



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

## **HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN 2020**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of life is to worship Allah:

*"And I (Allah) created not the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)." 51: 56*

Allah also Reminded us of the purpose of worshipping Allah:

*"O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqun." 2: 21*

Therefore anything which may hinder or reduce our ability to worship Allah must be resolved immediately, as any delay will only further deteriorate our worship, and which will lead to the deterioration of our relationship with Allah.

On the ways which will affect our acts of worship in our health. By health, many people mistakenly refer this to only physical health. However, mental health will also be very crucial to optimise our worship to Allah. If we have poor mental health, we would not be able to worship Allah in the best of manners.

Therefore, when we have a New Year resolution to have a healthy lifestyle, it consists of:

1. MENTAL HEALTH and
2. PHYSICAL HEALTH.

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### **1. MENTAL HEALTH IN ISLAM**

Quite a lot of people are suffering with mental health problems. The mental health problems may be so severe that it affects the ability to worship Allah. All of us have

faced various problems in our lives and we just need to understand how to deal with it:

- a. Seek knowledge
- b. Remember Allah
  - Pray
  - Recite Qur'an
  - Dhikr
  - Attend circles of knowledge
- c. Understand Qadr of Allah
- d. Understand trials and tests we have been promised by Allah
- e. Understand that Allah is the Best of Planner
- f. Trust in Allah – Tawakkul
- g. Be very cautious of shaytan and his whispers
- h. Strive to do good deeds
- i. Surround yourselves with good companions
- j. Seek counsel if mental health deteriorates
- k. Make du'a

The above has been elaborated in great details in our discussions before and therefore will not be discussed again. Always remember:

*"...Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest ." 13: 28*

The heart that is peaceful inshaAllah will achieve also a good physical health in the long run.

*"Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying), I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me." Quran (2:152)*

Narrated Abu Hurairah The Prophet said, "Allah says, I am just as My slave thinks I am, (i.e. I am Able to do for him what he thinks I can do for him) and I am with him if he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself; and if he remembers Me in a group of people, I remember him in a group that is better than them; and if he comes one span nearer to Me, I go one cubit nearer to him; and if he comes one cubit nearer to Me, I go a distance of two outstretched arms nearer to him; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol.9, Hadith No.502).

Ibn Taymiyyah stated that,

*..one should persist in remembering Allah in general, the best of which is Laa ilaaha ill-Allah. There may be some situations where certain kinds of dhikr are preferable, such as saying Subhan Allah wa'l-hamdu-Lillaah wa Allahu akbar wa laa hawla wa laa quwwata illa Billaah.*

*Moreover, one should realize that everything that the tongue utters or the heart imagines that may bring one closer to Allah, such as seeking knowledge or teaching, enjoining what is good*

*and forbidding what is evil, is a kind of dhikr or remembering Allah. Hence the one who occupies himself in the pursuit of beneficial knowledge after performing the obligatory duties, or who joins a gathering in order to learn or teach, which Allah and His Messenger have called fiqh or understanding, is also doing something which is one of the best forms of remembering Allah (dhikr). [al-Wasiyyah al-Jaami'ah li Khayr al-Dunya wa'l-Aakhirah]*

## 2. PHYSICAL HEALTH

### a. Allah's Commands in the Qur'an – prohibition of alcohol, pork, etc

*"O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), gambling, Al-Ansab , and Al-Azlam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaitan's (Satan) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful. Shaitan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from As-Salat (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?" 5: 90-91*

(CNN) Drinking one alcoholic drink on a daily basis could shorten your life expectancy, a new study suggests. ... Drinking 200 to 350 grams per week was estimated to reduce life span by one to two years and drinking more than 350 grams per week by four to five years.

(Guardian) Drinking is as harmful as smoking, and more than five drinks a week lowers life expectancy, say researchers.

(The Conversation) Our study shows that the more alcohol a person drinks, the higher their risk of stroke, fatal aneurysm, heart failure and early death. Drinking in excess could take up to five years off your life-expectancy.

*"He has forbidden you only Al-Maytatah (meat of a dead animal), blood, the flesh of swine, and any animal which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah (or has been slaughtered for idols etc. or on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering)..." 16: 115*

(peta) Eating pork products, which are loaded with artery-clogging cholesterol and saturated fat, is a good way to increase your waistline and increase your chances of developing deadly diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's, asthma, and impotence.

(healthline) Eating pork cases Hepatitis E - can lead to acute illness (fever, fatigue, jaundice, vomiting, joint pain and stomach pain), enlarged liver and sometimes liver failure and death, multiple sclerosis, liver cancer.

**b. Physical exercise**

When you exercise, your body releases chemicals called endorphins. These endorphins interact with the receptors in your brain that reduce your perception of pain. Endorphins also trigger a positive feeling in the body, similar to that of morphine.

- Help you control your weight. ...
- Reduce your risk of heart diseases. ...
- Help your body manage blood sugar and insulin levels. ...
- Help you quit smoking. ...
- Improve your mental health and mood. ...
- Help keep your thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp as you age.

Jogging and even walking to the mosque helps. Even movement of the body during prayers is a form of exercise. However, do spend more time doing physical exercise so that many unwanted diseases may be reduced or completely eliminated inshaAllah

**c. Diet**

A lot of the traditional food contains a lot of unhealthy ingredients which is adverse to our health.

- Sugary drinks. ...
- Most pizzas. ...
- White bread. ...
- Most fruit juices. ...
- Sweetened breakfast cereals. ...
- Fried, grilled, or broiled **food**. ...
- Pastries, cookies, and cakes.

Eating too much rice itself is not healthy. A new study from the Harvard School of Public Health shows people who eat lots of white rice may significantly raise their risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

**SO WHAT DOES A HEALTHY DIET CONSISTS OF?**

**Nuts, pulses, and grains**

Nuts, pulses, and grains can be highly nutritious. Here are some of the best:

Almonds

Almonds are rich in nutrients, including magnesium, vitamin E, iron, calcium, fiber, and riboflavin. A scientific review published in Nutrition Reviews found that almonds as a food may help maintain healthy cholesterol levels.

The authors wrote:

"The message that almonds, in and of themselves, are a heart-healthy snack should be emphasized to consumers. Moreover, when almonds are incorporated into a healthy, balanced diet, the benefits are even greater."

Almonds have more fiber than any other tree nut.

### Brazil nut

Brazil nuts, (*Bertholletia excels*) are some of the most healthful nuts on the planet. In Brazil, they are called 'castanhas-do-pará' - which translates as "chestnuts from Pará." Pará is a state in northern Brazil.

They are rich in protein and carbohydrates. They are also excellent sources of vitamin B-1 (thiamine), vitamin E, magnesium, and zinc.

Not only that, but they contain one of the highest amounts of selenium of any food; selenium is a vital mineral for maintaining thyroid function.

The nuts come in a hard shell and are often served prepared ready to eat, making them an excellent and nutritious, healthful snack.

### Lentils

Lentils are a pulse that is used in many cuisines throughout the world; notably, South East Asian countries like Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka.

Lentils require a long cooking time, but the seeds can be sprouted which makes them ready to eat - and a delicious, healthy snack. Adding a container of sprouted lentils to a lunchbox or picnic basket, perhaps with some chili powder or pepper for flavouring, makes for a delicious and healthy snack.

### Oatmeal

Oatmeal is meal made from rolled or ground oats. Interest in oatmeal has increased considerably over the last 20 years because of its health benefits.

Research found that the cereal's soluble fiber content helps lower cholesterol levels. When these findings were published in the 1980s, an "oat bran craze" spread across the U.S. and Western Europe.

In 1997, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) agreed that foods with high levels of rolled oats or oat bran could include data on their labels about their cardiovascular heart benefits if accompanied with a low-fat diet. This was followed by another surge in oatmeal popularity.

Oats are rich in complex carbohydrates, as well as water-soluble fiber, which slow digestion down and stabilize levels of blood-glucose. Oatmeal is rich in B vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids, folate, and potassium. Coarse or steel-cut oats contain more fiber than instant varieties.

### Wheat germ

Wheat germ is the part of wheat that germinates to grow into a plant - the embryo of the seed. Germ, along with bran, is a by-product of milling; when cereals are refined, the germ and bran are often milled out.

Wheat germ is high in several vital nutrients, such as vitamin E, folic acid (folate), thiamin, zinc, magnesium, phosphorus, as well as fatty alcohols and essential fatty acids. Wheat germ is also a good source of fiber.

### **Greens, fruits, and berries**

#### Broccoli

Broccoli is rich in fiber, calcium, potassium, folate, and phytonutrients. Phytonutrients are compounds that reduce the risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers. Broccoli also contains vitamin C, as well as beta-carotene, an antioxidant.

A single 100-gram serving of broccoli can provide you with over 150 percent of the recommended daily intake of vitamin C, which in large doses can potentially shorten the duration of the common cold.

Another ingredient, sulforaphane, is also said to have anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory qualities.

However, overcooking broccoli can destroy many of its nutrients. Eating it raw, or lightly steamed is best.

#### Apples

Apples are an excellent source of antioxidants, which combat free radicals. Free radicals are damaging substances generated in the body that cause undesirable changes. They are involved in the aging process and some diseases. Some animal studies have found that an antioxidant found in apples (polyphenols) might extend lifespans.

Researchers at Florida State University said that apples are a "miracle fruit." In their study, the investigators found that older women who started a regime of eating apples daily experienced a 23 percent drop in levels of bad cholesterol (LDL) and a 4 percent increase in good cholesterol (HDL) after just 6 months.

### Kale

Kale is a very underrated leafy green. There are a lot of different nutrients contained within the leaves of kale.

Vitamin C is a nutrient of kale, and, according to the United States Department of Medicine (USDA), it contains a substantial amount of vitamin K, 817 micrograms or 778 percent of the recommended daily intake.

Kale can be cooked or steamed like cabbage, spinach, or asparagus. It can also be consumed in smoothies or juiced for a revitalizing nutrient kick.

### Blueberries

Blueberries are rich in fiber, antioxidants, and phytonutrients. Unlike minerals and vitamins, phytonutrients are not essential for keeping us alive. However, they may help prevent disease and keep the body working properly.

According to a study carried out at Harvard Medical School, older adults who eat plenty of blueberries (and strawberries) are less likely to suffer from cognitive decline, compared with other people of their age who do not.

Scientists at Texas Woman's University found that blueberries help in curbing obesity. Plant polyphenols, which are abundant in blueberries, have been shown to reduce the development of fat cells (adipogenesis), while inducing the breakdown of lipids and fat (lipolysis).

Regular blueberry consumption can reduce the risk of hypertension (high blood pressure) by 10 percent, because of the berry's bioactive compounds, anthocyanins. Scientists from East Anglia University and Harvard University reported in the *American Journal of Nutrition*.

### Avocados

Many people avoid avocados because of their high fat content; they believe that avoiding all fats leads to better health and easier-to-control body weight - this is a myth. Avocados are rich in healthy fats, as well as B vitamins, vitamin K, and vitamin E and have a very high fiber content. Studies have shown that regular avocado consumption lowers blood cholesterol levels.

Avocado extracts are currently being studied in the laboratory to see whether they might be useful for treating diabetes or hypertension. Researchers from Ohio State University found that nutrients taken from avocados were able to stop oral cancer cells, and even destroy some of the pre-cancerous cells.

### Leafy green vegetables

Studies have shown that a high intake of dark-leafy vegetables, such as spinach or cabbage, may significantly lower a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Researchers at the University of Leicester said that the impact of dark green vegetables on human health should be investigated further after they gathered data from six studies. They reported their findings in the BMJ.

Spinach, for example, is very rich in antioxidants, especially when uncooked, steamed, or very lightly boiled. It is a good source of vitamins A, B-6, C, E, and K, as well as selenium, niacin, zinc, phosphorus, copper, folic acid, potassium, calcium, manganese, betaine, and iron.

### Sweet potatoes

Sweet potatoes are rich in dietary fiber, beta-carotene (vitamin A), potassium, vitamin C, and vitamin B-6.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest compared the nutritional value of sweet potatoes to other vegetables. The sweet potato ranked number one, when vitamins A and C, iron, calcium, protein, and complex carbohydrates were considered.

### **Fish, meat, and eggs**

When looking for healthy protein, it is difficult to know which is the best source. Here are some of the best:

#### Oily fish

Salmon, eggs, chicken, and venison are all excellent sources of protein.

Examples of oily fish include salmon, trout, mackerel, herring, sardines, and anchovies. These types of fish have oil in their tissues and around the gut.

Their lean fillets contain up to 30 percent oil, specifically, omega-3 fatty acids. These oils are known to provide benefits for the heart, as well as the nervous system.

Oily fish provide benefits for patients with inflammatory conditions, such as arthritis. They are also rich in vitamins A and D.



Scientists at UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center found that prostate cancer progression was significantly slowed when patients went on a low-fat diet with fish oil supplements.

### Chicken

Chicken is a cheap and healthy meat. Free-range chicken provides an excellent source of protein.

As a white meat, chicken can be consumed much more freely than other red meats such as beef, which can have a more damaging long-term impact on overall health.

It is important to remember that the preparation and cooking of chicken has an impact on how healthy it is. This means deep-fried chicken should be limited or avoided. It's also important to remove the skin, as this part of the chicken contains high levels of fat.

### Eggs

Eggs are another source of protein that can easily be incorporated into a balanced diet. Being very versatile, they can be added to many meals - not just breakfast.

They contain other vitamins, including vitamin B-2, also known as riboflavin, and vitamin B-12, both of which are important for energy and red blood cells. It is also a good source of the essential amino acid leucine, which is important for stimulating muscle protein synthesis.

The yolk of the egg contains the majority of the vitamins and minerals. It also contains the fat and cholesterol, however, research has shown that eggs do not increase the risk for heart disease. Consuming fat in moderate amounts is perfectly healthful.

### **Balance and moderation**

Overall it is important for health to have a balanced diet and one that does not focus on one specific type of food.

It's also important to remember that a treat once in a while can be a part of a balanced diet, and one that is very healthful overall.

#### **d. Don't eat too much**

The Prophet SallAllahu alayhi wa sallam advised us not to eat too much in a hadith-

“Nothing is worse than a person who fills his stomach. It should be enough for the son of Adam to have a few bites to satisfy his hunger. If he wishes

more, it should be: One-third for his food, one-third for his liquids, and one-third for his breath.”

- Tirmidhi & Ibn Majah

**e. Have a partner to motivate each other**

It is advisable to have someone who reminds each other on health and who constantly monitor each other's progress.

**f. Discipline and set up a realistic program/time table**

It is good to set up a deadline or timescale on a regime so that we are able to reach the goal inshaAllah. This program must be realistic, taking into consideration factors such as age, work, looking after children, etc.

**g. Know your limits, especially with age**

As we get older, we realise that some of the exercises will be reduced and we have to accept this. However, do not stop have an active lifestyle and exercise even if you are over 50. In fact, continuing doing these exercises will help you feel good and enhance inshaAllah your acts of worship even though you are old.

**h. Do not wait until it is too late**

You have to start when you are younger, because once you develop illness such as heart diseases be cause of a sedentary lifestyle then it may be a little too late to try and start a healthy lifestyle, as some movements may be limited.

**i. Understand your hereditary illnesses**

Those whose parents have diabetes or high blood pressure, then you have to control your diet even more. We have to recognise this and take steps to ensure that we stick to doctor's advice and plan our exercise and diet regime.

## CONCLUSION

A healthy lifestyle is a choice. We cannot always point out to Qadr when our health gets worse because sometimes it gets worse because we have been leading a very unhealthy lifestyle, especially the youth now who prefers chips and burgers rather than healthy home-cooked meals. By having a strong mental and physical health inshaAllah we are able to worship Allah better and inshaAllah we will be rewarded by Allah for taking care of our body. Our body is a trust given to us by Allah so that we take care of it in the best of manner.

May Allah continue to Grant us good health, physically and mentally, Increase our iman and taqwa due to the fact that we can worship Him even better with our good health, and Grant us all Jannatul Firdaus.