



Islamic view of gluttony explained from medical and scientific point of view

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Abstract: From the time of the Prophet SAW and his companions till today, during these fifteen centuries, the muslim ummah has undergone a profound change in its lifestyle, including the food habits. From highly simplistic and frugal way of life to a highly opulent and extravagant living. This, in turn, in addition to causing various health issues, is also making it difficult for the ummah to discern the huge benefits of following the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW in their daily life. For example, a health issue of gluttony which was unheard of during the time of the Prophet SAW, is becoming common in the ummah. Take for example, the use of sifter, which has become a thing of common use in our daily lives, was in seldom use during the time of the Prophet SAW. In this paper we have strived to bring home the critical lesson for the ummah to obediently follow the practices of the Prophet SAW and his Sahaba RA in their daily lives. Qur'an and Hadith are replete on this valuable subject. And now science after fifteen centuries has come to the conclusion that what was said in Qur'an and Hadith are coming true in letter and spirit.

Keywords: elementary canal, food intake, gastroenterology, gluttony

Abstrak: Sejak zaman Nabi SAW dan para sahabat hingga saat ini, selama lima belas abad ini, umat Islam telah mengalami perubahan besar dalam gaya hidup, termasuk pola makan. Dari cara hidup yang sangat sederhana dan hemat hingga cara hidup yang sangat mewah dan boros. Hal ini pada gilirannya, selain menimbulkan berbagai masalah kesehatan, juga membuat umat sulit memahami manfaat besar menjalankan Sunnah Nabi SAW dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Misalnya, isu kesehatan akibat kerakusan yang belum pernah terdengar pada masa Nabi SAW, kini menjadi hal yang lumrah di masyarakat. Misalnya saja penggunaan ayakan yang sudah menjadi hal yang lumrah dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, namun jarang digunakan pada zaman Nabi SAW. Dalam tulisan ini kami berupaya membawa pulang hikmah penting bagi umat untuk patuh mengikuti amalan Nabi SAW dan para Sahabatnya RA dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Al-Qur'an dan Hadits penuh dengan topik yang berharga ini. Dan sekarang ilmu pengetahuan setelah lima belas abad telah sampai pada kesimpulan bahwa apa yang dikatakan dalam Al-Qur'an dan Hadits menjadi kenyataan baik secara tertulis maupun secara batin.

Kata Kunci: asupan makanan, gastroenterologi, kerakusan, saluran pencernaan

Introduction

Islam being the most simple and modest way of life, strongly enjoins healthy eating habits. Food intake in addition to being a necessity of life, can also be a source of rewards in the hereafter, if one follows the guidelines of Shariah and the blessed way of the holy Prophet SAW. On the other hand, intake of food, without following the Sunnah, in addition to being devoid of blessings in this life, and no rewards in the hereafter, also can seriously lead one to major health problems, including developing the bad habit of gluttony. Our lives are replete with cases, where we or others have contacted diseases, and even life threatening ones, due to the simple reason of not following the Sunnah of eating. It can be said with certainty, that a major part of the diseases prevalent in the present day world, can be avoided if everyone makes a concerted effort to sincerely follow the Sunnas of eating. Without any hesitation, one would see that just by simply following the Sunnas of eating, nations throughout the world can reduce their medical budgets to at least half of what is being spent now, which is a huge wastage of precious resources and has caused great tragedy.

Gluttony is defined as greediness and excessive indulgence in eating and drinking. This usually leads to obesity, which in turn leads to several serious health issues. In this presentation we aim to elucidate the Islamic view on gluttony in light of the Qu'ran and Hadith using authentic interpretations from well-known Islamic scholars, and as well as corroborating it with science.

Materials and Methods

The work presented in this paper is qualitative and was conducted using the literature search, which involved gathering of various resources including reputed articles published online on the subject.

Result and Discussion

A. Qur'anic view of Food Intake

Allah Ta'ala says in Qur'an Al-A'raaf: 31:

﴿يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ خُدُوًا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ؕ ۳۱﴾

Meaning:

“O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.”

In Tafseer of the above verse, Mufti Mohammed Shafi (RA) states in Mariful Qur'an:

Sayyidna Faruq al-A'zam (RA) said: 'Avoid eating and drinking too much because it spoils the body, generates diseases and slackens activity. Instead, take to moderation in eating and drinking for it is good for the health of the body, and is far removed from extravagance (Israf) in it.' He also said: 'Allah Ta'ala does not like an obese 'Alim' (that is, a scholar of religion who has become fat and heavy as a result of eating excessively by choice). Then, he further said: 'A person does not get destroyed until he starts preferring his personal desires over his Faith.' (Ruh Al-Ma'ani from Abu Nu'aym). Righteous elders of the early period have said that to keep busy with the business of eating and drinking all the time, or to prefer it over other matters of importance giving the impression that one has no other worthy purpose left in life but eating and drinking, is included under Israf (extravagance). Also well-known is their saying that one should eat to live, not live to eat. The Holy Prophet SAW has included the attitude of compulsively satiating every desire as and when it emerges as included under Israf (extravagance), when he said in a Hadith: It is also an Israf that one eats everything one desires. (Ibn Majah from Sayyidna Anas). As reported by Al-Baihaqi, The Holy Prophet SAW once saw Sayyidah 'A'ishah (RA) eating twice on a day and he said: 'O' 'A'ishah, would you like that eating becomes your only pastime?

Eight Rulings from One Verse

In short, eight rulings of the Shari'ah come out from the Qur'anic statement: *كُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا* (Eat and drink and do not be extravagant): (1) Eating and drinking is obligatory as needed, (2) unless the unlawfulness of something stands proved as based on an evidence admitted by the Shari'ah, everything is Halal, (3) the use of things prohibited by Allah Ta'ala and His Messenger SAW is Israf and is impermissible, (4) taking as Haram what Allah has made Halal is also Israf, and a grave sin, (5) once one has eaten his fill, eating anymore is impermissible, (6) eating so little that one becomes weak and is rendered unable to fulfill his obligations is also Israf, (7) keep thinking of eating and drinking all the time is also Israf, and (8) it is not necessary that one must have what one wishes for at a given time.

The rules recounted above which emerge from this verse have their religious benefits. If one looks at it medically, a better prescription for health and well-being will be difficult to find. The key is moderation in eating and drinking, and that is our sanctuary from all diseases. In *Tafsir* of the above verse, *Mufti Shafi RA* relates a beautiful story. According to *Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani* and *Mazhari, Khalifah Harun Al-Rashid* had a personal physician who was a Christian. He said to *Ali ibn Husayn ibn al-Waqidi*: “Your Book (the Qur'an) has nothing about medicine in it, although there are only two fields of knowledge in our time, the knowledge of religion and the knowledge of bodies called Medicine.” *Ali ibn Husayn* said: “*Allah Tala* has put the whole science of medicine in half a verse of the *Qur'an*. He says: *كُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا* (Eat and drink and do not be extravagant)”. Then, the Court physician asked: “All right, is there something in the sayings of your prophet about Medicine?” *Ali ibn Husayn* replied: “The Holy Prophet *SAW* has reduced the whole science of medicine in a few sayings of his when he said that 'the stomach is the nursery of diseases and abstinence from harmful things is the root of all medicine' and 'give everybody what it can take (as a matter of habit)” (*Kashshaf & Ruh Al-Ma'ani*). After hearing this, the Christian physician said: “Your Book and your Prophet have left no Medicine for Galen (*Jalinnus*).”

Tafseer Ibne Kaseer elaborates on the verse: And eat and drink but waste not by extravagance

Al-Bukhari said that *Ibn Abbas* said, "Eat what you wish and wear what you wish, as long as you avoid two things: extravagance and arrogance." *Ibn Jarir* said that *Muhammad bin Abdul-A'la* narrated to us that *Muhammad bin Thawr* narrated to us from *Ma'mar* from *Ibn Tawus* from his father who said that *Ibn Abbas* said, "Allah has allowed eating and drinking, as long as it does not contain extravagance or arrogance."

Imam Ahmad recorded that *Al-Miqdam bin Ma'dikarib Al-Kindi* said that he heard the Messenger of Allah saying, The Son of Adam will not fill a pot worse for himself than his stomach. It is enough for the Son of Adam to eat a few bites that strengthens his spine. If he likes to have more, then let him fill a third with food, a third with drink and leave a third for his breathing. *An-Nasa'i* and *At-Tirmidhi* collected this *Hadith*, *At-Tirmidhi* said, "Hasan" or "Hasan Sahib" according to another manuscript.

Ata Al-Khurasani said that *Ibn Abbas* commented on the *Ayah*, And eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not the wasteful. "With food and drink." Certainly He (Allah) likes not the wasteful. *Ibn Jarir* commented on Allah's statement, "Allah the Exalted says that He does not like those who trespass the limits on an allowed matter or a prohibited matter, those who go to the extreme over what He has allowed, allow what He has prohibited, or prohibit what He has allowed. But, He likes that what He has allowed be considered as such (without extravagance) and what He has prohibited be considered as such. This is the justice that He has commanded."

B. Prophetic view of Food Intake

عن أبي هريرة أن رجلا كان يأكل أكلا كثيرا فأسلم فكان يأكل أكلا قليلا فذكر ذلك للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال إن المؤمن يأكل في معي واحد والكافر يأكل في سبعة أمعاء

Abu Hurayrah (RA) narrates that a man used to eat excessively. When he embraced Islam, he started eating less. This was mentioned to the Prophet SAW. He said: "Indeed, a believer eats with one intestine, and a disbeliever eats with seven intestines." (Saheeh Bukhari, Kitabut-Ta'am).

عن عائشة قالت كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يأكل طعاما في ستة نفر من أصحابه فجاء أعرابي فأكله بلقمتين فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أما أنه لو كان قال بسم الله لكفاكم فإذا أكل أحدكم طعاما فليقل بسم الله فإن نسي أن يقول بسم الله في أوله فليقل بسم الله في أوله وآخره

Aisha (RA) narrates, she says The Prophet SAW was eating food with six people from his companions. A Bedouin came and he ate it all in two morsels. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: Listen, had he said Bismillah it (the food) would have sufficed for you (everyone). If one of you eats food he should say Bismillah, if he forgets to say Bismillah in the beginning he should say Bismillahi fi Awwalihi wa Akhirihi (With the name of Allah Tala in the beginning and at the end). (Ibn Majah, 1893).

Imam Nawawi (RA) (Saharanpuri, 2016) has given the following interpretations for the above *Hadith*: A Muslim recites the *Tasmiyah* before eating so the *Shaytaan* doesn't eat with him, while a non-Muslim doesn't recite the *Tasmiyah*, so the *Shaytaan* eats with him, so he is not satisfied easily. A Muslim's hunger is satisfied quickly and easily, while a non-Muslim, due to his greed over food is not satisfied. This is a case with some of the Muslims, and some of the non-Muslims respectively. It refers to the seven qualities, namely: greed, gluttony (especially for food), having long hopes and expectations, ambitious worldly desire, a bad disposition, jealousy, and obesity. It refers to a Muslim who possesses complete Imaan, and ignores his worldly desires. It means that "some" Muslims eat in one intestine, and "some" non-Muslims eat in seven intestines. This does not necessarily mean that every single one of the seven intestines of a non-Muslim is equal to the one of the Muslim. What is meant by this *Hadith* is reducing the worldly things, and leaving the desire of investing oneself in it. It refers to a Muslim's abstinence from the world, and the non-Muslim's greed (hirs) in it. So it doesn't specifically refer to eating. It means that a Muslim eats Halal, and a non-Muslim eats Haram, and therefore, Halal is less than Haram. It means that a Muslim suffices on eating less, as he knows that eating a lot is a quality of non-Muslims. And the heart of a Muslims runs away from and dislikes the traits of the non-Muslims. The proof of excessive eating being a trait of non-Muslims is in the following verse of Surah Muhammad: "As for those who disbelieve, they enjoy (the worldly life), and eat as cattle eat" (47:12). It specifically refers to the person in the *hadith*, and is not a general statement. The figure "seven" is an exaggeration for excessiveness, and not a specific number.

The views of two major scholars regarding this Hadith:

Shaykhul Hind Mahmoodul Hasan (RA) (2017) writes in his Sharah of Jami' Thirmizi that it means that a complete Muslim with a complete Imaan eats less and suffices on it. And the numbers "one" and "seven" are to show less (*qillah*) and more (*kathrah*) respectively. Otherwise, the intestines of a Muslim and a non-Muslim are the same. Allamah Kirmani (RA)(2016) responds to the hadith by saying that it is from the nature of a Muslim to eat less, and a non-Muslim to eat more. The opposite is also possible as this is a general statement.

Elaborating on the Actual Meaning behind the Hadith

Seven intestines here is a metaphor because in Arabic numbers with seven are used to show excess. It basically means that disbelievers have greed and as a result they tend to overeat while a Muslim should rely only eat until he is not hungry anymore. A Muslim should rely on Allah (SWT) to feed him his next meal. If a Muslim lacks proper belief in Allah (SWT) he or she might still end up over eating.

Significance of *Ma'in/Am'ain* (intestine/intestines) in the Hadith Sharif from the medical and scientific point of view

So in the Hadith Sharif, the Prophet (SAW) is referring to the intestine/intestines and not to the stomach, when he said: "يَأْكُلُ فِي مَعَىٰ وَاحِدٍ وَالْكَافِرُ يَأْكُلُ فِي سَبْعَةِ أَمْعَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِ" Based on medical and scientific research, in human elementary canal, the stomach is the place of just digestion and not absorption and assimilation of the food in the body. The intestines (أمعاء), both small and large in the elementary canal, absorb and assimilate the digested food in the body through blood vessels to the liver, which acts as a storage depot of all nutrients needed for the body. The medical and scientific research fully corroborates with the Hadith Sharif of the Prophet (SAW), when he mentioned about the intestine/intestines (أمعاء/معى), and not stomach (*Al-Ma'adah*).

Digestion starts in the mouth and major part of it occurs in the stomach. Why Overeating should be avoided. First of all, it goes against the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet SAW. Overeating is harmful for health, and can lead to obesity, which in turn can cause high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and even cancer.

Imam Ghazali, in his famous book *Ihya ulum-id-din* says: Four things were innovated after the Prophet SAW: to eat on tables, to sift food-stuffs by sieve, to use soaps and to eat to one's heart's content. These things, though not unlawful, are not good for a humble man. One should take food sitting straight. The Prophet SAW said: "I don't lean as I am a mere slave and I eat as a slave eats and I sit as a slave sits." To eat leaning is bad for stomach. Hazrat Ali RA said: Allah Tala removes seventy kinds of disasters from one who begins eating with salt. The Prophet SAW said: "Such quantity of food is sufficient for a man which can keep his backbone erect. If he is unable to do it then one part of the belly is for food, one part for drink and one part for breathing." Lift up your hand before the stomach is filled up and lick up the fingers. Then wipe them with a towel and then wash them. Lift up the remnants of food. The Prophet SAW said: He who eats what lies on the dinning cloth will remain safe, will pass his life in solvency and his children will remain safe'. The Prophet SAW said: If any morsel of food falls down, take it up and clear off the dust attached to it and don't leave it for the devil. Don't wipe out your hands with handkerchiefs till you lick your fingers, because you don't know in which food there is blessing.

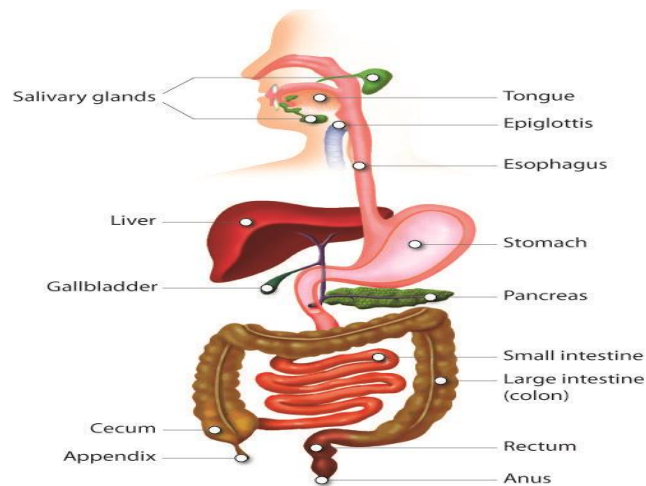


Figure 1. The human digestive tract

C. Prophetic Way of Life of Simplicity and Modesty

Holy Prophet's SAW life was an epitome of simplicity and modesty. So much so, that Abu Hurayra RA says, "Many moons (months) would pass by the wives of Prophet SAW without any of them being able to light a lantern or make a fire (to cook). If they ever got any oil (then instead of using it to light a lantern) they would rub it on their bodies and if they ever got any fat, they would eat it." In those days, animal fat was used to light a lamp. Urwa RA narrates that Aisha RA used to say, "Dear nephew! I swear by Allah that we (the wives of Prophet SAW) used to look at one new moon go by followed by another and yet another without a fire being lit in the rooms of Rasulullaah." Urwa RA asked, "Dear aunt! What was it that you lived on?" She replied, "Two black things, dates and water (Al Albani, 2000). Hadhrat Masrooq RA narrates that he once visited Aisha RA and she invited him to share a meal (al-Hindi, 1989). She then said to him, "Whenever I eat to my fill I cannot fight the urge to cry". "Why is that?" asked Hadhrat Masrooq RA. Aisha RA replied, "Because I think of the condition in which Rasulullaah SAW left this world. By Allah! There was never a day when Rasulullaah SAW twice get his fill with bread or meat" (Tirmidh, 1941).

Salmaa Radiyallahu 'Anha says that Imaam Hasan, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas and 'Abdullah bin Ja'far Saadiq went to her and said: "Cook for us the food that Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam liked and ate with pleasure". She replied: "O' my children, you will not like it now". (It was only liked in times of hardships). They replied: "Yes, we will surely like it". She got up and took a bit of barley, (stamped it) and put it in a pot, and poured a little olive oil over it, then stamped some chillies and spices and added it to the pot and served it, saying, this is what Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam loved (and ate with pleasure) (Tirmidh, 1941). Many a times, the Prophet SAW, would relish on eating dry barley bread dipping it in vinegar. He would say that the vinegar is a wonderful curry (Tirmidh, 1941). Yet, in another reference, Aisha RA declares that several months would pass, the hearth would not be lighted, because the blessed household of the Prophet SAW had nothing to be cooked (Tirmidh, 1941). Aisha RA once said, "The first calamity to befall this Ummah after the demise of its Nabi SAW is overeating because when a nation fills their bellies too much, their bodies become obese, their hearts become weak and their carnal passions get out of control" (al-Nasa'I, 1985). Now, consider ourselves, and the Ummah. Unfortunately, we are nowhere close to the simple and modest way of life of the Prophet SAW.

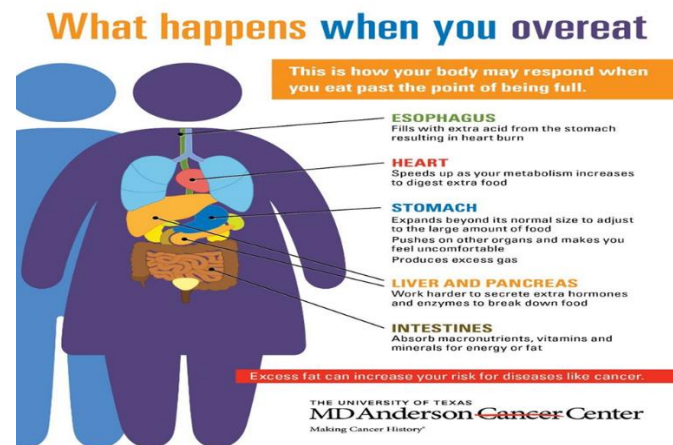


Fig. 2: Elementary canal in our body starts from the mouth and ends at the anus. In this whole process of food intake, if one eats past the point of being full, one can be afflicted with certain issues, especially if this is consistent. These issues include obesity, heartburn, discomfort, and gas. Long-term consequences include obesity, sleep disorder, and even cancer among other chronic health problems (Blackburn, 2018).

D. How Gases are Formed in The Elementary Canal

Gas in the digestive system is part of the normal process of digestion. Getting rid of excess gas, either by burping or passing gas (flatus), is normal. Gas pain may occur if gas is trapped or not moving well through the digestive system. An increase in gas or gas pain may result from eating foods that are more likely to produce gas. Often, relatively simple changes in eating habits can lessen bothersome gas. Certain digestive system disorders, such as irritable bowel syndrome or celiac disease, may cause — in addition to other signs and symptoms — an increase in gas or gas pain.

Symptoms: Signs or symptoms of gas or gas pains include, burping, passing gas, pain, cramps or a knotted feeling in the abdomen, a feeling of fullness or pressure in the abdomen (bloating), an observable increase in the size of your abdomen (distention). Burping is normal, particularly during or right after a meal. Most people pass gas up to 20 times a day. Therefore, while having gas may be inconvenient or embarrassing, burping and passing gas are rarely by themselves a sign of a medical problem.

Causes: Gas in the stomach is primarily caused by swallowing air when eating or drinking. Most stomach gas is released when one burp. Gas forms in the large intestine (colon) when bacteria ferment carbohydrates — fiber, some starches and some sugars — that aren't digested in the small intestine. Bacteria also consume some of that gas, but the remaining gas is released when one pass gas from the anus. Common foods that cause gas are certain high-fiber foods including, beans and peas (legumes), fruits, vegetables, whole grains. While high-fiber foods increase gas production, still fiber is essential for keeping the digestive tract in good working order and regulating blood sugar and cholesterol levels. Other dietary factors that can contribute to increased gas in the digestive system include the following: Carbonated beverages, such as soda and beer increase stomach gas, eating habits, such as eating too quickly, drinking through a straw, chewing gum, sucking on candies or talking while chewing results in swallowing more air, fiber supplements containing psyllium, such as Metamucil, may increase colon gas, sugar substitutes, or artificial sweeteners, such as sorbitol, mannitol and xylitol, found in some sugar-free foods and beverages may cause excess colon gas.

Medical conditions that may increase intestinal gas, bloating or gas pain include the following: Chronic intestinal disease. Excess gas is often a symptom of chronic intestinal conditions, such as diverticulitis, ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease. Small bowel bacterial overgrowth. An increase or change in the bacteria in the small intestine can cause excess gas, diarrhea and weight loss. In the category of food intolerances, gas or bloating may occur if the digestive system can't break down and absorb certain foods, such as the sugar in dairy products (lactose) or proteins such as gluten in wheat and other grains. Constipation may make it difficult to pass gas (Mayo Clinic).

E. Indigestion (Dyspepsia)

Occasional indigestion is common and not serious. If one get a stomachache after a large meal, one can usually relieve it with an antacid. But if one have indigestion often, there might be more going on. Sometimes it means one has a treatable condition, like acid reflux or peptic ulcer disease. Sometimes it's more complex.

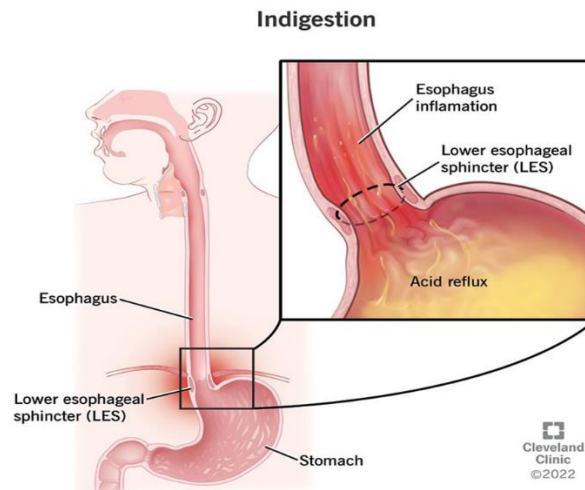


Figure 3: Acid reflux may cause the burning sensation in indigestion (Cleveland Clinic, 2022)

Indigestion is pain or discomfort after eating, while the stomach is digesting. Healthcare providers also use the term dyspepsia, which means the same thing: impaired digestion. If one has stomachache or upset tummy after eating, something in the digestive process isn't going quite right. It's not always a problem with the body, though. Sometimes it just means that one ate the wrong thing or ate too fast. Almost everyone has experienced occasional indigestion. But for some people, it's a daily occurrence that diminishes their quality of life. When indigestion becomes a significant problem, one can seek healthcare for answers and relief. Sometimes there's an underlying gastrointestinal (GI) disease that needs treatment. But sometimes there's no simple explanation for these symptoms.

Indigestion may involve several different symptoms, but it always involves some level of abdominal pain or discomfort. The abdomen is where most of the organs in the digestive system live, so if they're having difficulties while doing their jobs, that's where one will feel it. Indigestion symptoms always occur after eating, when your stomach is digesting — what healthcare providers call the postprandial period. Experts generally agree that the symptoms of indigestion include, the epigastric pain. The epigastrium is the central, upper abdominal region. This is where the stomach is. Burning sensation may come from stomach acids and enzymes in your GI (gastrointestinal) tract, or from inflammation. Early or late-lasting satiety. Feeling full soon after eating, or long after, suggests your stomach is overwhelmed. But people who experience indigestion often report other symptoms along with it, such as: bloating, gas, nausea, burping, regurgitation (when swallowed food comes back up), acid reflux, heartburn. These symptoms can overlap with indigestion, but they can also occur separately from it.

One may have symptoms of indigestion for a few minutes to a few hours after eating. It takes 3-5 hours for the stomach to digest a meal before passing it on to your intestines. During that time, the pancreas and gallbladder send bile and enzymes to the stomach to help with digestion. These are the organs in the epigastric region (upper middle abdomen), where indigestion symptoms occur.

Causes of occasional indigestion can be simple. For example, many people get indigestion after an especially large or rich meal. That's easy to explain: the digestive system is working harder than usual to accommodate a heavy load. The stomach is stretching, the gallbladder and pancreas are contracting, and they're all producing strong digestive juices, which may be ultimately irritating the tissues. But indigestion that lasts longer than one meal, or that comes and goes chronically, is often less simple. There may be a variety of factors involved. Sometimes there's an organic cause, like a disease. And sometimes there's no obvious cause. This is called functional dyspepsia. Functional GI disorders occur when the nerves in the

GI tract are hyper sensitized, which lowers the threshold for discomfort. In general, causes of indigestion fall into three categories: the eating habits, how the digestive system is functioning, and the perception of pain and discomfort.

When there's an organic cause, it usually has to do with stomach acid. Acid causes the telltale burning sensation often described in indigestion. The stomach has a strong lining designed to protect it from its own acid, but sometimes the lining is worn down. When this happens, it becomes irritated and inflamed by the acid. Sometimes gastric juices escape from the stomach into the top part of the small intestine (duodenum). The duodenum doesn't have the same protective lining as the stomach, so acid can do more damage there. Acids can also escape from the top of your stomach into the bottom of the esophagus. This is called acid reflux. The esophagus, actually isn't designed to tolerate acid, either.

Acid reflux may explain other symptoms that can come with indigestion, such as burping, regurgitation and heartburn. One can have acid reflux and discomfort in the esophagus even if the stomach lining is still intact. When acid eats away the stomach lining, then one can have peptic ulcer disease, which can cause ulcers in the stomach and duodenum. Peptic ulcers also cause a burning kind of pain.

Peptic ulcer disease may explain other symptoms that can come with indigestion, such as early satiety (fullness), nausea and bloating. In fact, acid and ulcers are so often the organic causes of chronic indigestion that healthcare providers have come to refer to functional dyspepsia as "non-ulcer dyspepsia". But overall, functional dyspepsia is more common than any organic cause of indigestion.

Diet and lifestyle factors that may contribute to occasional dyspepsia include: Eating too much or too fast. Overeating stretches the stomach and makes it more likely for acid to escape through the top. Too much fat in the diet, can also cause problems. High-fat content triggers more acids and enzymes, which may irritate the tissues. Like unidentified food intolerances, one may be having difficulties digesting certain foods. Smoking and alcohol use, both of these substances irritate the mucous lining throughout the GI tract. They can cause inflammation. Overuse of NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like aspirin and ibuprofen can become a serious issue. Too many NSAIDs can erode your stomach lining. As far as stress and anxiety are concerned, the GI tract is intimately connected with the brain through nerves, and each can affect the other.

Diseases and conditions that may be involved in chronic dyspepsia include: peptic ulcer disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease, hyperchlorhydria (too much stomach acid), gastritis (inflammation of the stomach lining), gastroparesis (slow stomach emptying), hiatal hernia (stomach pushes up through the diaphragm), bacterial overgrowth (in stomach or small intestine), eating disorders, gallstones, gallbladder inflammation (cholecystitis), pancreas inflammation (pancreatitis), irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), celiac disease, small bowel obstruction, stomach cancer, visceral hypersensitivity.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, Islam through the noble teachings of Qur'an and through the blessed sayings and practices of the Prophet SAW, clearly and strongly sends the message of simplicity and modesty, where in lies all the bliss, happiness and satisfaction of this life and in the hereafter, for the whole humanity. Time and again, we have witnessed that whenever the humanity had tried to deviate from these canonical and of course valuable advises, it had landed in sorts of unwanted problems, be it even as simple as food intake. It is high time that the muslim ummah, while taking it seriously, brings these commandments of Allah Ta'ala and Sunnah of the Prophet SAW, practically in their lives, and also propagate them to other people.

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