

THE FIT UMMAH'S
RAMADAN GUIDE TO
NUTRITION AND
EXERCISE



U M M A H

BECOME A STRONG BELIEVER

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

All praise is due to Allah ﷻ, Lord of the worlds, who created us and taught us that which we knew not. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, and all his companions.

Dear Reader,

Thank you for choosing this guide to better understand health and fitness from an evidence-based Muslim perspective. Before we begin, I'd like to introduce myself and set clear expectations.

I am Malik Djinadou. I hold a Master of Science degree in Health Sciences from the University of Ottawa, where my research focused on Health Literacy. I'm also an ISSA-certified Personal Trainer with experience helping men achieve their health and fitness goals.

Growing up, I was always active during Ramadan, but as I got older, I noticed my energy levels drop, and my health habits slowed—even though taking care of my body became more important than ever. This inspired me to find a balance between physical health and spiritual growth, which I now share with you.

This ebook is for any Muslim striving to maintain energy and stay active during Ramadan while enhancing their worship. Inside, you'll find practical advice on:

- ✔ **Suhoor and Iftar meal planning** to fuel your day and avoid energy crashes.
- ✔ **Workout strategies** tailored to fasting hours, so you can stay strong without compromising your ibadah.
- ✔ **Long-term habit formation** to carry the discipline of Ramadan into the rest of the year.

It's important to note that while this book combines scientific research with Islamic lifestyle considerations, I do not claim to be either a medical professional or an Islamic scholar. Please consult qualified professionals in these fields for specific medical advice or religious rulings (fatawa).

Together, let us honor the fourth pillar of Islam by making mindful choices about our health. May this guide serve as a means to elevate our worship, safeguard our well-being, and help us fully reap the immense blessings of Ramadan.

Sincerely,

Malik Djinadou

Founder, TheFitUmmah

For my other eBooks on nutrition and fitness, check out TheFitUmmah.com

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Introduction

The 4th pillar of Islam

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become righteous” (2:183).



Fasting during the month of Ramadan is more than a mere tradition; it is one of the Five Pillars of Islam—an act of devotion that brings us nearer to Allah (SWT).

Fasting can be physically demanding, especially alongside extra prayers, challenging weather, and daily responsibilities. Yet the Salaf (early generations) demonstrated that even battles, travel, and routine chores could be accomplished while fasting. Their example shows that caring for our bodies through proper health and fitness directly boosts our ability to worship.

In fact, the Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of physical strength, remarking,

“The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer” (Sahih Muslim).

Here, strength refers to the physical and mental aspects. Treating our body as an amanah (trust) requires us to maintain consistent worship with energy, clarity, and focus.

Beyond the spiritual benefits, **peer-reviewed studies** show that fasting can have a positive impact on metabolic health, potentially aiding in weight management and mental clarity. By optimizing our physical well-being, we can more effectively devote energy to our spiritual pursuits.

Alhamdulillah, the Sunnah has provided us with a simple solution that works during and outside of Ramadan:



"Eat and drink, but be not excessive" (7:31)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"...But if he must eat (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink, and one third for air."

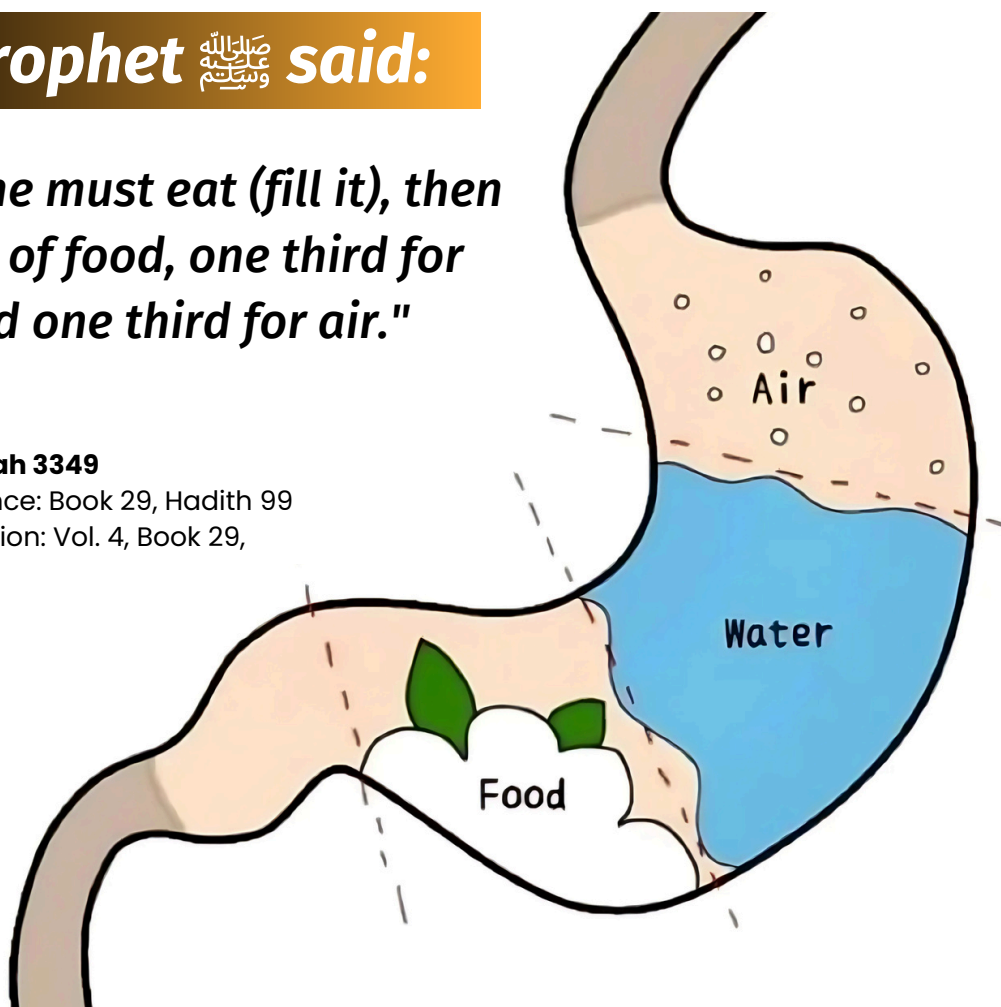
Reference:

Sunan Ibn Majah 3349

In-book reference: Book 29, Hadith 99

English translation: Vol. 4, Book 29,

Hadith 3349



TheFitUmmah Solution

Whether you want to lose fat or build muscle during Ramadan, master these principles:

- ✔ Balanced macronutrient intake—protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats.
- ✔ Nutrient-dense WHOLE foods for sustained energy and better body composition.
- ✔ Mindful eating to manage calories for fat loss or muscle preservation/gain.

The following are examples of foods you should incorporate. Make the appropriate substitutions and consume the appropriate portions that work for you.



Suhoor (Pre-Dawn Meal)

Carbs

- Dates with milk
- Yam
- Plantain
- Cassava
- Millet porridge (fura)
- Brown rice jollof
- Whole-grain couscous
- Flatbreads (msemen or khobz)
- Paratha made with whole-wheat flour
- Chapati
- Brown rice congee
- Sweet potatoes
- Whole-grain noodles
- Whole-grain pita bread
- Bulgur
- Oatmeal
- Whole-grain toast
- Sweet potato hash

Why: These foods release glucose slowly, preventing blood sugar spikes and crashes.

Protein

- Boiled eggs
- Beans (ewa agoyin)
- Lentil stew
- Chickpea salad
- Grilled fish
- Paneer curry
- Chicken keema
- Tempeh
- Tofu
- Chicken satay (grilled, not fried)
- Hummus
- Grilled chicken shawarma
- Labneh with nuts
- Turkey sausage
- Greek yogurt

Why: Protein helps build and maintain muscle mass and keeps you full longer.

Healthy Fats & Fiber

- Groundnut paste (peanut butter)
- Avocado slices
- Olive oil (beware of calories)
- Ghee (in small amounts)
- Coconut milk in curries
- Coconut-based gravies
- Tahini (in moderation)
- Almond butter
- Seeds (chia and flax)

Why: Fats and fiber slow digestion, providing sustained energy throughout the fast.

Hydration

Water, milk, herbal teas, with a pinch of salt or honey.

Why: Electrolytes & adequate fluids help prevent dehydration.

Key Takeaway: Suhoor should fuel and hydrate you for the day, focusing on balanced meals that include proteins, complex carbs, and healthy fats.

Iftar (Breaking the Fast)

This is primarily where many people undermine both their worship and health goals. The right food will either complement your ibadah or will make you tired and uncomfortable.





Break the Fast with Hydration and Light Foods: Dates, Yogurt, Water, Soups (Harira), Millet Drink, Fresh Fruits

The Prophet ﷺ encouraged breaking fast with dates and water (Tirmidhi)



Macro Breakdown

Should be protein focused so you don't get bloated and have a sugar crash

Protein Source		Typical Serving Size	Approximate Grams of Protein/Calories
	Beef, lamb	3 oz cooked	21 grams/200
	Poultry	3 oz cooked	24 grams/125
	Fish/Shellfish	3 oz cooked fish	17 grams/120
	Eggs	1 egg,	6 grams/70
	Nuts and Seeds	½ oz nuts	3 grams/100
		2 Tbsp pumpkin, sunflower, or other seeds	3–4 grams/90
		1 Tbsp peanut or almond butter	3–4 grams/90
	Beans and Peas	½ cup cooked legumes (beans, lentils, split peas)	7–9 grams/110
		½ cup tofu (about 4 oz)	14 grams/90
		½ cup tempeh, cooked	17 grams/170
		¼ cup roasted soybeans	10 grams/120
		2 Tbsp hummus	2 grams/45
	Dairy	1 cup skim milk	8 grams/110
		1 cup yogurt	14 grams/150
		1 cup Greek yogurt	24 grams/150
		½ cup cottage cheese	21 grams/100
		1 oz cheese	6 grams/100

Meal Examples

- ✓ Rice with chicken (mandi, jollof, biryani)
- ✓ Vegetable based stew with protein
- ✓ Whole grains with vegetables and lean meat (Couscous with vegetables and lamb)
- ✓ Whole grain bread with ample protein (Chapati with grilled chicken)
- ✓ Fried rice with minimal oil (Nasi goreng)
- ✓ Grilled kebabs with tabbouleh
- ✓ Roasted chicken with vegetables

Limit Fried and High-Fat Foods

Fried pastries, meats, or snacks.

Note: I am not saying to eliminate these foods but to LIMIT them. Excessive intake can cause indigestion, energy crash and weight gain. You can still enjoy them but in moderation.



Key Takeaway:

Moderation at Iftar is crucial. Overindulgence can quickly derail your health goals and take away from your nightly ibadah.

Hydration and Post-Iftar Snacks

Spread Water Intake

Aim for small, frequent servings of water from Iftar to Suhoor.

Electrolytes: Electrolytes are essential minerals like sodium, calcium, potassium which your body needs to function. Sunnah foods like milk, honey and dates are rich in electrolytes, keeping you hydrated and energized.

Electrolytes prevent dehydration and support kidney function.



High- Electrolyte Foods



Sea Salt



Lemons



Pickles



Wild Salmon



Greek Yogurt



Potatoes



White Beans



Watermelon



Olives



Avocado



Coconut Water



Bananas

Snacks

Greek yogurt, boiled eggs, Spring rolls (baked, not fried), Baklava in moderation, Popcorn, Protein bars, Fruit, or a small smoothie.

Find the balance between something tasty and enjoyable and something that offers real nutritional value.

Sweetener Alternatives

Use natural sweeteners like honey, dates or stevia to replace refined sugar in your meals and snacks.

Why: These alternatives can provide sweetness without the negative effects of high sugar intake, helping to manage energy levels and overall health.

In Summary: Consistent hydration and smart snacking maintain energy levels and avoid empty calories.

Supplements

Focusing on a balanced diet during Ramadan can be difficult because of Ibadah, family, and other daily responsibilities. I recommend whey protein and multivitamins to ensure you can consistently hit your goals. For anything else, consult your doctor.

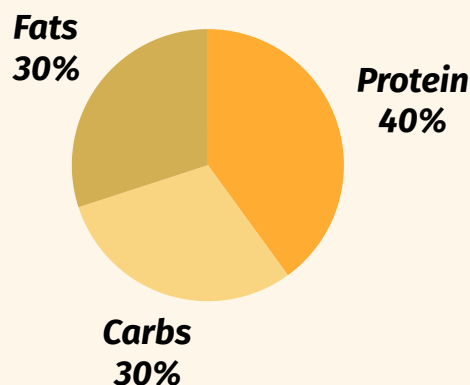
Tailoring Your *Diet for Specific Goals*

While the general framework applies to everyone, your goals—weight loss versus muscle building—require some tweaks.

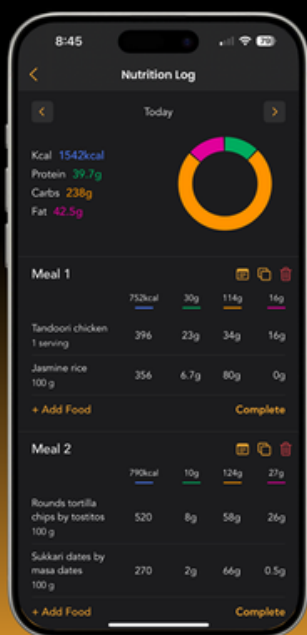
Weight Loss Strategy

- **Calorie Deficit:** A slight deficit (250–500 calories below maintenance)
- **High-Protein, Moderate-Carb, Moderate-Fat:** Example ratio 40% protein, 30% carbs, 30% fats.
- **Emphasize Fiber:** Vegetables, fruits, whole grains.
- **Avoid Calorie Bombs:** Limit fried foods, sugary drinks, heavy desserts.

Macronutrient Distribution for Weight Loss



EASY MEAL PLANNER



Register on
[TheFitUmmah.com](https://www.thefitummah.com) for
App Access

How to Track Calories

1

Set Your Goal

- *Decide if you want to lose, gain, or maintain weight.*

2

Calculate Your Needs

- *Use an app like MyFitnessPal or TheFitUmmah app to determine your daily calories based on age, gender, weight, height, and activity.*

3

Track Your Intake

- *Log everything you eat and drink in the app—even condiments. This builds awareness of true portion sizes.*

4

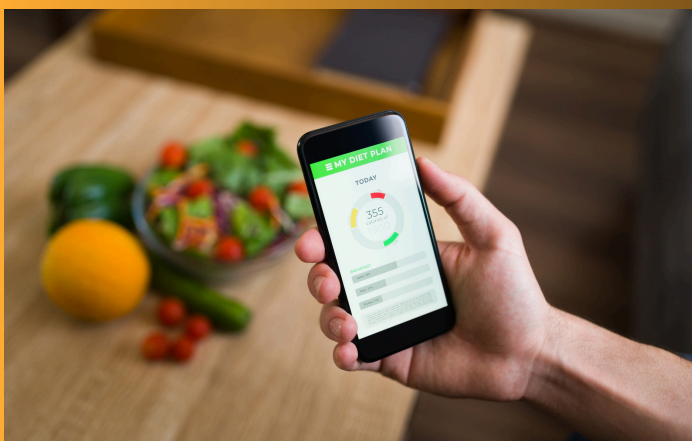
Weigh Your Food

- *Use a digital kitchen scale for a few weeks to measure accurate portions. You can ease up once you develop a good feel for serving sizes.*



Muscle Building & Maintenance

- **Sufficient Protein Intake:** 1.2–1.6 g protein/kg (2,2lbs) of body weight daily, split between Suhoor, Iftar, and post-Iftar snacks. You can stick to your current maintenance calories
- **Quality Carbs & Timing:** Complex carbs around workout times replenish glycogen.
- **Body Recomposition:** Strength training plus adequate protein can preserve muscle while burning fat.
- **For Weight Gain:** Increase calories by 250–500. Increase carbs and reduce protein proportionately if gaining mass is your priority.



Key Takeaway:

Align macros and calorie intake with your specific objectives—whether its fat loss, muscle gains, or maintenance.

Making *Traditional Foods Work*

If you only have access to traditional foods—or simply love them—you can still achieve your goals with these three simple approaches:

01 *Adjust Ingredients*

Control the preparation method. Use less oil or sugar when cooking, and use substitutions when possible

Example: Instead of deep-frying samosas, brush them with oil and bake them at 375°F (190°C) for 15–20 minutes—they'll be just as tasty and crispy



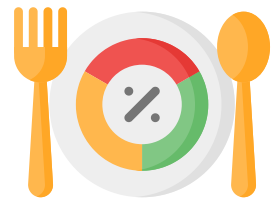
02 *Prioritize Protein*

- Protein is highly satiating, keeping you fuller for longer.
- Increase the portion of fish, lean meats, eggs, or beans in your meals and decrease the carbs and fats (rice, bread, dessert).



03 *Practice Portion Control*

- Eating on smaller plates helps regulate how much you consume.
- Focus on balanced servings rather than eliminating your favorite dishes entirely.



Traditional foods are important to your identity and to family. There is no need to eliminate them. Rather, make the above adjustments and remember: moderation is KEY.

Exercise in **Ramadan**



Why You Should Exercise During Ramadan.

Research consistently shows that exercise can greatly enhance your Ramadan and fasting experience. Physical activity improves energy levels and releases endorphins and other hormones, leading to increased energy during the day and better sleep quality, which in turn helps you feel more rested and revitalized to do ibadah.

Additionally, fasting and exercise together can optimize hormone levels, promoting muscle gain and fat loss. This synergy improves overall health and body composition, making your fast more effective and your worship more fulfilling.



When to Workout

Best Time to Work Out: The time that **best suits YOU**. Everyone's energy levels differ during Ramadan. The main thing is to find the time you will be consistent in.

Next best time to workout? Early mornings:

"O Allah, bless my nation in their early mornings." (Sunan Ibn Majah 2236)

Many of the Salaf took advantage of morning hours for physical and mental tasks. By exercising early, you free up the rest of your day and nights for extended worship—Taraweeh and Tahajjud.

Scientific Evidence for Morning Workouts

Research indicates that morning exercise can help regulate circadian rhythms (your body's internal clock) and improve your overall energy levels throughout the day. Starting your day with exercise can enhance your motivation by allowing you to achieve a sense of accomplishment before other responsibilities come into play.

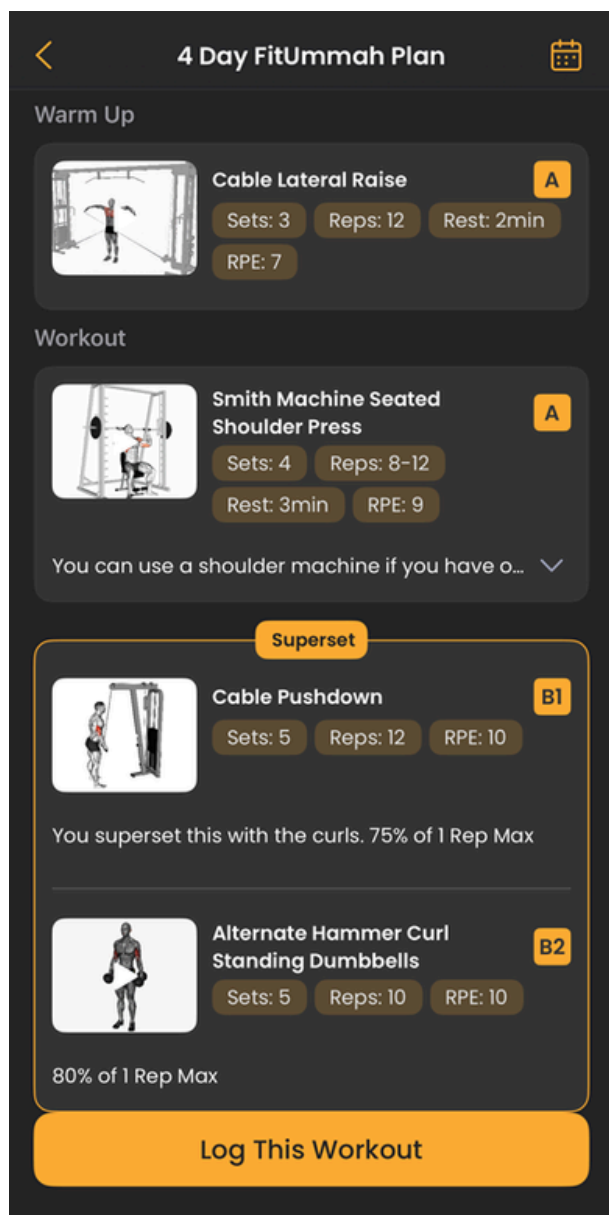
How to exercise during Ramadan

Prioritize routines that help maintain muscle mass, cardiovascular health, and mobility without excessive strain. Here's how you can structure your exercise:

Strength Training

- **Keep Weight Training Largely the Same:** Your usual lifts and resistance exercises can stay on track. Focus on the big compound movements (squats, deadlifts, bench press) or quality bodyweight moves (push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges) to maintain muscle mass and strength.
- **Keep Sessions Short:** Limit your sessions to 45-60 minutes, especially before Iftar





Cardiovascular Activity

- **Low- to Moderate-Intensity:** Engage in activities like walking, cycling, or light jogging.
- **Short Durations of intense exercise:** Aim for 15–30 minutes to avoid extreme thirst or fatigue.
- **Post-Iftar/suhoor Walks:** Consider brisk walks after Iftar to aid digestion and manage caloric balance.

Flexibility & Mobility

- **Dynamic stretching:** Integrate pilates, and mobility drills like dynamic stretching and foam rolling to reduce muscle tension.

Following these guidelines will help you stay fit and healthy while fasting, ensuring you maintain muscle mass, cardiovascular health, and flexibility.



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Ramadan Workout Periods

Below are common time slots people choose to exercise during Ramadan. Each comes with its own benefits and cautions:

Time Slot	Pros	Cons	Ideal For
Pre-Suhoor	You can hydrate and fuel your body shortly after the workout with Suhoor, which helps with recovery and energy for the day.	Waking up earlier may disrupt sleep.	Cardio, weight training.
Post-Suhoor	You've had a meal and hydration, so you'll have energy for a more intense workout.	Can't hydrate during the workout.	Moderate-intensity workouts.
Pre-Iftar	Exercising in a fasted state can support fat loss and discipline.	Keep workouts moderate to avoid dehydration or dizziness.	Strength training or a moderate cardio session with the ability to hydrate freely afterward.
Post-Iftar	Renewed energy from having eaten and drunk water.	May impact sleep and night worship (Taraweeh and Qiyam Al Lail).	Strength training or a moderate cardio session with the ability to hydrate freely afterward.
After Taraweeh	Day's obligations are done, so you can focus on your workout.	It might be late; keep workouts brief to avoid cutting into essential sleep.	Light to moderate-intensity sessions and mobility.

Reminder

Preserve Energy for Worship

Ramadan is fundamentally about spiritual growth. Exercise should enhance your ability to worship, not deplete it.

Sample Ramadan Routine

Note: THIS IS JUST AN EXAMPLE. ALIGN IT WITH YOUR GOALS

Suhoor

Traditional Bread + Eggs & Honey

- 1 or 2 whole-grain Flatbreads/Chapatis/Pitas—scrambled eggs with spinach
- Dates
- 1 teaspoon honey (drizzle over the bread or have on the side)

Hydration

- Water
- (Optional) 1 cup of herbal tea (e.g., mint or chamomile) or coffee; you can add a small pinch of salt or honey.

Post-Suhoor Workout

1. Weightlifting (30 min)

- Compound Lift 1: Squats or Front Squats (3 sets x 8–10 reps)
- Compound Lift 2: Bench Press or Dumbbell Chest Press (3 sets x 8–10 reps)
- Compound Lift 3: Bent-Over Rows or Single-Arm Dumbbell Rows (3 sets x 8–10 reps)

(Rest 60–90 seconds between sets, ensuring proper form and controlled breathing.)

2. Bodyweight Finisher (10 min)

- Push-Ups (3 sets x 10–12 reps)
- Planks (3 sets, hold 30–45 seconds each)
- Lunges (Walking or Stationary, 3 sets x 10 reps each leg)

(Minimal rest between exercises to keep intensity up.)

Iftar

Break Fast

- Dates + Water (Sunnah)
- Light Soup, e.g., Lentil or Vegetable Soup
- Protein shake/smoothie

Main Meal

- Chicken or Fish
- Whole-Grain Rice or Quinoa (1 cup)
- Steamed or Roasted Vegetables (carrots, zucchini, green beans)

Hydration

- 1–2 glasses of water
- (Optional) Unsweetened tea after the meal

Key Tip: Keep portion sizes moderate to avoid post-Iftar lethargy.

Post-Iftar Snack

Light Protein Boost

- Greek Yogurt with Fruit (banana slices, berries)
- A sprinkle of nuts (almonds, walnuts) or seeds (chia, flax)

Hydration

- 1 glass of water or herbal tea with honey

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Before and After Ramadan

Dua is the weapon of the believer

Dua (supplication) is essential to every endeavor in a Muslim's life—particularly when seeking Allah's help to remain steadfast in good actions. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“Dua is the essence of worship.” (Tirmidhi)

By turning to Allah (SWT) and asking for guidance, strength, and sincerity, you can ask Allah for anything and everything as everything is possible for Al- Khaliq (The Creator).

Practical Tip: Make dua to maintain the habits you want—whether it's healthy eating, regular exercise, or consistent Qur'an recitation.

Recognize Ramadan's Uniqueness

Ramadan is a unique period of heightened spirituality and a disrupted daily routine, such as fasting from dawn to sunset and engaging in nightly Taraweeh prayers. Once the month ends, you naturally return to eating and sleeping at “regular” times. This shift can make sustaining every practice you developed during Ramadan challenging.

Key Insight: You won't be praying Taraweeh every night or breaking fast at Maghrib for the rest of the year. Accept that some Ramadan-specific activities will change, but your cultivated discipline must continue



Translate Temporary Routines into **Lasting Habits**

Scientific research on habit formation suggests it can take 21 days to form a new behavior—and consistency is crucial. As the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said,

“Allah loves consistent deeds, even if they are small.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 6464).

During Ramadan, you’ve already demonstrated the ability to be consistent in fasting and nightly devotional acts. Now, channel that same commitment into smaller, manageable routines post-Ramadan.

The Desirability of Observing Three Days of Fasting in Every Month



Abu Hurairah reported:

My friend (the Messenger of Allah) directed me to observe fast for three days in every month, to perform two Rak'ah (optional) Duha prayer at forenoon and to perform the Witr prayer before going to bed.

~ Bukhari and Muslim

Start Small: If you’ve been waking up earlier for Suhoor, maintain an earlier wake-up time for Tahajjud and/or morning exercise, even if just once or twice a week. You can also start implementing Sunnah fasts like Mondays and Thursdays.

Set SMART Goals: Make your goals **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound. For example, aim to walk 30 minutes daily or reduce sugary snacks to twice a week.

Maintain a Moderate Workout Schedule: If you exercise in the early mornings during Ramadan, you can continue this habit throughout the year.

Conclusion

By nurturing your physical health with mindful eating and regular exercise, you fulfill the amanah entrusted to you and uphold the prophetic call to be a strong believer—both spiritually and physically.

Action Steps for Success:

01 Calculate Your Daily Calorie Needs

Use an online calculator to estimate your maintenance level.

02 Track Your Intake

Get a clearer picture of portion sizes and nutrient distribution.

03 Choose Whole, Nutrient-Dense Foods

Focus on proteins, complex carbs, healthy fats, and plenty of vegetables.

04 Craft Sustainable Habits

Adapt smaller, realistic changes you can maintain well after Ramadan.

05 Remain Consistent With Both Diet & Worship

Balance is key—strive for health without neglecting your spiritual goals.

06 Make Dua

Only with God can you find success (11:88)

Acknowledgments

All praise is due to Allah ﷻ, Lord of the worlds, who created us and taught us that which we knew not. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, and all his companions.

I thank Allah ﷻ first and foremost for enabling me to compile this knowledge and share it with the Ummah. Any benefit derived from this work is from Allah alone, and any mistakes are from myself and Shaytaan.

For specific questions about your health and matters of religion, always consult qualified scholars and professionals.

I ask Allah ﷻ to make this work beneficial for the Ummah and to place it in our scale of good deeds on the Day of Judgment.

Contact me

✉ thefitummah@gmail.com

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