

HOW ISLAM DEALS WITH DISEASES AND PANDEMICS (PART 1 OF 2)

Rating: 5.0

Description: Over fourteen centuries ago Islam informed humankind on essential measures that help prevent the spread of viruses.

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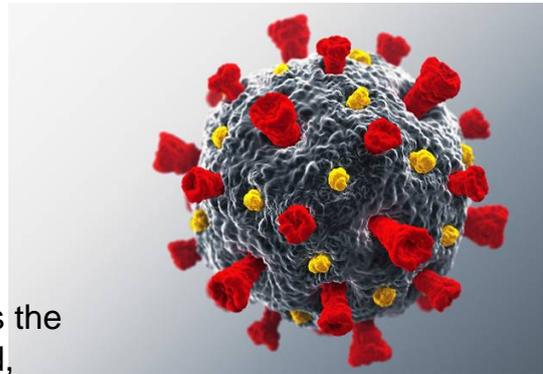
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Tips to Prevent the Spread of Viruses

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic that has taken the entire world by surprise, it is worth noting that Islam, the religion of mercy, long ago mentioned valuable tips that medical science would later confirm help prevent the spread of illnesses, plagues and viruses, including:



1. Washing Hands. Islam strongly recommends the washing of hands. The Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, said, "**Wash your hands after you wake up; you do not know where your hands have moved while you sleep.**"^[1] In addition to after waking up Muslims also wash their hands during an act known as "wudu"—an act of cleaning various parts of the body starting off with washing each hand three times—that is a prerequisite to performing the five daily prayers. Furthermore, the Prophet told us that when washing, we should make sure to wash in-between the finger joints,^[2] which medically speaking is essential in-order to kill germs.

2. Cleanliness. The importance of cleanliness can be emphasized in the saying of the Prophet that, "**Cleanliness is half of faith.**"^[3] Cleanliness is of so much importance that many acts of worship cannot be performed until one becomes in a clean state. A Muslim cannot pray, hold the Quran, nor circumambulate the Kabah until they perform wudu, which includes the washing of the hands, mouth, nose, face, arms, and feet. Likewise after sexual intercourse a Muslim must take a shower before he/she can carry out certain acts of worship.

It is also highly recommended to take a complete shower before attending the weekly Friday prayer at a mosque. A well-known saying of the Prophet goes even further and tells us of ten acts of cleanliness that one should implement for

their own well-being, including snuffing water in the nose, cutting the nails, removing armpit hair, shaving pubic hair, and cleaning one's backside with water after answering the call of nature. Furthermore, even the using of a "miswak", a tree twig used for cleaning teeth, which is equivalent to present day brush and toothpaste, is something that is recommended and liked by God.^[4] The Quran (2:222) mentions, "**Indeed, God loves those who repent and loves those who keep themselves pure.**" Implementing the above-mentioned points helps one stay clean and hence less prone to illness.

3. Drinking and Eating Guidelines. The Prophet forbade people from breathing into a vessel or cup while drinking from it^[5] and forbade the drinking of water directly from the mouth of a water skin.^[6] Not breathing into a cup and not drinking from the same cup with someone else are two universal acts of hygiene that help prevent the transmission of disease. Islam also tells us to cover food and drinks when we go to sleep^[7] and forbade people from urinating in still water.^[8] Finally, Islam dislikes the act of overeating; an act that can cause over a dozen medical conditions; the Prophet mentioned, "**The food for two persons is sufficient for three, and the food of three persons is sufficient for four persons.**"^[9]

4. Cleaning of Clothes. The Prophet used to clean his clothes with his very own hands, and Islam informs us that God likes to see His servant dress well. The Quran (74:4) mentions, "**And purify your clothes.**"

5. Covering One's Sneeze. It is narrated that, "**When the Prophet sneezed, he used to place his hand or a garment on his mouth, to lessen the noise;**"^[10] an act that is strongly recommended at times of infection in order to prevent the spread of germs to others.

6. Social Quarantine. Remarkably, over fourteen centuries ago the Prophet mentioned the following, "If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; but if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place,"^[11] and "If you hear that it (plague) has broken out in a land, do not go to it; but if it breaks out in a land where you are present, do not go out escaping from it."^[12] Experts strongly advise at times of outbreaks that no one leaves their homes and that no one travels to other locations.

Footnotes:

^[1] Muslim, Book # 2, Hadith # 541

^[2] Muslim, Book # 2, Hadith # 502

[3] Muslim, Book # 2, Hadith # 432

[4] Muslim, Book # 2, Hadith # 502

[5] Al Bukhari, Book # 69, Hadith # 534

[6] Al Bukhari, Book # 69, Hadith # 532

[7] Al Bukhari, Book # 69, Hadith # 528

[8] Muslim, Book # 2, Hadith # 553

[9] Al Bukhari, Book # 65, Hadith # 304

[10] Abu Dawoud, Book # 41, Hadith # 5011

[11] Al Bukhari, Book # 71, Hadith # 624

[12] Al Bukhari, Book # 71, Hadith # 626

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