



INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR SAFE RAMADAN AND EID AL-FITR PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19

2022

BACKGROUND

The transmission of COVID-19 is facilitated by close contact between people, as the virus spreads through respiratory droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces. Qatar has implemented sets of interventions and measures to mitigate the public health impact, such as physical distancing measures, wearing masks, getting COVID-19 vaccines, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces, and washing hands frequently.

The holy month of Ramadan is characterized by its social and religious forums that continue throughout the Holy month and until the end of Eid Al Fitr celebrations. It is customary for intense traditional and religious gatherings to occur during Iftar, Suhoor, Tarawih, and Qiyam prayers and i'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadan.

Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, clear instructions, few interventions, and measures to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission should be implemented. Such as masks use, advice regarding physical distancing is recommended where feasible, proper ventilation of mosques and areas of gatherings, and vigilant regular cleaning and disinfection of premises. Ensure proactive messaging on healthy behaviors during Ramadan and Eid and ensure compliance with these preventive measures.

PURPOSE

This document gives guidance to the public for social and religious practices and gatherings during Ramadan and Eid to protect themselves and others from COVID-19 infection and prevent the spread of the disease.

GENERAL PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM COVID-19

- Stay safe this Ramadan by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and following the general precautionary measures on COVID-19.
- Urge high-risk groups to not to attend gatherings, as they are considered vulnerable to severe disease and COVID-19; people in high-risk groups include the elderly and anyone with pre-existing medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer.
- Urge people who are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home, avoid attending events and follow the national guidance on follow-up and management of symptomatic cases.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, disinfect your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes, mainly when you are outside.
- Cover your mouth with a tissue while coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue immediately in a lined trash bin. Wash your hands immediately after. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Privilege outdoor over indoor venues; if indoors, ensure good natural or mechanical ventilation.
- Wear masks while inside the mosque.

TIPS ON WELL-BEING

- Healthy people should be able to fast during this Ramadan as in previous years.
- COVID-19 patients or people with other illnesses are advised to refer to their doctor and religious fatwas for the right advice regarding breaking the fast based on their situation.
- Drink plenty of water and eat hydrating foods between iftar and suhoor meals.
- Eat a healthy diet and proper nutritious food during the month of Ramadan. People should eat various fresh and unprocessed foods.
- Exercise.
- Avoid tobacco (cigarettes and water pipes) under any circumstances. Smoking is one of the risk factors leading to respiratory diseases and dramatically increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness.
- Promoting mental and psychosocial health, prayers, meditation, and shared spirituality as a family or household are encouraged – all from a healthy distance.

PROMOTE GOOD HYGIENE

- Encourage healthy hygiene practices (performing wudu before prayers is one way for that).
- Ensure that hand washing facilities are adequately equipped with soap and water and provide alcohol-based hand rub (at least 60% alcohol) at the entrance and inside public places.
- Ensure the availability of disposable tissues and lidded bins with disposable liners, and guarantee the safe disposal of waste.
- Frequently clean worship spaces, sites, and buildings using detergents and disinfectants.
- Enforce routine cleaning of venues where people gather before and after each event.
- Keep the premises and wudu facilities clean and maintain general hygiene and sanitation.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and objects such as doorknobs, light switches, and stair railing.
- Provide visual displays of advice on physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, mask-wearing, and general messages on COVID-19 prevention.

TIPS FOR VACCINATED INDIVIDUALS

Vaccinated people should continue to exercise preventive measures, including physical distancing, masks, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene.

VACCINATION DURING RAMADAN

Eligible individuals should be encouraged to get vaccinated during Ramadan to protect themselves and their communities.

Taking the COVID-19 vaccine is permissible: Islamic authorities in several countries have stated that receiving COVID-19 vaccination as an intramuscular injection, the only route for the vaccines currently available, does not invalidate the fast.

SUMMARY

- Wear masks when in indoor settings and in mosques
- Follow cough etiquette
- Clean your hands and avoid touching your face
- Ensure regular vigilant environmental cleaning
- Ensure proper ventilation in all places of gatherings, including mosques
- Advise vulnerable population to stay safe and wear masks when attending gatherings, as they are considered vulnerable to severe disease and COVID-19; high-risk groups include older people and anyone with pre-existing medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer

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