

A NOTE ON NUTRITION

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Managing gout and uric acid levels during Ramadan: A guide to healthy fasting

Research shows that short fasts, lasting anywhere from 12 to 14 hours, can lessen risks for heart disease, diabetes, and even cancer. However, we must ensure special precautions during this holy month for people with illnesses like gout.

Abstaining from drinking water during this period is not bad at all. In fact, it causes a concentration of all fluids within the body, producing slight dehydration. Having said that, fasting in Ramadan can worsen symptoms of gout as it can lead to increased uric acid levels as dehydration increases the formation of uric acid crystals in joints. Additionally, fasting can lead to a reduction in urine production, which can further increase the concentration of uric acid in the body.

The body has its own water conservation system. Around 2 to 2.5 litres of water is

required during Ramadan to help flush uric acid out of the system. This requirement varies from person to person.

Ideally, during the holy month of Ramadan, our diet should remain close to regular eating habits and be kept as simple as possible. The goal is to maintain a stable weight, avoiding both weight loss and gain.

This year, Ramadan coincides with difficult weather conditions; the days are warmer and fasting hours are long. That means extra preparation must be taken but following a balanced and controlled diet during Ramadan can promote overall health benefits.

What to avoid

Drinks high in fructose, corn syrup, and sugar.

Some consume purine-rich foods during this month, which can trigger a



gout attack. Limit foods high in purines, such as red meat and organ meat like liver, kidney, brain etc., meat extracts and meat soups, fatty flesh like pigeon and duck, sea fishes like herring, sardine, mackerel, shrimp, hilsa, etc.

Limit flavourings and condiments made from high-purine animal products.

Avoid ultra-processed foods like packaged snacks and fast food.

Excess amounts of nuts and oats would

also be harmful.

Dried fish, fish bone, roe (fish eggs) and the head portion of fish need to be strictly avoided.

Fruits and vegetables like those high in uric acid, like spinach, okra, yam, tomato, eggplant, broad beans, long beans, cauliflower, beet, carrot, taro, jambul fruit, tender coconut water, coconut, dried beans, dried peas (*matar dal*), and lentils (*masoor dal*).

Other precautions

A well-adjusted food and fluid intake is important between fasts.

To prevent muscle breakdown (which will worsen gout), meals must contain enough energy-releasing food. One should have a well-adjusted diet with the right proportion of carbohydrates, fat, and protein.

#HEALTH & FITNESS

Work out, not burn out: Your Ramadan workout guide



Exercises help us attain fitness goals, manage weight, and above all, lead a healthy life. So, this Ramadan, it's time we make the right choice for our wellbeing and include exercising with a balanced nutritious diet. Working out in this hot humid environment of ours can be pretty daunting, especially after fasting all day, so we gathered some simple tips for you to follow.

The right timing for the workout

Before doing any exercise, the most important thing is to pick the appropriate time. We suggest skipping workouts while fasting as the humid environment will put you at risk of dehydration. Be active throughout the day, whether you are at the office or home, walk a bit if you can, and remember to take rests whenever you are fatigued.

The best time

for a workout in Ramadan is an hour or two after you have had your iftar, as by then your body would be rehydrated.

Start with some cardio

Before starting your exercise, make sure to warm up and stretch your body properly. Start your session with some cardio; keeping in mind the heat and the fact you have been fasting all day, start lightly.

Go for a walk and check how much you can exercise before you are fatigued as the goal is to have easy enough workouts that will help to maintain your fitness throughout the month.

Be flexible with yoga

Yoga ensures flexibility and strength for both body and mind, making it a nice companion to your fasting journey.

Yoga poses — like the bridge, the triangle, and the tree — are great workout

options if you are looking for something that will calm your mind and maintain your fitness in the process. As it can be done in the comfort of your home, yoga after an hour or two of iftar might just be the exercising cleanser your body needs.

A healthy beverage

Green tea without sugar, unlike milk tea, plays a key role in weight management. According to nutritionists, green tea contains amino acid which works to improve brain function along with antioxidants like EGCG that help prevent cell damage.

Whether it's the pre-workout drink that you need or the post-workout fix, a cup of green tea can be your health and wellness partner along with your workout routine.

— Star Lifestyle
Photo: Collected

