



رمضان كريم

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FAQ's pertaining to

FASTING

(Last Updated: 23/02/2026)



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Q. Does a minor child have to fast?

A. Fasting is not obligatory on a child. However, children should be encouraged to fast as per their ability to inculcate within them the spirit of fasting.

Q. Does a pregnant or breastfeeding woman have to fast?

A. By default, a pregnant and a breastfeeding woman has to fast. However, if illness or harm is genuinely feared upon herself or the foetus/child, she is excused from fasting. Qadha will be required after Ramadaan.

Q. Does a sick person have to fast?

A. A sick person is excused from fasting if there is a genuine reason to believe that the current illness will intensify or that his recovery will be prolonged due to fasting. Qadha will be required after Ramadaan.



Q. Can a traveller omit fasting?

A. A Shar'i musafir (traveller) who embarked on his journey before dawn (Subah Saadiq) is permitted to omit the fast of that day. As long as the person is a musafir, they may omit fasting. However, if the journey is not difficult, it would be better to keep the fast. Qadha will be required after Ramadaan for missed fasts.

If a fasting person commences a journey after dawn, they will have to complete the fast of that day.

Q. What about travelling during the day?

A. If a person commenced a journey during the day after the intention of fasting was already made, he/she will have to complete the fast of that day.

Q. Will the application of eye drops break the fast?

A. Using eye drops will not break the fast.

Q. Can eardrops be used?

A. If a person's eardrum is intact and not perforated, which is the general case for most people, the use of ear drops is permitted. If someone has perforated eardrums, using ear drops will break the fast.



Q. Will a nasal spray break the fast?

A. Yes, a nasal spray will break the fast.

Q. Can mouthwash be used whilst fasting?

A. It is disliked to use mouthwash whilst fasting. If used, the fast will remain valid except if any mouthwash is swallowed.

Q. Is it permissible to brush teeth and use toothpaste?

A. It is disliked to use toothpaste whilst fasting. One may brush teeth without toothpaste, use a miswak or a tongue scraper.

Q. Is smoking permitted whilst fasting?

A. It is not permissible to smoke whilst fasting irrespective of whether one smokes cigarettes, cigars, hookah or similar items. Smoking will result in Qadha and Kaffarah becoming due.

Q. Can a smoker use a nicotine patch while fasting?

A. A smoker who is struggling with nicotine dependency may use a nicotine patch. This will not break the fast.



Q. Is the use of e-cigarettes/ vapes permitted whilst fasting?

A. The ruling with regards to smoking e-cigarettes and vapes while fasting is the same as smoking cigarettes. Smoking e-cigarettes will cause the fast to break and Kaffarah will also be due.

Q. Is my fast valid if I forgot I was fasting and ate?

A. If one was unaware that they were fasting, the fast will not be broken regardless of what was consumed.

Q. By mistake I swallowed water whilst making wudhu?

A. Swallowing water mistakenly will break one's fast. Only Qadha will be necessary, not Kaffarah.

The difference between a mistake and forgetfulness is that in forgetfulness a person is not aware of the fast. A mistake means that the person was aware of the fast but accidentally swallowed water. The fast breaks due to their carelessness while aware of the fast.



Q. I engaged in intercourse with my spouse. What is the status of my fast?

A. Engaging in intercourse when one is aware that they are fasting will invalidate the fast and make both Qadha & Kaffarah compulsory.

Q. Will acts of intimacy without intercourse break the fast?

A. Merely being intimate is disliked if it will lead one further. If one experiences ejaculation during intimacy, the fast will break.

Q. Does masturbating break the fast?

A. It is not permissible to masturbate, whether fasting or not. However, if one experiences ejaculation due to masturbation whilst fasting then the fast will break and a Qadha will have to be kept. One should make sincere Taubah for this impermissible act.

Q. I had a wet dream whilst fasting. Is my fast broken?

A. A wet dream does not break the fast.



Q. Can one take a Fardh Ghusal bath after Sehri ?

A. It is not advisable to unnecessarily delay the Fardh Ghusl. However, if one wants to have Sehri before taking Ghusl then it is permissible.

Q. Does the use of an injection break the fast?

A. In principle, taking an injection will not break the fast. However, in the rare event of an injection being administered directly into the stomach itself, the fast will break.

NB. Insulin injected in the abdomen does not invalidate the fast as it is injected into the subcutaneous layer of the abdomen and not directly into the stomach.

Q. What is the ruling for using suppositories?

A. Insertion of suppositories up the rear passage will invalidate the fast.

Q. Does the use of a drip break the fast?

A. The usage of an IV drip will not break the fast. However, IV drips should only be used for medical reasons while fasting.



Q. Can I have a blood test done whilst fasting?

A. Yes, it is permitted to have a blood test done while fasting provided it does not weaken you thus making fasting difficult.

Q. If one vomits, does it break the fast?

A. Normal vomiting does not break the fast. Only induced vomiting will break the fast if the amount vomited was more than a mouthful.
The definition of “a mouthful” is that amount which cannot be contained in the mouth except with difficulty.

Q. I am an asthmatic. Does the usage of the pump break my fast?

A. Using an asthma pump will break the fast. In this case, only Qadha of the fast will be required. It is advisable to use the pump at Sehri and Iftaar times.

Q. Can I Undergo Cupping (Hijamah) While Fasting?

A. Undergoing cupping while fasting does not break the fast. However, if a person knows from experience that cupping makes them physically weak, then it is disliked (Makrooh) for them to undergo cupping while fasting.



LAWS PERTAINING TO WOMEN

Q. Is a fasting woman allowed to breastfeed her baby?

A. It is permissible for a fasting woman to breastfeed her child. Breastfeeding does not invalidate the fast.

Q. Is it permissible to take medication like the pill (contraceptive) throughout the month of Ramadaan to avoid getting one's period to keep all the fasts as it is very difficult to keep the missed fasts?

A. It is permissible to take the pill for this reason but it is not recommended. It could have side effects like changing one's cycle or irregular spotting which may lead to difficulties in the future for Salaah, Umrah and Hajj.

Q. Is it permissible for a female to insert medicine through her private part or have a pap-smear done whilst fasting?

A. In principle, if any substance reaches the digestive system whilst fasting, the fast will be invalidated.

Contrary to what was believed in the past, a woman's genital organs are not connected to her digestive system. Accordingly, the fast will not be invalidated if medication is inserted in the private part of a woman or if she undergoes a pap smear whilst fasting. It is however better for her to delay any internal medical procedures for when she is not fasting.



Q. I would like to obtain some clarity on women who miss Ramadaan fasts due to being pregnant or breastfeeding. Are they required to fast the missed fasts after Ramadaan or can they pay Fidyah?

A. Women who are breastfeeding or pregnant may postpone the fast during Ramadaan if fasting will be detrimental to their health or the health of the child. After Ramadaan, they will have to make Qadha of the missed fasts. Paying Fidyah will not suffice if one is physically able to make Qadha of the missed fasts.

NB. Breastfeeding and pregnant women should consult an upright and experienced Muslim doctor on whether fasting will be detrimental or not.

Q. If a female starts menstruating whilst fasting in Ramadaan, can she eat (discreetly) when she is in seclusion? Similarly can she do so when she stops menstruating? What if in both cases she kept the entire fast for that day. Will her fast be valid as she has completed some part of the fast as a pure/paak person?

A. If her menses has commenced whilst fasting then the fast will automatically break and she may eat discreetly (out of people's sight). If her menses had ended during the day, then she must abstain from eating and drinking both in private and public and act as a fasting person. In both cases her fast will be invalid as menstruating women is not a position to fast. She will have to make Qadha for missed days after Ramadaan.



FIDYAH & KAFFARAH

Q. What is Kaffarah?

A. The term Kaffarah refers to the penalty upon a person who intentionally breaks his fast for no valid Shari' reason by either eating, drinking or engaging in conjugal relations during the fast of Ramadaan. The Kaffarah for breaking a fast is to fast for 60 days consecutively. If a person cannot fast for 60 days consecutively due to a valid Shari' reason, for e.g. old age or a chronic illness, then he would have to feed 60 poor people two full meals for 1 day, or feed one poor person two full meals a day for 60 days. It is also permitted to give each poor person the Sadaqatul Fitr (Fitra) amount instead of feeding them. The current (Ramadaan 1447) Fitra amount in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa is R30.

Q. Can a sick person pay Fidyah instead of fasting?

A. A person who is permanently incapable of fasting due to a terminal illness or old age will give Fidyah. Fidyah cannot be given by a person who is experiencing a temporary sickness or a temporary valid excuse like such pregnancy or breastfeeding during which fasting will be detrimental to the health of the mother or baby.



Q. I am no longer able to fast. How do I pay Fidyah to compensate for the missed fasts?

A. Fidyah is a monetary compensation in lieu of missed fasts that is given to poor Muslims. The current (Ramadaan 1447) Fidyah amount in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa is R30 for each fast. It can be paid during or after Ramadaan.

N.B. This money may not be discharged before Ramadaan.

Jamiatul Ulama KZN Fatwa Dept.

(Islamic rulings are answered in accordance to Hanafi Fiqh)

