



# Guide to a Covid Safe Ramadan





The blessed month of Ramadan is nearly upon us. It is expected to begin on or around the 12th of April 2021. We are still living in a pandemic, and the UK will be in a national lockdown throughout the duration of Ramadan.

Ramadan is about worship and in this current climate, saving lives is perhaps the biggest form of worship possible (Qur'an, 5: 32). So it is essential we remain vigilant and adhere to Covid-19 guidelines.

Ramadan will be very different for Muslims once again this year, however, we will still remain positive Insha Allah. Rather than focusing on what we cannot do during this month of spirituality, Islam asks us to concentrate on what we are still able to do.

We can still seek Allah's pleasure and forgiveness and like with all Ramadans, we can be there for our family and community, albeit in a different form.

Undoubtedly, we can still pray sincerely to Allah for the strength needed to get through the pandemic together.

Under the current restrictions, places of worship are open. If you plan to attend mosque during Ramadan, it is vital that you:

- Maintain social distancing of at least 2m
- Wear a face covering
- Practice good hand hygiene

**Stay safe, and have a blessed Ramadan, Ameen.**

# Iftar and Suhur

There are expected to be changes in the national lockdown rules that may enable six people, or two households to get together outside in a public space or private garden. Only one household is allowed to be in the same indoor space.

Community Iftars will not be able to go ahead this year, regardless of if they are held outdoors or indoors. This means that there are to be no large family gatherings in people's homes. If you have family members who you do not normally live with, then they must be treated as a separate household.

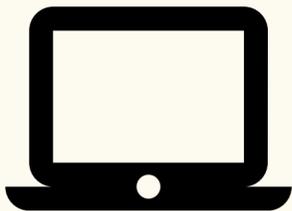




Communal Iftars are not permitted in the mosque, it is much safer to open your fast at home



Only one household is allowed to be in the same indoor space, so avoid any Iftar events outside your immediate family or bubble.



Virtual Iftars over Zoom can be a great way to stay connected with your loved ones who do not live with you.



Avoid distribution and exchanging meals between homes and families. If you are delivering Iftar meals for others, pre-packaged food is ideal, or package individual portions separately.



Do not share food; if you are having your Iftar meal outside with another household, remain socially distanced and avoid open buffet-style dishes.

**Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) identified an immense reward for a Muslim who provides Iftar to others – the forgiveness of one’s sins, salvation from the fire and gaining the reward of fasting for the one Iftar was provided too. This huge reward is the same if a Muslim provides Iftar to his own family members, in their own household (Mirqat al-Mafatih, III: 397).**



# Prayers and Taraweeh

Under the current national lockdown restrictions, places of worship remain open for communal worship. You may attend your masjid for Salah al-Taraweeh and other prayers, but please continue to follow Covid-19 measures that are in place for your safety.

*Your mosque is likely to have limited the number of worshippers that can attend, check to see if you need to register for a place before attending.*

## **Tips:**

- When attending the masjid, please ensure you take with you your own prayer mats and face mask and bags for shoes. It can be costly for your local masjid to provide this on a regular basis
- Remain 2m socially distanced from the other worshippers, there should be no hugs or handshakes.
- Say 'Ameen' quietly to yourself during the Fard, Taraweeh and Witr Salah, as well as Du'a Qunut.
- Bring your own prayer mats to the mosque, and where possible you should wear a face covering throughout.
- If you can, worship from home. Allah knows our circumstances and rewards accordingly. Your mosque may organise live streams to help with this.



Muslims are expected to wear the mask throughout their stay in the house of Allah. If they find it difficult to keep it on for long periods (like in Taraweeh prayers), we advise Muslims to leave the mosque and complete the remaining prayers at home. There is nothing wrong with this, and in fact, it is Sunna. It is reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) led eight rak'ats of Taraweeh prayers with his Companions in the mosque. He performed the remaining twelve at home privately (Sahih al-Bukhari & Muslim). This shows there is a precedence in performing some of the Taraweeh prayers at home.

**I'tikaf (seclusion)** in the mosque for the last ten days of Ramadan is a Sunna Muakkada Kifaya. What this means is that if one Muslim fulfils this obligation, then the burden is lifted from the entire community. Insha Allah, all mosques will safely designate a Muslim to perform I'tikaf on behalf of the community.

In these unconventional times, we can still reap the immense benefit and reward of I'tikaf. Each and every time a Muslim enters the mosque, he should make the intention of I'tikaf, he will still be rewarded immensely. Our sisters can also perform I'tikaf, at home.



# Ramadan and the Covid-19 Vaccination

The UK Covid-19 vaccination roll-out aims to have offered every adult in the UK a vaccine by the end of July. There is a possibility that you will be offered your vaccine during Ramadan.

The majority of Islamic scholars and medical experts state that the vaccine does not invalidate the fast, including the British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA). Receiving the vaccination is the best way to help to protect yourselves, your family, and your community. As Muslims we have a duty to preserve life and getting vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent loss of life from Covid-19.



## Tips:

- All the Covid-19 vaccinations offered by the NHS are halal. They do not contain pork or other animal, foetal or alcohol products.
- The Covid-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and they do not invalidate the fast, you should not delay your vaccination on account of Ramadan.
- Most of the side effects of the Covid-19 vaccine are mild, will last just a few hours and will allow you to continue your fast.
- If you become unwell after receiving your Covid-19 vaccine you should stop fasting and seek medical advice. Islam clearly indicates which types of Muslims are exempt from fasting and from the Qur'an (2: 184); we know that the ill are one of them.

**As a precaution, Muslims who take the vaccination in Ramadan can perform an extra fast in Shawwal, with the intention of making up the fast kept on the day of the vaccination.**



# Celebrating Eid al Fitr

**Eid al-Fitr is Insha Allah expected to fall on, or around, the 13th of May 2021. Insha Allah, it will still be a time of happiness, rejoice and thanks.**

Such sentiments will only be enhanced this year if we celebrate Eid in a manner that keeps our beloveds and our wider community safe.

At this time, only six people or two households will be allowed to meet outdoors and only one household is allowed to be in the same indoor space (unless circumstances changes). It is highly unlikely that Eid in the park events will go ahead.

**If we work together now, next year we will be able to share the spirit of Eid with our loved ones and celebrate the day together as a community!**

## **Tips:**

- Make sure that you give your Zakah and Sadaqa al-Fitr (Fitrana) online this year.
- If you plan to celebrate outside with another household, maintain social distancing practices of at least two metres. Please do not hug or shake hands. Also, please wear a face covering in public spaces.
- To ensure public safety it is best to refrain from travelling outside of your local area to celebrate Eid al-Fitr.
- Avoid large Eid parties, instead organise smaller events within your households and bubbles

