

Handy information for Hospital Staff, regarding Islam & Muslim Patients.

Islamic Society of North America, Canada

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Handy information for Hospital Staff regarding Islam & Muslim Patients.

- Under emergency and life threatening situations, there are no restrictions of any kind (Qur`an, 5: 3 & 6:145) for the purposes of medication, treatment, preventative measures, etc.
- As far as possible, the same sex medical staff should handle Muslim patients. Even the dead should be handled the same way. Muslims do not shake hands with the opposite sex unless they are close blood relatives like the family members.
- Under normal conditions, mind-altering drugs (intoxicants), alcohol, pig or its products are prohibited. At the same time, if substitutes are not available, anything is permissible including a porcine valve for the heart.
- Faith healing with *Du`a* (supplication) is acceptable. Medical treatment is essential & should be undertaken for pathological and psychological disturbances.
- *Azan* (prayer call) is called to the newly born baby in his/her right ear, and *Iqama* is chanted in her/his left ear.
- Blood transfusion, vaccines and medications are permitted. Biopsies, amputations, transplants are permitted.
- Organ donations or acceptance are not restricted. However, leave this matter to the discretion of the patient's living will or family. Muslims can have a living will.

- Genetic engineering to cure a disease is acceptable but not cloning.
- Maintaining a terminal patient on artificial life support for a prolong period in a vegetative state is not encouraged. Time to be born and time to die is predestined.
- Birth control – generally acceptable on health reasons; husband and wife have to agree on methods.
- Sterilization – individual decision based on medical necessity.
- Artificial insemination – permitted if from husband to wife. Abortion – prohibited unless life threatening.
- Circumcision – yes for male babies, any time after 6 days.
- A Muslim performs *Wudu* (ablution) i.e., washes his hands, face, wipes head, and (washes) feet before each of the five daily prayers. If certain patient cannot use water, Ablution is done symbolically without water.
- If you see a Muslim patient in his chair or bed, saying his/her Prayers, leave him/her alone for 5 minutes to finish it.
- Muslim men and women have dress codes to follow under normal conditions. Ladies wear *Hijab* (headscarf). Supply long gowns to ladies & men.
- Muslims practice *Tahara*, i.e., wash after relieving (urinating and/or passing stool). Full bath is compulsory after intercourse, seminal discharge, and after menstrual period.
- General concepts on Islam are to follow. Scholarly literature on this subject written by Muslims is available.

For Islamic Ethics such as above, consult The Islamic Medical Association of the U.S.A and Canada. P.O. Box # 38 Plainfield, IN 46168-9904 USA. Or ISNA Canada, # 2200 South Sheridan Way, Mississauga ON, L5J 2M4, Canada. 905-403-8406 Ext. 206
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www.youngmuslims.ca/online_librart/

DIETARY LAWS

- No pork or pork bi-products (pepsin, gelatin or lard as ingredients in food).
- No alcoholic food or drink. No intoxicants, recreational drugs except for medical treatment.
- Meats: lamb, beef, chicken, turkey must be slaughtered under Islamic tradition, i.e., *Halaal*.
Kosher food is acceptable (no alcohol) if *Halaal* meat is not available.
- All seafood (any fish), vegetables & all cereals are permitted.

DEATH AND BURIAL

- When there are signs of imminent death, inform the family. Friends and family members may like to recite Qur`an (*Sura Yaseen, and Shahada*) close to the patient at the time of death. Privacy for the family is appreciated.
- An *Imaam* (Muslim clergy) or an *A`lim* may be called (tel. #s to follow) if the family desires. Muslims believe in the life Hereafter. Body dies and soul is

“transferred” to Hereafter for the accountability.

- Steps to be taken by the hospital staff at the time of death: Consult the family if available.
 1. **If possible**, turn face of the patient towards Mecca, Saudi Arabia (North-East in Ontario).
 2. After death, close eyes, close mouth (by running gauze around the head including jaws).
 3. Straighten arms and legs (tie toes together to keep legs straight).
 4. Please remove all tubes and needles as much as possible.
 5. Release the body ASAP, since Muslims want to bury the dead without unnecessary delay.
- Autopsy – only if essential for investigations.
- Disposal of body – body is bathed and shrouded by Muslims. After the traditional prayers in the Mosque or elsewhere, the body is buried in a nearby Muslim cemetery, without too much delay. No embalming may be done unless body has to be flown overseas which is not encouraged; cremation is prohibited.
- Organ donation is acceptable. It is individual’s and family’s decision.

Part 2

Islamic Religious Concepts as described in Qur`an, and the Traditions of Muhammad (Allah’s peace & blessings be upon him), the Prophet of Islam (570 – 632 Christian era).

A follower of the Islamic Faith is Muslim; Revealed Holy Book is Qur`an; Allah is The Lord,

The Creator, The Most Merciful, The Sovereign, The Healer and many more attributes.

Muhammad (son of Abdullah) is The Last Prophet and Messenger of God.

- **Allah** is the Lord and Creator of the universe (seen and the unseen). Allah is the name mentioned for God in Arabic Bible also.
- Revelations were given to Prophets David, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (Allah’s peace be upon them all). Our source of guidance is the **Qur`an**. Qur`an is the last and final revelation given to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who was unlettered. Qur`an exists in its original, word by word in Arabic. This book is the living and eternal miracle for man.
- Articles of faith; Muslims believe in Allah, His angles, His scriptures, (last and final being the Qur`an), His Prophets (amongst others, David, Moses, Jesus, & Muhammad being the last), and the Day of Judgment. Allah is the Master of our destiny. We are given the power of discretion and every individual is answerable for his or her deeds.

- Second main source of guidance to Islam is **Sunnah** (Traditions of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). **Shariah** are the laws based on the above.
- We came from Allah and we will return to Him.
- A good practicing Muslim is one who follows Qur`an and the ways of Prophet Muhammad. Cultural practices, distorted news media or certain individual’s wrongful actions are **not** to be taken as Islamic. For that matter, writings or lectures by so-called ‘Experts in Islam’ who do not believe in Islam may not necessarily be the correct concepts.
- Every baby is a born Muslim, since Islam is the natural way of life. Subsequently, it is the parents and environs, which bring up the child the way he/she believes.
- Human beings can enter into spiritual relationship with God. There is reward and punishment for the actions according to the laws in Qur`an.
- Muslims are supposed to maintain peace and harmony by saying *Salaam* to each other and respect beliefs of other peoples. Respect parents, teachers and elders. Islam is the natural way of life. Hence, religion is not separate from daily life. There is no compulsion in religion. Muslims extend invitation to others to follow the right path.
- No priesthood. A learned Muslim amongst the congregation leads prayers. He is called *Imam* (a few call him *A`alim*).
- Men and women are equal in status and have rights on each other. They both have their designated responsibilities. Both have rights to own properties, have business, and rights

for divorce. Divorce is the worst in the sight of Allah.

- There is no barrier of race, nationality, color, language or family status. Muslims stand shoulder to shoulder to pray. In the sight of Allah, the best among the peoples are those who are pious. Tribes and races are made to know each other, not to break.
- Lawful & the prohibited (*Halaal* & *Haraam*) are very important & well defined in terms of any food, actions, life style & concepts.
- Family and social life is essential. Celibacy is discouraged. Adultery, fornication & homosexuality are sinful.
- No recreational intoxicants like alcohol & drugs. Gambling, *Riba* (usury), and suicide, are sinful and strictly prohibited.
- Dietary laws include no pork or its products like lard, gelatin or pepsin in any quantity. All vegetables & seafood, fish of any kind are permissible. Permissible animals like lamb, beef, chicken, turkey etc. are to be slaughtered according to Islamic code (**Halaal**). If *Halal* food is not possible, *Kosher* is the next choice.
- *Jihad* means self-restraint or striving; striving to practice peace & piety. Arms struggle could become a necessity if attacked, or to remove aggression or oppression. There is no Arabic word ‘*Harb al Muqaddas*’ meaning ‘Holy war’ in Qur`an or in *Hadith*.
- *Tahara*: Muslims have to wash after relieving or urinating. Bathe after intercourse, seminal discharge & at the end of menstrual periods. Gen. physical cleanliness include daily five times washings of face, mouth, nostrils, ears, wiping head, & neck, wash hands and feet.

The five Tenets of Islam:

1. **Shahada** - Attest and recite the creed, "There is no god but Allah (The God). Muhammad is the messenger of Allah."
2. **Salaat** – 5 daily prayers, spread over in 24 hrs. , a few minutes each time after ritual wash *Wudu*. Patients, unable to stand for prayers, can perform it on a chair or in bed.
3. **Siyaam** - Fasting in the lunar month of *Ramadan*. This is abstinence from food and drink, smoking and other sensual pleasures, starting from just before the break of dawn, to sun set. Sick folks, feeding mothers and the like are excused. They have to make good fasts after regaining health. Compensation for the infirm and terminally sick is through feeding the poor.
4. **Zakaat** - A compulsory charity, minimum of 2 ½% of the extra wealth saved over one full lunar year.
5. **Hajj** – As soon as one can afford, perform pilgrimage to *Ka`ba* in Mecca (Saudi Arabia). This is once in a lifetime.

HOLIDAYS:

Islamic calendar is based on lunar cycle. Hence there is always a difference of 11 days (short each year) between lunar and the solar calendars.

Every Friday afternoon, congregational prayers are done in the Mosque. Some Muslims, regard

first 10 days of the month of Muharrum as auspicious.

Ramadan, is the month of fasting and practicing strict piety.

Feasts (major);

- 1) Eid-ul-Fitr, 1st day after the month of Ramadan.
- 2) Eid-ul-Adha, 10th day of the month of Zul-Hajj, the day after the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

SOME QUOTAIONS:

“And We (Allah) send down in the *Qur`an* that which is a **healing& mercy** to those who believe ...”

“(Allah, Lord and Cherisher of the worlds) Who created me, and it is He Who guides me; Who gives me food and drink, and when I am sick, it is **He Who cures me**; Who will cause me to die; and then to live (again); and Who, I hope, will forgive my faults on the Day of Judgment; O my Lord! Bestow on me, and join me with the righteous; Grant me a truthful (perfect) report in the later generation; Make me one of the inheritors of the garden of bliss...” (Says Prophet Abraham) *Qur`an* 26:78-85.

“... Then, eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for you). There comes from within their bellies a drink (**honey**) of varying colors, **wherein is healing for men:** verily in this is Sign for those who give thought.” *Qur`an* 16:69

“O Allah, Lord of people, take away the disease; cure, for surely You are the One Who

cures. There is no cure but Yours. Grant a cure that leaves no disease.” - Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Ref. Bukhari, Vol. 7 H 579

“Make use of medical treatment, for Allah (SWT) has not made a disease without appointing a remedy for it, with the exception of one disease, namely old age.” – Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Ref. Abu Dawud Vol. 3 H 3846

Ref. Books:

Qur`an, English translation by Yusuf Ali, or Pickthal, or Asad, or M. Muhsin Khan:

‘**The Life of Muhammad**’ by Haykal; ‘Islam in Focus’ by Hammudah Abdalati; both books by American Trust Publications:

Islam in Focus. By Hammudah Abdalati.

‘**Islamic Perspectives on Prayers & Coping with Sickness.**’ by Amjad R. M. Syed, Published by ISNA Canada (905-403-8406 Ex. 218)

All Islamic books are available at Email: manager@islamicbookscanada.com Call 905-4038406 Ex. 218

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Muslim Visitor at Sunnybrook & Women College Hospital, Toronto, and in Halton Healthcare Services, Oakville Site, Oakville, ON.

Noted Mosques and services in Greater Toronto & Mississauga:

Islamic Centre of Canada (ISNA), # 2200 South Sheridan Way, Mississauga L5J 2M4. Tel. 905-403-8406 Ext. 206. (*Funeral service & Islamic Book store*).

Alfalah Masjid (ICNA), # 391 Burnhamthorpe Road East., Oakville ON, L6J 4Z2. Tel. # 905-257-5782. (*Islamic Bookstore*).

Jamia Masjid Mississauga, (Islamic Propagation Centre of Mississauga) # 5761 Coopers Ave. Mississauga. Tel. # 905-507-3323

Jamia Islamia Canada, Mississauga, Tel. 905-279-3040; Jami Mosque, Bousted Ave. Toronto, Tel. # 416-769-1192 (*Funeral service & Book store*).

Madinah Mosque, Danforth Ave. Toronto, Tel. #416-465-7833. (*Funeral service available*).

Islamic Foundation, Nugget Ave. Scarborough Tel. # 416-321-0909; 416-321-UASK. (**Funeral service available**)

Shea community - Jafary Islamic Centre Markham (*Funeral arrangements available*, Tel. 905-881-1763):

Ismaili Community: Tel. 905-278-5626

Your notes

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