



# 15th World Congress on Public Health

3-7 April 2017 Melbourne Australia [www.wcph2017.com](http://www.wcph2017.com)

## Islam and Public Health

Tuesday 4 April, 1600 - 1800, Plenary Hall 2

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Lead	Dr Ahmed Soliman Mohamed Wasfi, Dubai Health Authority
Speakers	Dr Ahmed Soliman Mohamed Wasfi, Dubai Health Authority Ms Najwa Al Bastakee, Dubai Health Authority Dr Sabya Farooq, Dubai Health Authority Dr Muhammad Wasif Alam, Dubai Health Authority

Islam is much more than a religion, it is considered a way of life. Public Health promotion and disease prevention in the Arabian Peninsula dates as early as 1400 years ago, the time when the ideology of Islam and its teaching spread in that region. The risk of fecal-oral transmission of diseases, water and foodborne diseases is reduced significantly by performing five times ablution (washing one's body part) that is required before prayers (personal hygiene). Many other religious practices are taught to Muslims that have a scientific basis in communicable diseases control such as circumcision and abstaining from sex workers (protecting from Sexually transmitted diseases). A large, retrospective study of nearly 15,000 infants found neonatal circumcision to be highly cost-effective in averting cases of infant urinary tract infection, lifetime incidence of HIV infection, penile cancer, balanoposthitis (inflammation of the foreskin and glans), and phimosis (a condition where the male foreskin cannot be fully retracted from the head of the penis).

The Holy book "Quran" along with the examples of the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) set out many important guidelines concerning ones' diet and lifestyle. It encourages eating of specific foods which have proven health benefits including: Honey, Olive Oil/olives, Figs and pomegranate, which we know today to be full of antioxidants. The traditions of the Prophet also encourages eating within moderation or until only two thirds of the stomach is full.

Substances considered harmful or intoxicating for the body such as Alcohol and Tobacco are forbidden. Exercise of the body (moving all joints and muscles) and mind is a pillar of Islam and a ritual performed 5 times a day through prayers. It is also an opportunity to meditate in order to reduce mental stress, focus on your inner self and to be "thankful" - concepts which meditation and mindfulness draw upon today.





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Islam also encourages sports for males and females, particularly mentioned are Archery, Fencing, Equitation, Swimming and Sprinting.

These are just some examples of how Islam and its codes of practices are mutually in agreement with the recommended Public Health Practices of the 21st century. A more detailed dialogue will be constructed on its principles and the practice of virtuous Public Health.

