

# FAQ About Ramadan

**Will water/oil entering the ears break the fast? Will it make a difference if it was intentional or unintentional?**

The fast will **not** break by water entering the ears unintentionally. If water was put into the ears intentionally then caution dictates that the fast be considered broken. Putting oil or medicine in the ears will always break the fast.

**What happens if a person eats or drinks forgetting that he is fasting?**

The fast will not break.

**While gargling or pulling in water into my nose during wudhu some water went to my throat by mistake, did my fast break? What should I do?**

Yes the fast has broken and you will be required to perform qadhā.

**I have a bad habit of smoking, am I permitted to smoke while fasting?**

Smoking is not allowed while fasting, smoking will break the fast. If a person intentionally smokes while fasting he will be required to perform a qadā fast and pay kaffārah as well.

**I have a dentist's appointment for a filling to be done during Ramadān, can I go for my appointment?**

The fast will not break as long as nothing reaches the throat. It will be advisable to delay your appointment till after Ramadān as there is a high risk of something reaching the throat. This applies to tooth extraction, drilling, cleaning and any other oral procedure.

**If one can't fast in the month of Ramadan because of old age what should one do? Can his family fast for him?**

No one can fast on behalf of another person. If a person is not capable of fasting in the month of Ramadān due to some reason, such as old age and or such an illness from which he has no hope of recovery, then he may offer *fidya* (monetary compensation) for each day he is unable to fast.

These *fidya* payments are meant to feed a *miskīn* (person in need) for each of the fasting days missed, and are equivalent to the price of feeding one person twice.

If he wishes he can give *fidya* from the beginning of Ramadān for the entire month or he can give it at the end of the month, to give *fidya* before the month commences will not be correct.

**Will using an inhaler break my fast? Please keep in mind that I am an asthma patient.**

Yes, since inhalers contain medicine they will break the fast. If a patient has asthma then their difficulty in breathing is a good indication that they may need to break the fast and use the inhaler if there is a flare up. Therefore, if your medical physician feels that your condition is severe enough to cause weakness or worsen your health if you fast then this could be considered a chronic illness which will allow you to break your fast and pay *fidyāh*. If you recover from your illness then you will need to perform qadā as well.

**Can I brush my teeth with toothpaste I'm fasting? I heard the taste you get in your mouth breaks your fast. Please explain.**

It is *makrūh* to use toothpaste while fasting. It is *makrūh* for a fasting person to taste something. There is also a possibility that it may reach the throat. If someone needs to use toothpaste in Ramadān then it should be used during *sehri* time or after *iftār*.

**If I apply cream or lotion will it break the fast?**

All creams, lotions and medications that are for external use and are applied to the skin will not break the fast.

**I have a chest infection and my doctor gave me some medication to take, can I break my fast?**

If your doctor considers it to be a severe illness because of which your condition will worsen if you fast, then you should take your medication and perform a *qadā* later. There will be no need for *kaffārah*.

**Can I have blood test taken during Ramadān?**

Having blood taken will not break the fast. Similarly blood donation and cupping can be done while fasting. However, caution is advised as weakness is likely to follow such procedures.

**I have an appointment with my gynecologist for a pap-smear procedure during Ramadān, will it break my fast?**

This will break the fast because generally this type of procedure is carried out using lubricants and creams. If lubricants and creams are not used then it will not break the fast.

**Can a woman, during her period, eat food in Ramadān during the day?**

She will be allowed to eat anytime during the day. It will be preferable not to eat in front of others who are fasting.

**Will eye drops break my fast?**

Eye drops and any other eye procedures will not break the fast even though the medication can be tasted it in the mouth. The same applies for applying *surma*.

**During the month of Ramadān I will be having my state exams and I can't focus on an empty stomach, can I break my fast and make a qadā later on?**

Giving exams is not a valid excuse for breaking the fast. If a person does break the fast for this reason he will be required to perform a *qadā* and pay *kafārah*.