

First line advice: For patients over Ramadan

This information sheet has been provided to give you basic initial information about what to do if you are fasting over Ramadan.

If you need more detailed advice and support, please ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian.

Food and drink is restricted between the hours of Sahoor (pre-dawn) till Iftar (Sunset) during Ramadan. The diet during Ramadan should not differ significantly from a healthy balanced diet. Complex Carbohydrates are advisable, they are foods that will help release energy slowly during the long hours of fasting. These can be found in grains and seeds like barley, wheat, oats, millet, semolina, beans, lentils, wholemeal flour/ cereals and basmati rice etc

Top Tips:

1. Avoid drinking tea or coffee at Sahoor.
(Caffeine acts as a diuretic, resulting in faster water loss through urination).
Sugar free drinks should be used to quench the thirst or sweeteners used.
Avoid sweet lassi, mango pulp, fruit juices and fizzy drinks.
2. Fibre rich foods are also digested slowly and include bran, cereals, whole wheat, grains and seeds, potatoes with skin, vegetables such as green beans and almost all fruits including apricots, prunes, figs, etc
3. Eat starchy foods such as wholegrain bread with seeds, porridge, semolina, bran flakes, wholemeal chappati and naan bread, fruits and yoghurts for Sahoor to stop you feeling hungry.
4. Foods to avoid at Iftar are processed foods, fast burning foods that contain refined carbohydrates in the form of sugar, white flour, etc e.g. rusks, cakes, biscuits, chocolates and sweets such as Indian mithai's)
5. Limit sugary foods at Iftar. Limit your intake of such as laddoo, jalebi and burfi. Have a variety of fruits, vegetables and yoghurts for Suhoor and Iftar, to maintain a balanced diet and prevent constipation.
6. Reduce preparation and the intake of fried foods such as paratha, puri, samosa, chevra, pakora, katlamas, fried kebabs and Bombay mix. When using oil for cooking, be sure to only use 1-2 tablespoons as a maximum.
7. Fried foods, such as, fried kebabs, samosa and pakaora's should be discouraged and reduce the amount of oil in cooking and frying and avoid the usage of deep fat fryers during Ramadan. Reheated oil becomes saturated fats which is bad for your heart.
8. Risk of Constipation – Drink plenty of water at Sahoor; eat plenty of fibre rich foods including cereals, dried fruits and fruits and vegetables with skins.

	Foods to avoid ✘	Healthy/ Alternatives Foods ✓
Fats & oils	Deep fried foods e.g. pakoras, samosa. Use less fat and oils in cooking. Avoid using ghee or butter.	Grill, bake foods such as samosas, kebabs. Add 1 teaspoon oil per person per dish. Shallow fry where possible.
Drinks	Avoid lassi, fizzy drinks, fruit juices, mango pulps, and Carnation milk.	Have sugar free drinks, use semi skimmed milk in drinks, and have sugar free drinks.
Fruits & Vegetables	Limit fruit juices to 1 small glass and avoid mango pulp (contains a lot of sugar/syrup).	Eat 2 portions of fruit at Sahoor and eat 2 pieces fruits at Iftar Bowl of salad and Increase use of vegetables in curry or rice.
Sweets	Avoid mitai, jalebi, ladoos baklava.	Make sweets such as halwa, kheer, rasmalai, pancakes at home using semi skimmed milk and artificial sweeteners.
Salt	Use less salt in cooking, reduce intake of salty snacks.	Use alternative spices, lemon juice, coriander, garlic, onions, chillies and low fat salad dressings.
Sahoor (Pre dawn)	Avoid frying eggs, parathas, puris, and adding curry and rice.	Wholegrain toast/ plain roti (made from wholemeal atta) with dhal or low fat plain yoghurts Cereals such as muesli, Weetabix, porridge, Fruit & Fibre with semi-skimmed milk Boil or poach eggs.
Iftar / Dinner (Sunset)	Avoid pilau, fried rice or biryani, oily curries, fried chicken and chips	Open your fast with dates. Have boiled rice, and add plenty of vegetables with rice and low fat yoghurts and fruits.
Snacks	Avoid fried samosas, pakoras, spring rolls, tikki's, chevra, biscuits, rusks, puff pastry.	Grilled chicken, samosas baked in oven, corn on the cob, grilled kebabs, shallow fry pakora's and samosa in a non-stick pan.

This information leaflet was produced by the Community Dietitians at The North West London Hospitals NHS Trust, Northwick Park Hospital, Watford Rd, Harrow, HA1 3UJ

This diet sheet is intended for information only. It is not a substitute for proper medical diagnosis or dietary advice given by a Registered Dietitian. The advice is not appropriate for certain medical conditions such as diets that require the exclusion or restriction of particular foods. If in doubt, please check with your medical practitioner.
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