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Ramadan 2017

Ramadan, begins on Friday 26th May 2017 and will continue for 29/30 days until Sunday 24 June.

Eid marks the end of the daily fasting through the month of Ramadan.

During Ramadan, Muslims must abstain from food, drink, smoking and marital relationships, also avoiding all immoral and sinful behaviour between dawn and sunset.

Each day begins with a very early meal, suhoor (dawn) and the fast is broken at sunset with a meal known as iftaar (sunset). The day of Eid signals the end of Ramadan and the beginning of the next Islamic month.

Ramadan is one of the five fundamental pillars of Islam. During this month the majority of Muslims observe an absolute fast from dawn to sunset without any food or drink. Fasting during Ramadan can impact on patients with a history of various medical conditions. People with chronic medical conditions, women who are pregnant or breast-feeding are exempt. However, many still insist on fasting during Ramadan. **The Qur'an states that fasting during these conditions should be avoided.**

Where Muslim patients refuse treatment, even though it may not break the fast, patients choice should be respected and advice should be offered on medical grounds. This should also be documented.

Fasting will have an impact on Assessments

The fast will break when

- Eating or drinking intentionally
- Taking oral medication
- Providing nourishing medication (also by intramuscular or intravenous injections)
- Smoking
- Using vaginal or rectal pessaries



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Typical clinical interventions that would break the fast include (the list is not exhaustive)

- Using Aspirin
- Glucose drip (IV)
- Glucagon (IM)
- Glucose drinks

The fast will not break when:

- Administering injections (intravenous, intramuscular and subcutaneous)
- Taking bloods (thumb pricks or intravenous)
- Using puffers and inhalers or eye and ear drops
- Eating or drinking unintentionally

Typical clinical interventions that will not break the fast include (the list is not exhaustive)

- GTN
- Rectal Diazepam
- Ventolin sprays/ Salbutamol
- Morphine (IV)
- Adrenaline (IV)
- Treating wounds
- Nebulisers and oxygen
- Saline infusion (IV)
- Diazepam/ Diazepamul (IV)
- Penicillin (IV)

FOR MANAGERS: Remember that Ramadan will impact patients, staff and service delivery

Managers should consider the impact of Ramadan on staffing and ways to accommodate Muslim staff during this period.

- Consider allowing breaks at different times of the day to support Muslim staff
- Consider / sensitively any requests for annual leave or shift swap/change for Eid
- Consider flexible working or changing shift rotas to accommodate breaking the fast at the end of each day, where this is possible
- Consider allowing extra time off to pray, especially at sunset
- Allowing meal breaks at different times, for example lunch breaks at dusk
- Avoid organising any social events during the time Muslim staff are to be invited to the events

However, all requests based on religious identity and practices, should be considered and balanced against operational needs.

It's good practice to accommodate these requests wherever possible, accommodating religious and practices does not mean allowing extra time off, it is about employees' existing holiday entitlement, working patterns or break periods.