erosion and avoids excess calories stored in the body during this spiritual cleanse.

Grilling and baking are healthier methods of cooking which require less/little oil to be used. This reduces the amount of fat being stored in the body.

Consume water/yogurt lassi with most Iftar meals. This is to prevent the body becoming dehydrated during Ramadan.

Consuming a rainbow of fruit and vegetables can provide your body with sufficient amounts of vitamins and minerals, vital for the body's systems to work efficiently. Examples include: Persimmon, Kiwi, Dates, Blueberries, Mango, and Pineapple.

Long periods of sitting can induce the body to relax mentally. Quick bursts of light activity can re-engage you in your activities, spark your energy and improve focus.

Try planning and freezing meals in advance to ensure you consume healthy balanced meal without any other preservatives or additives included.

Covid-19 Guidelines

Ramadan is normally a common time for South Asian communities to come together, exchange delicious food at Iftar and strengthen community cohesion through regular interactions of a religious nature. Ramadan 2020 will be different to previous years in that interactions with others are **not allowed at all**. This is to reduce the potential spread of Covid-19. Therefore, we ask that you please follow the government guidelines outlined below:

STAY AT HOME unless:

- For essential food, health reasons or going to work (only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2m (6ft) away from others at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you come home
- You are allowed to leave the house once a day for exercise. This can either be walking, running or cycling (alone or with members of your household)

DO NOT MEET FRIENDS OR FAMILY. YOU CAN SPREAD THE VIRUS EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE SYMPTOMS

For more information please visit the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>