



## QUICK REFERENCE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS INTERACTING WITH MUSLIM PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

For more complete information on interacting with Muslim patients, please see the complete version of the *Guidelines for Health Care Providers Interacting With Muslim Patients and Their Families*. This Quick Reference is meant to assist Health Care Workers in Emergency Situations.

<p><b>GENERAL</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The fundamental belief of Muslims is the oneness of God and belief in Muhammad as the last Prophet of God. “Islam” means submission and obedience to the will of God, and aims at achieving peace with self and the surroundings. The Five Pillars of Islam are Declaration of Faith, five daily Prayers, Fasting (for the entire month of Ramadan from dawn to dusk), Charity and Pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca).</li> <li>▪ During illness, Muslims are expected to seek God's help with patience and prayer, increase the remembrance of God to obtain peace, ask for forgiveness, give more in charity, and read or listen to more of the Qur'an (the Muslim spiritual text).</li> </ul>
<p><b>GENDER ISSUES/ MODESTY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Respect modesty and privacy (knock on the door, announce your arrival, etc.).</li> <li>▪ Limit eye contact.</li> <li>▪ Do not touch while talking.</li> <li>▪ Some Muslim women will insist on covering their whole bodies except for the face, hands and feet at all times. Some examinations may be done while a patient wears a gown. Hospital gowns should be long, with long sleeves. If such clothing is unavailable, <b>Muslim women should be allowed to use their own gowns.</b></li> <li>▪ Although Islam does not ban treatment by the opposite sex, providing the patient with a nurse and/or physician of the same sex when possible is recommended, especially if the patient feels strongly about it. Alternately, a male physician should examine a female patient in the presence of her husband or another female if the patient desires, when possible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS</b></p>	<p>Blood transfusions are allowed.</p>
<p><b>FAMILY ISSUES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An essential aspect of health care is the health care providers' roles in understanding the concerns of the patient and family and communicating these concerns to all those involved in the decision-making process; to console and comfort the patient and his/her family so that they can accept their or their loved one's disease state; and if possible, to take care of the family's needs beyond the medical aspects.</li> <li>▪ It is an Islamic cultural and religious practice to visit the sick. Be open and understanding of visits by family members and well wishers when practical.</li> <li>▪ In matters of terminal care, the attending physician should consult the patient, the family, the ethicist, and preferably, an Islamic scholar before making a final decision.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DIETARY ISSUES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Muslim Halal (similar to Kosher) meals should be provided, if available. <b>Pork, ham, lard, bacon, and alcohol are strictly prohibited.</b> If Halal meals are not available, Jewish Kosher meals or vegetarian meals are acceptable. Allow patients to bring food from home if there are no dietary restrictions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fasting is done once a year (from dawn to dusk) during the month of Ramadan. In general, fasting is exempt in illness and pregnancy.</li> </ul>
<b>END OF LIFE CARE</b>	Maintaining a terminal patient on artificial life support for a prolonged period in a vegetative state is not encouraged.
<b>ORGAN DONATION/RECEIPT OF TISSUE OR ORGANS</b>	Organ transplantation, both donating and receiving, is allowed with some restrictions (donor material of porcine origin).
<b>AUTOPSY</b>	Autopsy is not encouraged but is permitted if required by law.
<b>CARE OF THE DECEASED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is important that funeral and burial arrangements be made in advance in consultation with the family and according to the wishes of the dying or deceased patient if possible.</li> <li>▪ With minimum delay, the body is to be removed to the funeral home because Muslims prefer an expeditious burial. Provide routine post-mortem care; the body should be gowned and shrouded.</li> <li>▪ Allow the family and Imam (chaplain) to follow Islamic guidelines for preparing the dead body for an Islamic funeral. The dead body should be given the same respect and privacy as during life.</li> <li>▪ If the death is subject to investigation by the local Medical Examiner or Coroner, follow established procedures. Be sure to notify the Medical Examiner or Coroner of any special religious beliefs or family requests.</li> </ul>
<b>RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES</b>	<p>A prayer room for Muslims may be provided. The room should be quiet, clean and carpeted (prayers are done while kneeling on the floor). An inter-religious space sensitive to the needs of persons of diverse traditions is preferable.</p> <p>It is a religious custom that an elder says the Islamic prayer call in an infant's right ear shortly after birth.</p>
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION &amp; RESOURCES ON THE WEB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, 630/629-7490, <a href="http://www.ciogc.org/">http://www.ciogc.org/</a></li> <li>▪ Muslim Community Center, Chicago, 773/725-9047</li> <li>▪ Islamic Foundation, Villa Park: 630/782-6562</li> <li>▪ The Mosque Foundation of Chicago, Bridgeview, 708/430-5666</li> <li>▪ Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago, Northbrook, 847/272-0319</li> <li>▪ Aminah Beverly McCloud, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Islamic Studies, DePaul University, 773/325-1290</li> <li>▪ Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMA), <a href="http://www.imana.org">http://www.imana.org</a></li> </ul>