



FASTING IN RAMADAN WHILE PREGNANT: RISKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Although the Ramadan fast is compulsory in Islam, pregnancy may represent a relative exemption. Many Muslim women, nonetheless, still choose to fast during their pregnancy.
- The scientific evidence and literature concerning fasting in Ramadan and pregnancy outcomes is overall weak.
- Some reports say that fasting during pregnancy could cause decreased fetal movement, may lead to lower birth weight of newborns if fasting occurs early in pregnancy (1st trimester), and although not found to be associated with significant adverse birth outcomes it may have unproven long-term health consequences for the offspring, especially when they reach their middle age.
- Based on expert opinion, recommendations for pregnant women who decide to fast during the holy month of Ramadan include:
 1. Seek for close medical advice especially if you are diabetic
 2. Hydrate yourself well especially before dawn
 3. Focus on healthy natural balanced food
 4. Never miss your pre-dawn meals
 5. Stay calm and avoid stressful situations
 6. Try to rest and avoid prolonged exposure to heat and sunlight
 7. Try not to exercise during fasting periods
 8. Save activities until shortly before dusk so that you can eat and drink soon after
 9. Watch for excessive nausea and vomiting especially during the first trimester
 10. Watch for decreased fetal movement
 11. Watch for signs of preterm contractions
 12. Watch for signs of low blood sugar and dehydration like dizziness, weakness or fatigue

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