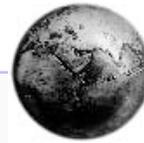




PRIDE IN OUR DIVERSITY

The following information is provided to help you become more aware of your patients' and co-workers' views, traditions, and actions. While you can use this information as a guide, keep in mind that all people within a culture are **not** the same. Be sure to ask your patients and their families about specific beliefs, practices, and customs that may be relevant and important during medical treatment and hospitalization.

When describing the Muslim culture the following information could apply to Muslims outside of the United States, first generation Muslims, or ensuing generations of Muslims. Each piece of information does not necessarily apply to all believers in Islam.



general information

- Islam makes up around 20 percent of the world's population. It is the fastest growing major religion, with non-Arab Muslims now outnumbering Arab Muslims by a ratio of three to one. Also, the four nations with the largest number of Muslims today are all outside of the Middle East: Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India.
- You should formally address the patients and family members. Keep the dialogue serious and direct.
- Some Muslims might bring in objects of religious meaning, such as the Qu'ran. Such objects should be left where they are, unless specifically requested by the patient.
- Islam is the third great monotheistic faith. It emerged with the prophet Muhammad in the 7th century. It is the faith of a steadily growing number of Americans, (currently about 6 million).

inter-personal relationships

history

- ✓ Islam began as a formal religion around 7th century AD, with the emergence of the prophet Muhammad. Within the next twenty years, he accrued a significant following, which enabled him to create an Islamic state in the Arabic peninsula.
- ✓ After Muhammad's death in 632, Islam split into two "sects" - the Sunni, and the Shiite. The differences between them, originally centered around Muhammad's successor, but have since evolved and encompassed a much bigger spectrum of faith. Today, about a fifth of the Muslims profess to be Shiite, while the majority of the rest are Sunni.
- ✓ The differences between the two branches of Islam, and their interpretation of the civil and religious responsibilities, have been a contributing factor in the instability of the Middle East.

beliefs and obligation of Islam

- ✓ The term "Islam" means submission to the will of God, and the person who submits is called a Muslim.
- ✓ The religion of Islam can be divided into beliefs (*iman*) and obligations (*deen*) to the holy places of Islam.

- ✓ The obligations of Islam include: to recite the Shahadah (bearing witness to faith), to pray five times a day, to fast, to give alms (at least a fortieth of your income to the poor), and to make a pilgrimage to the holy places of Islam.

the Qur'an

- ✓ The Holy book is believed to have been dictated to scribed by Muhammad himself, or reconstructed from memory based on his teachings.
- ✓ The Qur'an is written in Arabic and considered authoritative only in that language. Translations of it are not regarded as inspired.
- ✓ The Qur'an teaches that human life, which lasts only a short while, is a test. We will be rewarded or punished for our actions in life after this one. Rewards and punishments will begin immediately after the funeral, but there will also be a Day of Judgment and a resurrection.

Although a majority of Muslims today do not fluently speak Arabic, it remains the official, sacred language of the faith. The words here are written in a western, pronounceable alphabet; Arabic has its own written language, and is one of the minority that is written left to right.

g l o s s a r y

(a r a b i c)

word	meaning
Shokran	Thank you
Ahalan	Hello
Om	Mother
Ab	Father
na'am	Yes
laa	No
Ma'a	Water
Alla EIRahib wa EISaa	You're welcome
Kathir	A lot
Ann Eazinak	Excuse me
Kaifa Halok	How are you?
Ma Ismok	What is your name?
Taib/Bikair	Good
Saia/Mosh Bikair	Bad

The Islamic or Hijra calendar is made up of 12 lunar months. The Hijra year is therefore 354 11/30 days long, which means that it migrates through the solar year, starting about 11 days earlier each (Gregorian solar) year. The Islamic year is considered to have started at sunset of Thursday, July 15, 622 in the Julian calendar and has twelve months of alternately 29 and 30 days, the last month having 30 days only in leap years:

c a l e n d a r				
1	Muharram	30	7 Rajab	30
2	Safar	29	8 Sha'ban	29
3	Rabi' I	30	9 Ramadan	30
4	Rabi' II	29	10 Shawwal	29
5	Jumada I	30	11 Dhu al Qa'da	30
6	Jumada II	29	12 Dhu al Hijja	29/30

The leap year occurs in the 2nd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 13th, 16th, 18th, 21st, 24th, 26th and 29th years of a 30 year cycle. The beginning of a new month is commonly defined, however, by physical observation by the religious authorities of the new moon. Thus the calculated dates may be off by a day or two and may even vary from country to country. In practice this is most important for the beginning and end of Ramadan, the month of fasting and for the feast of 'Id al Adha.

Friday is the day of rest. In many countries, shops and offices may be found open after midday prayers are finished but government offices and so on are invariably closed for the whole day.

did you know

-  Muslims, like Christians and Jews, consider themselves children of Abraham. However, only Muslims claim lineage through Ishmael.
-  A mosque is a building used by Muslims for worship and prayer. One wall, known as *qibla* wall, always faces Mecca.
-  The night of Muhammad's first revelation is known as the "Night of Power."

major observances, festivals, holidays & fasts

Name	Date	Description
Hijra New Year	1 Muharram	A holiday in many countries.
Ashura'	10 Muharram	Shi'a holiday celebrating the martyrdom of Ali. Devout Shi'a beat themselves with chains and even barbed wire in memory of the martyrdom.
Mawlid an Nabi	12 Rabi' I	The birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him).
Lailat al Miraj	27 Rajab	The Ascent of the Prophet (PBUH).
Lailat al Bara'a	15 Sha'ban	Ramadan Month of fasting Believers take no food, drink or tobacco from sunrise to sunset, and abstain from sexual relations. In many cities, the start of the fast is marked each day by a drummer who beats the bounds of each district and the end of the fast by the firing of a cannon. Traditionally, the fast is broken with a bowl of soup and a special salad (fattoush) but the evening breakfast ('iftar) is often an opportunity for reveling which may go on late in the night. Ramadan is not a holiday, but work schedules may be seriously disrupted or altered.
Lailat al Kadr	27 Ramadan	Evening of destiny, revelation of the Qur'an
Quds Day	Last Friday in Ramadan	A recent addition to the calendar, in memory of Jerusalem.
'Id al Fitr	1 Shawwal	This feast marks the end of Ramadan. It commonly lasts 3 days. Known as Seker Bayram in Turkish, Hari Raya Puasa in South East Asia.
'Id al Adha	10 Dhu al Hi	Festival of sacrifice. The culmination of the Hajj or holy pilgrimage. Commonly a 4 day holiday. Known as Kurb Bayram in Turkish, Hari Raya Hajj in South East Asia.

important holidays & dates

As the Muslim day begins at sunset, so do the holidays. The Gregorian dates given in this site are for the day of the feast, so in Western calendar terms, the feast can be said to begin at sunset on the evening before the date given.

Event	Date and Year	Event	Date and Year
Hijra New Year	17 Apr 1999 06 Apr 2000 26 Mar 2001 15 Mar 2002	Ramadan starts	09 Dec 1999 28 Nov 2000 17 Nov 2001 06 Nov 2002
Ashura'	26 Apr 1999 15 Apr 2000 04 Apr 2001 24 Mar 2002	Lailat al Kadr	15 Jan 1999 04 Jan 2000 13 Dec 2001 02 Dec 2002
Mawlid an Nabi	26 Jun 1999 15 Jun 2000 04 Jun 2001 24 May 2002	Quds Day	15 Jan 1999 07 Jan 2000 22 Dec 2000 14 Dec 2001 29 Nov 2002
Lailat al Miraj	06 Nov 1999 26 Oct 2000 15 Oct 2001 04 Oct 2002	'Id al Fitr	19 Jan 1999 08 Jan 2000 28 Dec 2000 17 Dec 2001 06 Dec 2002
Lailat al Bara'a	24 Nov 1999 13 Nov 2000 02 Nov 2001 22 Oct 2002	'Id al Adha	28 Mar 1999 16 Mar 2000 06 Mar 2001 23 Feb 2002

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