

A Guide to
Nutrition in Islam

A Recipe
for Faith &
Wellbeing

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and Contributors

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most
Gracious, the Most Merciful

Foreword

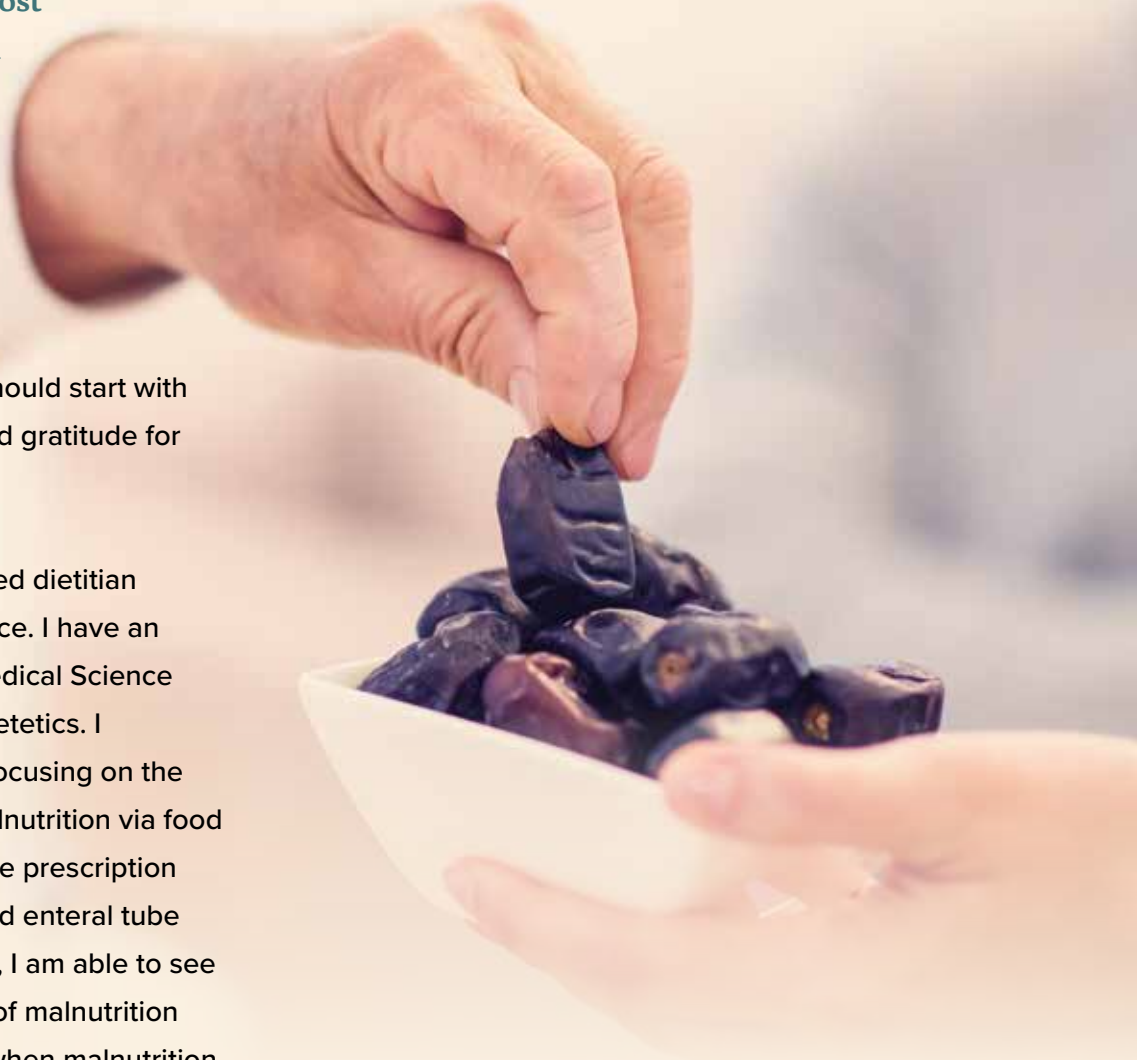
As with everything we do, we should start with remembrance of our Creator and gratitude for our blessings.

I currently work as a registered dietitian with a range of clinical experience. I have an undergraduate degree in Biomedical Science (BSc) and a Master's (MSc) in Dietetics. I specialise in nutrition support, focusing on the treatment and prevention of malnutrition via food fortification advice, as well as the prescription of oral nutrition supplements and enteral tube feeding. Through my daily work, I am able to see the unfortunate consequences of malnutrition which can be detrimental, and when malnutrition is severe and on a large scale, it becomes a crisis.

The catastrophic levels of malnutrition and starvation are continuously faced by millions of our brothers and sisters around the world, including in Yemen, Afghanistan, East Africa, and increasingly in Palestine.

I have decided to collaborate with Islamic Relief and Green Lane Masjid to support their incredible work, focusing on malnutrition projects.

A part of the proceeds from this book will go towards Malnutrition Projects.





Introduction

Understanding what a healthy diet looks like has become over-complicated when we are constantly inundated by conflicting advice from the media, which often lacks any evidence-base while simultaneously being influenced by a culture of over-indulgence through social media. This has unfortunately resulted in a progressive deterioration in our health and wellbeing. We often turn to the Qur'an and Hadith for guidance in various aspects of our lives from parenting to finances, but how often do we seek guidance regarding what to eat and drink beyond that which is permissible and impermissible (halal and haram)?

This book aims to serve as a simple guide focusing on the importance of nutrition in Islam while serving reminders to bring us back to the Qur'an and Hadith. It is accompanied with practical tips to help you integrate positive changes along the way.

This book has ultimately been created to give back. Our intention is to help as much as we can, wherever we can. While part of the proceeds will contribute towards our efforts in treating and preventing famine, the contents of this book aim to support our Muslim community in improving our health and dietary habits by way of the Qur'an and Sunnah. We have also worked alongside some smaller businesses where able, to collaborate in creating our content to share the work of our community.



Our bodies are an Amanah (trust)

With any changes we make, the first step is to review our purpose and motivation for change. Why should we have a healthy diet beyond the reason of disease prevention? As Muslims, it is important for us to remember that **good health is a gift from Allah and it is our responsibility to preserve our wellbeing.**

There is a hadith which states, *“Indeed, your own self has rights over you...”* (Sunan Abu Dawud) and this emphasises the need to value our health intentionally.

As with most of our actions, it is the intention behind them that may increase our reward with Allah - and this can also be applied to our diets. We eat and drink every day, so why not use this as an opportunity to please Allah by intending to nourish our bodies for His Sake?

Food is for our benefit so choose wisely

“O Believers! Eat of the good and pure (lawful) that We have provided you with and be grateful to Allah, if you truly worship Him.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:172)

Having food and drink to eat is a blessing.

Having sufficient food and drink is a bigger blessing, and having the ability to choose when and what we want to eat and drink is an immense blessing that most of us take for granted. Allah has provided us with food and drink for our sustenance, although many disregard this to eat and drink for pleasure only. It is, of course, a positive thing to enjoy the meals we have been blessed with but we should aim to focus our choices on those that are beneficial for our health and those that will please Allah - and so, we should **strive for balance.**



Balance: Practising moderation while avoiding over-indulgence

We often hear the term ‘balanced diet’, and this focuses on two key principles taught in the Qur’an and Sunnah about diet, which are to **practise moderation and avoid over-indulgence**. Moderation is taught in Islam across many aspects of our lives and again, and we should remember to apply this to our diets.

There are a few key reminders from the Qur’an and Sunnah which demonstrate this:

“And eat and drink, but waste not in extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not those who waste in extravagance.”
(Surah Al-A’raf, 7:31)

“The human does not fill any container that is worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat what will support his back. If this is not possible, then a third for food, a third for his drink and a third for his breath.” (Sunan al-Tirmidhi)



General Practices and Reminders according to the Sunnah

Sitting on the floor to eat

“I eat as a slave eats and I sit as a slave sits.” (Al-Albani)

Drinking water in three sips

“Do not drink in one breath just as the camel does. Rather drink twice and thrice, and mention [Allah’s] name before drinking and thank [Him] upon finishing.”
(Sunan al-Tirmidhi)

Drinking water while sitting

“None of you should drink while standing.” (Sahih Muslim)





Eating with the right hand and eating that which is near to you

“I was a boy under the care of RasulAllah ﷺ and my hand used to reach out to all around the platter while I was eating. So RasulAllah ﷺ said to me, ‘O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand, and eat the (part of the) dish that is nearer to you.’ Since then I have applied those instructions when eating.” (Sahih al-Bukhari, ‘Umar ibn Abi Salama)

Eating with three fingers

“I saw the Messenger of Allah eating with three fingers (i.e. the thumb, the index finger and the middle finger) and licking them after having finished the food.” (Sahih Muslim, Ka’b ibn Malik)



Recipes

Here are a collection of nourishing recipes that I have compiled, with some kind contributions from our community. We have carefully selected a range of recipes to showcase the diversity in cuisines across the Muslim community as we demonstrate how we can enjoy our cultural traditions while making healthy choices and incorporating Sunnah foods.



Breakfast Ideas

Lunch and Snacks

Main Meals

Dessert

Acknowledgements

This book has been nothing short of a team effort and it would not have been possible without the amazing team I have worked alongside, including my wonderful family and friends.

I would like to start with a special thanks to Bashir Mahyoub, a dear brother and our previous Volunteer Manager at Islamic Relief, who believed in me as much as this idea from the very beginning. This project was followed through with unmatched dedication and support by my current volunteer managers at Islamic Relief and Green Lane Masjid: Aleesha Mohsan and Rashid Campbell.

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I'd also like to give special thanks to my collaborators for sharing their talents and for the generosity in their time and efforts.

Illustration: Sunnah Foods

Thank you to my sweet friend and sister, Sakina, for taking her time to design a beautiful and custom Sunnah foods illustration for our book. You can also find her lovely artwork sold as postcards and totes at her website.

Sakina Dharas (@sakina.studio)

Contributors

Habit Coaching

Thank you to my dear friend and sister, Hiba Jama, for so generously putting together an incredibly beneficial resource for this book regarding habit development. Hiba is a habit coach and this is her area of expertise - she manages her own coaching business so please check this out. With her helpful tips (inspired by James Clear's Atomic Habits), it makes it so much easier for us to put the advice into action!

Hiba Jama (@LearnwithHiba)

Recipes

Thank you to the exceptionally kind people who have shared their delicious recipes with us, including:

My lovely mum (Jusnara Choudhury) for the Pumpkin Bhaji recipe

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@SavouriesbySara for Sara's Chunky Chaat Recipe

@Falasteenifoodie for the Palestinian Musakhan recipe

@FeastwithSafiya for the Moroccan Fish Tagine recipe and image

May Allah reward each and every person that has helped to develop this book from start to finish immensely. Ameen.

*And whoever is mindful of
Allah, He will make a way out
for them, and provide for them
from sources they could never
imagine. And whoever puts their
trust in Allah, then He alone is
sufficient for them.*

(Quran, 65:2-3)