

Ramaḍān FAQs (updated)

A compilation of 30 question and answers that are commonly asked regarding fasting

Q1: Is it necessary to make an intention (niyyah) for each fast daily or one intention (niyyah) at the beginning of Ramaḍān suffices for the entire month?

A: It is necessary to make niyyah daily for each fast. However, waking up for suḥūr (pre-dawn meal) will be equivalent to making niyyah.¹ Simply knowing that you will be fasting is sufficient.

Q2: If one misses suḥūr, up until when can one make niyyah for the fast?

A: Niyyah can be made up until midday (which is calculated by looking at the starting time of fajr and maghrib, the midway point of which is midday), provided one has not eaten, drank or engaged in intercourse up until then.

Q3: If a person does not keep a fast at all, does kaffārah (penalty) become incumbent?

A: A person who does not fast at all will make qaḍā' for all the fasts missed. Kaffārah has to be

1 أن النية شرط لكل يوم، لأن صوم كل يوم عبادة على حدة، ألا ترى أنه لو فسد صوم يوم لا يمنع صحة الباقي، وكذا عدم الأهلية في بعضه لا يمنع تقرر الأهلية في الباقي فتجب النية لكل عبادة. (الاختيار لتعليل المختار. ج ١ ص ١٣٥. دار الكتب العلمية)

2 وقد مر أن المغمى عليه لا يقضي اليوم الذي حدث الإغماء في ليلته لوجود النية منه ظاهراً. (البحر الرائق شرح كنز الدقائق. ج ٢ ص ٣١٣. دار الكتاب الإسلامي)

given by the one who deliberately eats, drinks or engages in intercourse with one's spouse after starting the fast.

Q4: Does becoming unconscious break ones fast?

A: No, becoming unconscious whilst fasting does not invalidate the fast as long as one does not eat or drink after regaining consciousness.²

Q5: Does using eye drops invalidate the fast? Also, what will be the ruling on using kuḥl/surmā?

A: Using eye drops and applying kuḥl/surmā will not affect the fast.³

Q6: Is it permissible to use a nasal spray whilst fasting?

A: Using a nasal spray whilst fasting will invalidate the fast and qaḍā' will be necessary.⁴

3 قلت رأيت الصائم يكتحل بالإثمد والذرور والصبر وغيره قال نعم لا يضره ذلك شيئاً قلت فإن وجد طعمه في حلقه قال وإن وجد طعمه في حلقه. (الأصل للشيباني. ج ٢ ص ٢٤٣. إدارة القرآن)

4 ومن احتقن أو استعط أو أقطر في أذنه دواءً أو دهنًا أو داوى جائفة أو آمة بدواء رطب فوصل إلى جوفه أو دماغه لزمه القضاء لا غير. (تحفة الملوك. ص ١٤٣. دار البشائر الإسلامية، بيروت)

Q7: Does using ear drops invalidate one's fast?

A: If one inserts ear drops into one's ear and one's eardrum is perforated then the fast will break. As a matter of precaution, one should avoid the usage of ear drops.⁵

Q8: What is the ruling on undergoing dialysis whilst fasting?

A: Dialysis treatment does not invalidate the fast. However, one should consult the doctor to know if it is safe to fast in this situation.⁶

Q9: Is it permissible to undergo any intravenous treatment whilst fasting?

A: Yes, it will not invalidate the fast.

Q10: If a person plans to start a journey after suḥūr, is fasting still compulsory?

A: If a person is not a musāfir (a traveller – one who is undertaking a journey of 55 miles or more) at the time of suḥūr, this person is required to begin the fast. If this person struggles to continue with the fast after embarking on a journey, it will be permissible to break the fast. However, qaḍā' of that fast is required. If a person is a traveller at the time of

suḥūr, it is permitted to leave out the fast and make qaḍā' later.

Q11: Does masturbating break the fast?

A: If masturbation causes one to reach climax and ejaculate, then the fast will be invalid and qaḍā' is required. One should bear in mind that masturbating is a sin and should be avoided in and out of Ramaḍān.

Q12: Is it permissible to use an inhaler whilst fasting?

A: Using an inhaler or a nebuliser will invalidate the fast. If a person suffers from asthma and requires an inhaler whilst fasting, the inhaler may be used. Qaḍā' of that fast will have to be done later.⁷

Q13: What is the ruling on having a blood test while fasting?

A: Extraction of blood does not affect the fast. However, it is makrūh (disliked) to go for a blood test if one fears weakness due to extracting blood.⁸

Q14: If a person sees a wet dream whilst fasting, does it affect the fast?

5 ضابطة المفطرات للمفتي رفيع العثماني

6 واكثر المشايخ اعتبروا الوصول في الجائفة والامة، ان عرف ان اليابس وصل الى الجوف يفسد صومه بالاتفاق وان لم يعرف ... لا يفسد. (الفتاوى التاتارخنية. ج 3 ص 379)

7 وفيما ذكرنا إشارة إلى أنه من أدخل بصنعه دخانا حلقه بأي صورة كان الإدخال فسد صومه سواء كان دخان عنبراً أو عوداً أو غيرهما حتى من تبخر ببخور فأواه إلى نفسه واشتم دخانه ذاكراً

لصومه أفطر لإمكان التحرز عن إدخال المفطر جوفه ودماغه. (مراقي الفلاح مع الطحطاوي. ص 660. دار الكتب العلمية)

8 قال رحمه الله: (فإن أكل الصائم أو شرب أو جامع ناسياً أو احتلم أو أنزل بنظر أو أدهن أو احتجم أو اكتحل أو قبّل أو دخل حلقه غبار أو ذباب وهو ذاكراً لصومه أو أكل ما بين أسنانه أو قاء وعاد لم يفطر) ... وأما الاحتجام فلما روينا ولعدم المنافي وهو قول جمهور العلماء. (تبيين الحقائق شرح كنز الدقائق. ج 1 ص 323. المطبعة الكبرى الأميرية بولاق، القاهرة)

A: Merely experiencing a wet dream will not invalidate the fast.⁹

Q15: Does vomiting whilst fasting invalidate the fast?

A: There are different types of vomit. Some of which break the fast whilst others do not. If one vomits a mouthful involuntarily and thereafter swallows it intentionally, then the fast breaks. Similarly, if one vomits a mouthful voluntarily (i.e., it is self induced) then the fast will break.¹⁰

Q16: I am diabetic and I have to take my insulin whilst fasting. I wanted to know if that affects my fast?

A: It is permissible for a diabetic patient to take the insulin whilst fasting. General injections do not affect the fast.¹¹

9 المرجع السابق

10 See: <http://fatwa.ca/sawm/485/>

11 وما يدخل من مسام البدن من الدهن لا يفطر. (الفتاوى الهندية. ج ١ ص ٣٠٣. رشيدية)

12 وكره له ذوق كل شيء وكذا مضغه بلا عذر. (رد المحتار. ج ٢ ص ٣١٦. سعيد)

13 (قوله: استحسانا) وفي القياس يفسد أي بدخول الذباب لوصول المفطر إلى جوفه وإن كان لا يتغذى به كالتراب والحصاد هداية (قوله: لعدم إمكان التحرز عنه) فأشبه الغبار والدخان لدخولهما من الأنف إذا أطبق الفم كما في الفتح، وهذا يفيد أنه إذا وجد بدا من تعاطي ما يدخل غباره في حلقه أفسد لوفعل شرنبلالية

Q17: Can I brush my teeth using regular toothpaste whilst fasting?

A: It is makrūh (disliked) to make use of toothpaste when fasting. If the toothpaste goes down the throat, the fast will break and qaḍā' will be necessary.¹²

Q18: Does smoking break ones fast?

A: Yes, smoking will invalidate the fast and makes qaḍā' and kaffārah (penalty) compulsory.¹³

Q19: What should one do if one cannot fast due to old age?

A: If one is unable to fast in Ramaḍān due to old age, and also cannot make up for them in winter when the fasts are short, then one should give fidyah for each fast missed.¹⁴

Q20: Does swallowing one's saliva break the fast?

(قوله: ومفاده) أي مفاد قوله دخل أي بنفسه بلا صنع منه (قوله: أنه لو أدخل حلقه الدخان) أي بأي صورة كان الإدخال، حتى لو تبخر ببخور وآواه إلى نفسه واشتمه ذاكرا لصومه أظفر لإمكان التحرز عنه. وهذا مما يغفل عنه كثير من الناس، ولا يتوهم أنه كشم الورد ومائه والمسك لوضوح الفرق بين هواء تطيب بريح المسك وشبهه وبين جوهر دخان وصل إلى جوفه بفعله إمداد وبه علم حكم شرب الدخان ونظمه الشرنبلالي في شرحه على الوهبانية بقوله: ويمنع من بيع الدخان وشربه... وشاربه في الصوم لا شك يفطر. ويلزمه التكفير لو ظن نافعا... كذا دافعا شهوات بطن فقرروا. (رد المحتار. ج ٢ ص ٣٩٥)

14 ويجوز الفطر لشيخ فان وعجوز فانية... وتلزمها الفدية. (مراقي الفلاح مع حاشية الطحطاوي. ص ٦٨٨. قديمي)

A: Swallowing one's own saliva does not invalidate the fast. However, it is makrūh (disliked) for a fasting person to gather saliva inside the mouth and to swallow it.¹⁵

Q21: If a person's gums bleed whilst fasting, does it break the fast?

A: The mere bleeding of the gums will not invalidate the fast. However, if the blood is swallowed and it reaches the stomach then the fast will be nullified. In this case, qaḍā' will be required. If one has continuous bleeding gums, one should consult a muftī and explain the scenario.

Q22: Is a woman who is experiencing ḥayḍ (menses) and nifās (post-natal bleeding) required to fast?

A: A woman in her monthly menses and similarly a woman experiencing post-natal bleeding is not permitted to fast for the –

duration of ḥayḍ and nifās. Such a woman will make up for her fasts after Ramaḍān.¹⁶

Q23: Is a woman who is breastfeeding required to fast?

15 ويكره للصائم أن يجتمع ريقه في فمه ثم يبتلعه. (الفتاوى الهندية. ج ١ ص ١٩٩. رشيديه)

16 الحائض والنفساء لا تصومان وتقضيان. (الفتاوى التارخانية. ج ٢ ص ٣٨٧. إدارة القرآن)

17 قال في الأصل: إذا خافت الحامل أو المرضع على أنفسهما أو على ولدهما جاز الفطر وعليهما القضاء. (الفتاوى التارخانية. ج ٢ ص ٣٨٤. إدارة القرآن)

A: A breastfeeding mother is required to fast in Ramaḍān as normal. However, if fasting will severely impact her or her child's health, then she will be exempted and will be required to make qaḍā' later.¹⁷

Q24: Is a pregnant woman required to fast?

A: A pregnant woman is required to fast. She will be exempted if she is unwell or there is a high chance of her getting ill. Similarly, she will be excused from fasting if there is a risk to the unborn child. If a pregnant woman falls ill after starting her fast, she should break her fast and make qaḍā' later.¹⁸

Q25: What happens if one eats forgetfully whilst fasting?

A: Eating forgetfully will not break one's fast. As soon as one remembers, one should immediately stop eating.¹⁹

Q26: If one is conscious of the fast, but accidentally swallows water when making wuḍū' or ghusl, will the fast break?

A: Yes. Qaḍā' will be required in this case.²⁰

Q27: If a person bites the skin from the lips and swallows that skin, does that break the fast?

18 المرجع السابق

19 إذا أكل الصائم أو شرب أو جامع ناسياً لم يفطر... كذا في الهداية. (الفتاوى الهندية. ج ١ ص ٢٠٢. رشيديه)

20 وان أفطر خطأ... كأن تميمض فسبقه الماء. قوله: فسبقه الماء أي يفسد صومه. (رد المحتار. ج ٢ ص ٤٠١. سعيد)

A: If the skin is extremely small, the size of a sesame seed or less, then the fast does not break. However, this action should be avoided.

Q28: Are pubescent children required to fast whilst going to school?

A: Pubescent children are legally responsible (mukallaf) in Islām. Hence, they are required to fast, pray etc. just as teenagers and adults are required to do so.

Q29: Is it permissible to miss the Ramaḍān fasts because of exams?

A: Sitting in exams is not a legitimate excuse to miss the Ramaḍān fasts. If one does so, he/she will be sinful and answerable in the court of Allāh Ta‘ālā. If one keeps a fast and sits in the exam, Allāh will surely assist them through his grace and mercy.

Q30: What is kaffārāh?

A: The kaffārāh (penalty) for a broken fast, which is in addition to making up the fast for the missed days is fasting for sixty consecutive days. If the sixty days are interrupted without a legitimate shar‘ī reason, then one has to recommence the sixty days. If one is unable to fast the sixty days for a legitimate shar‘ī reason, e.g., old age or a chronic illness that makes fasting very hard then the person can do one of the following:

- Feed sixty poor people two full meals for one day.
- Feed one poor person two meals a day for sixty days

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http://www.askimam.org/public/question_detail/19624

- Give sixty poor people 3.5lbs, or 1.6kgs of wheat, flour, fine flour or its value in cash.
- Give sixty poor people 7.5lbs or 3.5kgs of dry dates, barley or its value in cash.²¹

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20 Sha‘bān 1441 / 14 April 2020

Updated: 14 Sha‘bān 1442 / 28 March 2021

For further queries, email us on:

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A kind reminder to keep the compiler, editors and the Markazul Fiqh team in your prayers, especially during the blessed month of Ramaḍān.

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