

# 5 Health Myths

that hold Muslims back



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*[FitnessForMuslims.com](http://FitnessForMuslims.com)*

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# Introduction

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Why is it that many Muslims seem to be living very unhealthy lifestyles? Just go to your local masjid. How many Muslims are not showing up for Fajr because they are too lazy? Do most Muslims even realize that they are not fit? And do they know the consequences of being unfit?

These questions have been coming up a lot in the past few years.

Across the world, Muslim scholars teach Islam as the perfect solution to live a healthy life. Yet many Muslims in our local communities still don't understand how to live a Health life.

Why the contrast?

The root of the problem is in the beliefs we have internalized.

This report will outline the 5 main misconceptions that hold Muslims back from living their ultimate healthy and fit life.

If you haven't already, make sure you join the FitnessForMuslims community list at <http://FitnessForMuslims.com>

Safi Shareef

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P.S. When you have read this report, send me and e-mail at [FitnessForMuslims@gmail.com](mailto:FitnessForMuslims@gmail.com). And tell me what information was of most use to you. It will help bring more benefit in the future, insha Allah!

# Myth #1:

## *Islam has nothing to do with being fit....*

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*Salman reported that it was said to him:*

*Your Messenger (may peace be upon him) teaches you about everything, even about excrement. He (Salman) replied: Yes, he has forbidden us to face the Qibla at the time of excretion or urination, or cleansing with right hand...*

*- recorded in Sahih Muslim*

Many people will point out to me that its not just Muslims who are getting more fat and having health problems. Its actually a general trend throughout the developing world. Yes thats true, by being Muslim it doesn't make you genetically different than other people.

Islam, however, shows us how to *EMBODY* the ideal lifestyle.

Allah has given us guidelines to live by in every aspect of our life. When we act contrary to those guidelines we create imbalance in our lives.

The modern day obesity trend throughout the developing world is a reflection of that imbalance. The only way to solve it is by revitalizing the Islamic lifestyle in our communities.

*“You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men; you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah;..”*

*- Qur'an (3:110)*

As Muslims we need to live up to the standard set for us in the Qur'an. Let's educate ourselves and live the ideal healthy Islamic lifestyle! Only then can we enjoin others to do likewise!

# Myth #2:

I was born fat, so I will always be fat...

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*We have indeed created man in the best of stature,*

*- Qur'an (95:4)*

Growing up, I was always considered the chubby kid. My rotund form became a significant part of my identity. Alhamdulillah, as I got older, my understanding of Islam became more serious. I realized that the only one who was keeping me from being fit, was myself!

Allah tells us in the Qur'an:

*O mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the Generous, Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion; In whatever form He willed has He assembled you.*

*-Qur'an (82:6-8)*

Everyone was born and raised through our childhood exactly the way Allah desired. To believe that just because we were born overweight we are guaranteed to always be so, is contrary to Islam. Each of us has been given our own individual tests and trials. Whether we are desperately poor or obesely fat, Allah asks us to make an effort to change for the better. As long as we have the right intentions, we will, insha Allah, be guaranteed success.

Now, I'm not saying that there aren't people with legitimate genetic issues they need to deal with. Some people do develop hormonal problems, like Hypothyroidism, which can lead to obesity or other diseases. These are considered to be tests from Allah. Just like a blind woman should be patient throughout her life, so should those affected by any other illness.

The prophet (peace be upon him) even mentions genetic inheritance in an authentically narrated hadith:

*Narrated Abu Huraira:*

*A bedouin came to Allah's Apostle and said, "My wife has delivered a black boy, and I suspect that he is not my child." Allah's Apostle said to him, "Have you got camels?" The bedouin said, "Yes." The Prophet said, "What color are they?" The bedouin said, "They are red." The Prophet said, "Are any of them Grey?" He said, "There are Grey ones among them." The Prophet said, "Whence do you think this color came to them?" The bedouin said, "O Allah's Apostle! It resulted from hereditary disposition." The Prophet said, "And this (i.e., your child) has inherited his color from his ancestors." The Prophet did not allow him to deny his paternity of the child.*

*- recorded in Sahih Muslim*

The reality is that people are generally born perfectly healthy. If you take time to study the number of birth defects possible, you'll come to realize how miraculous our very own birth is, Alhamdulillah!

When I finally came to know that the life I was living had unhealthy consequences, I decided to change. Since then, I have made some huge improvements in my fitness, Alhamdulillah. As a fitness coach, I have also benefited others in greatly eliminating their former habits.

With effort, YOU can too!

If you have felt like your not living a healthy life, you are not alone. One of the worst things you can do is to believe that you can not change. So do not despair!

# Myth #3:

**Its natural for me to get weaker as I get older...**

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During the battle of the trench, the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) looked for the strongest man to remove a huge rock. The natural choice was the Prophet (SAS), who was well into his 50s!

We were digging (the trench) on the day of (Al-Khandaq ( i.e. Trench )) and we came across a big solid rock. We went to the Prophet and said, "Here is a rock appearing across the trench." He said, "I am coming down." Then he got up, and a stone was tied to his belly for we had not eaten anything for three days. So the Prophet took the spade and struck the big solid rock and it became like sand.

*- recorded in Sahih Bukhari*

Take a quick look throughout our Islamic history. You will find numerous stories of the companions, many in their 50s and 60s performing incredible feats of strength. Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali, and 'Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them all) were all known to have been on the forefront in battles late into their lives. Even some women Sahabas, like Nusaybah (may Allah be pleased with her).

This was not restricted just to the companions of the prophet (peace be upon him). In the 1900s, 'Umar Mukhtar, a Libyan Quran teacher in his 50s, led the resistance movement against the occupying Italian fascists for nearly 20 years!

What did all these Muslims have in common? Their lives did not revolve around dieting and exercising. But they did make sure to keep themselves always optimally fit. Spreading Islam during the day and praying to Allah alone for half the night.

Nowadays, Muslims are neglecting both the worship of Allah and exercise. And by not staying healthy and fit, we are preventing ourselves from doing more 'Ibaadah and worship of Allah!

In my medical education, I was astonished to find that modern day health care providers thrive on people getting fatter and more sick as they got older. They would rather prescribe medication then address the root of the problem. And the societal trends accept that.

The reality is, to really live healthy, all we need is a few guidelines and we are set for our lives.

Yes, It is natural for us to degenerate slowly as we get older. This is normal. Older people will always have more health concerns.

But when its common to find Muslims in their 40s and 50s getting multiple bypass surgeries, we know there is a real problem. And now, its even more prevalent to find young Muslims in their 20s who can't stay awake while fasting and struggle to stand in Qiyam during the Taraweeh prayer!

These are some of the of the main issues, FitnessForMuslims will address, insha Allah!



# Myth #4:

## I can start living a healthier life later...

*The Messenger of Allah (SAS) told 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr:  
It suffices for you that you should observe fast for three days during every month. I said: Apostle of Allah, I am capable of doing more than this. He said: Your wife has a right upon you, your visitor has a right upon you, your body has a right upon you ....*

*- recorded in Sahih Muslim*

Allah created us with amazingly robust bodies. There was a time in my life where I couldn't walk with my legs for a whole month because I had injured them. Now, Alhamdulillah, I can run for miles. I am sure we have all either been through or had a close friend/relative go through a debilitating sickness; then later, with Allah's help fully recover.

But there are some sicknesses which damage a person for life.

When you have a heart attack, your heart muscle loses its oxygen supply. This causes the muscle tissue in your heart to die and scar up. Once this occurs, if you happen to survive, your heart can no longer pump efficiently and now must work extra hard to get blood to the rest of your body. The more work your heart constantly has to do, the weaker it gets, and the more likely you are to get another heart attack. Modern science has yet to find an effective way to stop this vicious cycle.

In liver failure, your body can no longer deal with anything you eat or drink. Normally, your liver has the ability to regenerate its function if it gets damaged when you are sick. But by continuously eating and drinking toxic products, you overburden your liver. As you damage your liver more and more, it never gets a chance to recover. This can continue until your liver has lost ALL of its function!

These are just a few of very serious consequences that are caused by a lifetime of abusing your body.

The prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited us from habits that may weaken our bodies, even if they seem outwardly good.

*'Abdullah b. 'Amr (Allah be pleased with both of them) reported: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said to me: I have been informed that you stand for prayer the whole of night and fast during the day. I said: I do that, whereupon he said: If you did that you in fact strained heavily your eyes and made yourself weak. There is a right of your eyes (upon you) and a right of your self (upon you) and a right of your family (upon you). Stand for prayer and sleep. observe fasts and break (them).*

*- recorded in Sahih Muslim*

In the documentary, *Super Size Me*, Morgan Spurlock experimented with doing a strictly fast-food only diet and no exercise for 30 days. He started with excellent health, but after 20 days, he had to stop his experiment because he gained nearly 30 lbs and was approaching dangerously close to irreversible liver and heart damage. Now imagine someone who lives like that everyday!

*One day Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, noticed a Bedouin leaving his camel without tying it. He asked the Bedouin, "Why don't you tie down your camel?" The Bedouin answered, "I put my trust in Allah." The Prophet then said, "Tie your camel first, then put your trust in Allah"*

*- recorded by Tirmidhi*

No doubt, we never know if Allah has written that we get sick in the near future. But the point is that we don't know our future. What Allah asks is that we fulfill our rights today. Our body has a right on us, so we must start taking care of it today. Only then can we trust in Allah that we will have the best health in our future!

# Myth #5:

## I am too busy to keep a good diet and exercise...

*'A'isha reported that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said:*

*... O people, perform such acts as you are capable of doing, for Allah does not grow weary but you will get tired. The acts most pleasing to Allah are those which are done continuously, even if they are small. And it was the habit of the members of Muhammad's (may peace be upon him) household that whenever they did an act they did it continuously.*

*- recorded in Sahih Muslim*

When I see advertisements for many of the latest fitness trends, I can't help but smirk. I have done a lot of research on health, discovering the most effective fitness routines. What I have found is that most all of those commercials selling fitness “toys” and “routines” are scams that will only lead you to waste time. You could get caught up exercising for hours everyday and still not see any results. I almost did.

That's one of the reasons I started helping other Muslims get more fit. My experience, backed by modern research, shows that we only really need to be spending at most 4-5 hours per week to get amazing results! A small continuous effort everyday.

*Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope.  
- Qur'an (2:28)*

Staying healthy and being in shape should NOT take up a lot of time from our life. Lets educate ourselves on the best way of living healthy.

By keeping fit, we can focus on achieving our potential and fulfilling our true purpose in life, worshiping Allah!

# About *FitnessForMuslims.com*

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**FitnessForMuslims** is about living a healthy fulfilling life no matter how old you are. It's about prioritizing health today, so that you won't suffer tomorrow.

The information and practical advice you will find in the **FFM** community is the result of years (sometimes centuries) of research and collaboration between the world's fitness elite.

**FFM** will often feature Muslims from the fitness elite who strive to live the ideal healthy Islamic lifestyle.

If you have any questions, feel free to send us an e-mail, we would love to hear from you!

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