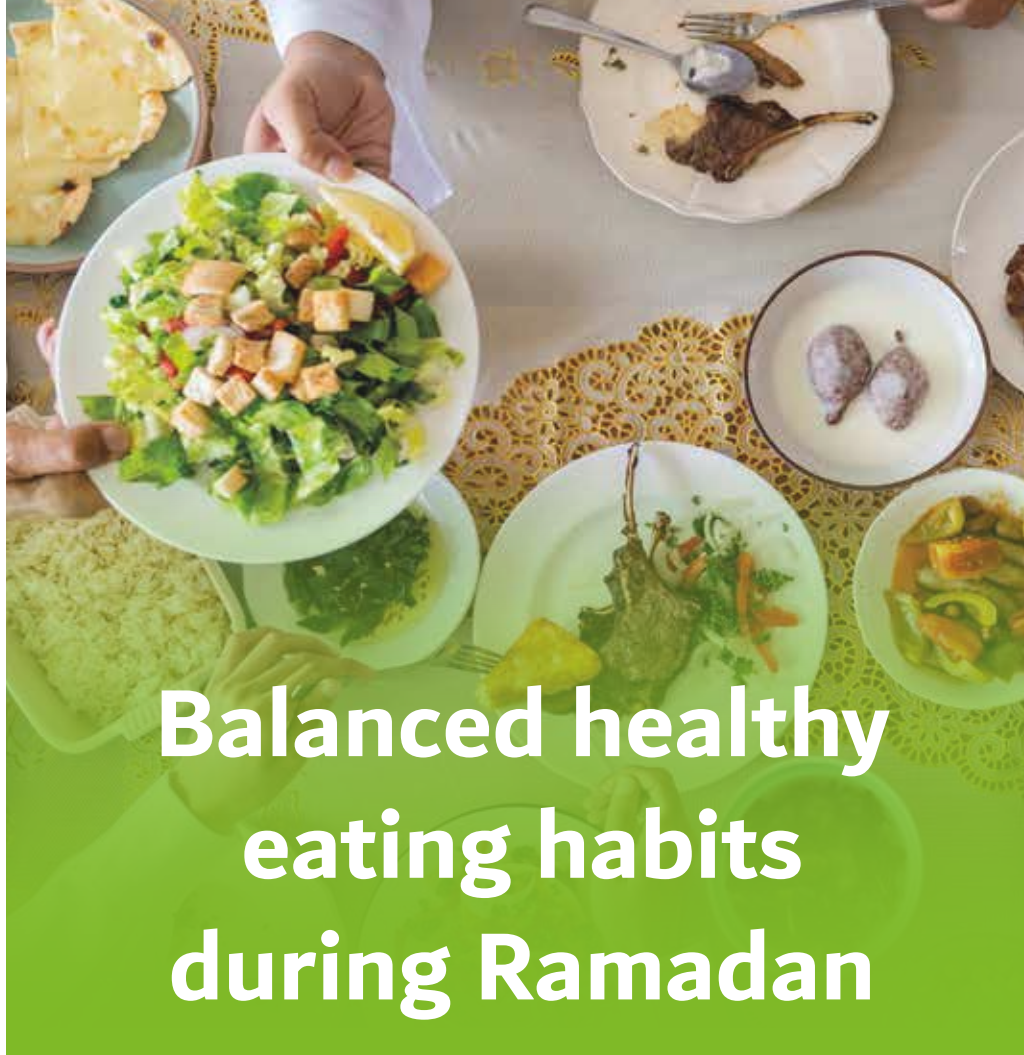


Balanced healthy

eating habits during Ramadan





Balanced healthy eating habits during Ramadan

Many people make a mistake when they think that nutrition during the blessed month of Ramadan differs from it in the rest of the year.

The individual's nutritional needs in this month do not differ from other months, and the requirements may be lower than they are in reality due to the less muscular effort that the individual expends in this month.

The month of Ramadan has many health and nutritional benefits, including resting the stomach and digestive system, relieving blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and high cholesterol, so a healthy balance is an important goal.

There are many meals or dishes prepared during Ramadan with high calories, so they should be eaten in moderation to avoid any complications that may occurs.



The following are some considerations for eating healthy in Ramadan:



Avoid overeating during the Iftar and Suhoor meals and keep a gap between snacks during non-fasting hours.



Increase your intake of fruits and vegetables, as they contain a high amount of fiber, water, minerals and vitamins.



Delay your suhoor meal; because this helps reduce the feeling of hunger and thirst and helps the fasting person to perform his daily tasks without getting tired or exhausted.



Increase your fluid intake that compensates for dehydration because of losing these fluids due to sweat.



Avoid excessive salt intake and all salty and spicy foods, pickles, and canned foods to avoid thirst.



Reduce eating heavy and fatty meals because they contain high amounts of calories and fat, which may cause weight gain.



The following are some considerations for eating healthy in Ramadan



Minimize sweets intake and replace it with fruits.



Avoid soft drinks and natural drink juices that may cause indigestion, acidity, and weight gain.



Exercise regularly to burn more calories than the body needs and to prevent the accumulation of fats in the body. Ramadan is an opportunity to perform Tarawih prayers. In addition, practice other sports at appropriate times.



Components of a healthy iftar



Start with a few dates, drink a glass of water or Laban to avoid indigestion, and then eat your main meal after a while. Of course, moderation in eating is a main factor to maintain good health.



Drink water slowly at room temperature and avoid cold water because it causes narrowing of the blood vessels in the capillaries in the stomach, which leads to indigestion.



It is recommended to eat the main dish, which represents a balanced healthy meal consisting of different varieties of food. Each food group has a particular benefit and eat in moderate quantities. Have cereals, pulses, meat, and dairy products, and fruits and vegetables so that the body gets all the essential nutrients and avoid overconsumption of caffeine-containing drinks such as tea and coffee.



Iftar Steps



Start with soup, preferably a vegetable soup, to provide the body with vitamins, minerals, and fibers to help you feel full, stimulate digestion, and prevent constipation.



Then eat the main dish which should consist of all the essential nutrients for the body such as protein in the form of meat or legumes such as beans, white beans or beans, also have some carbohydrates such as rice, bread, pasta, potatoes, fruits and vegetables (fresh or cooked) at least five servings per day.



Iftar Steps

Components of a healthy snack in between meals:

Have a snack or two between Iftar and Suhoor such as a fruit, or a fruit yogurt or a few unsalted nuts.

Components of a healthy Suhoor:

- Eating suhoor helps prevent fatigue and headaches during Ramadan and relieves severe thirst. It is preferable to delay suhoor as much as possible and try to consume foods, which satiate you for a longer time so that you do not feel hungry quickly.
- Suhoor should be balanced and contain nutrient-rich foods, such as oats, dairy (unsalted cheeses or labnah) fruits and vegetables and foods containing dietary fiber and protein.
- Avoid eating salty foods such as pickles or salty olives and salty cheese, avoid spices and spices used to preserve foods or fast food.
- Do not overeat sugars at Suhoor meal because it increases the feeling of hunger the next day.



Tips for children in Ramadan:

Training children to fast during Ramadan should be gradual. First, they should learn to fast only for a few hours and later they can keep the full fast once they are ready.

Children cannot tolerate thirst and hunger during whole period of fasting so gradually increase the time once you observe that the child is ready.

In case the child feels very tired and exhausted during fasting, he/she must break the fast immediately to avoid complications. Follow a healthy balanced diet rich in essential nutrients and implement healthy habits such as:

- Speed up Iftar and delay Suhoor as much as possible.
- Eat sources of protein such as eggs, cheeses, chicken, fish, meat and legumes for breakfast and Suhoor along with starches, fresh or cooked vegetables and fruits.
- Drink sufficient amount of water from Iftar to Suhoor.
- Eat two healthy snacks between Iftar and Suhoor.
- Reduce sweets and replace them with fruits.
- Avoid salty foods, processed meats and fast food to avoid thirst during fasting.
- Sleep adequate hours.



Tips for pregnant women during Ramadan:



Consult your physician before you begin fasting during Ramadan to ensure it is safe for you and the baby and to avoid any complications.



Consume a healthy balanced diet that contains all the necessary nutrients and calories.



Chew food well to avoid indigestion.



Vary foods and focus on snacking between Iftar and suhoor.



Avoid overeating and exceeding the daily calorie requirement for a healthy pregnancy and avoid excessive weight gain.



Restrict fatty, fried, high-sugar foods and beverages.

Avoid soft drinks and caffeinated drinks.



Avoid intake of salted foods, pickles, fast food, and processed meats.



Increase dietary fiber intake such as vegetables and fruits that promote digestive health.



Drink water in sufficient quantities.



Perform exercise and daily activities as instructed by your doctor.



Tips for the elderly in Ramadan

Healthy nutrition is essential for the elderly, especially during Ramadan, to avoid loss of body muscles, to avoid fatigue, weakness, and complications due to malnutrition. Consult a physician in case of chronic diseases to regulate medication doses and to know the possibility of fasting according to the health condition.

- Iftar should be early by starting with a few dates with water or milk to prepare the digestive system for food reception.
- Divide meals during the Iftar period into several meals.
- Eat a Suhoor meal and delay it as much as possible.
- Eat a balanced diet and integrate all necessary nutrients to provide the body with the energy.
- Adjust the consistency of the food (soft or semi-solid diet) according to the ability of the elderly to chew and digest
- Focus on eating foods rich in dietary fiber such as vegetables, fruits and whole grains.
- Reduce eating fatty foods and avoid salted foods and sugars.
- Hydrate with water, unsweetened fresh juices, and liquids, and do not consume too many high caffeine drinks.
- Practice regular activities and exercises.