General Guide for Health of Hajj and Umrah Pilgrims

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A message from H.E. Minister of Health

Introduction

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon our Master and Prophet Muhammad.

Allah, Exalted be He, says in the Ever-Glorious Qur’an: {... And [due] to Allah from the people is a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way...} [Al-Imran: 97]. Allah Almighty has honored this blessed country with the two Holy Mosques for which all people from all over the world yearn and that they visit during Hajj and Umrah seasons, which are the biggest human gatherings worldwide. This being the case, the government of the Custodian of the Two Sacred Mosques is always keen to exert its best efforts and utilizes all its possible resources to properly receive pilgrims, providing them all utilities and means of comfort so that they should smoothly and easily perform Hajj rituals.

The Saudi Ministry of Health is one of the governmental authorities serving pilgrims providing them health care from when they arrive in the Kingdom until they leave for their home countries. For such purpose, the Ministry has assigned about 22,000 health practitioners and administrative staff of various types and specialties to be on duty during the entire Hajj period for serving pilgrims. In addition, a large number of health facilities have been provided in Mecca and Medina and ritual places, including 25 hospitals providing a total of 5250 beds in addition to 141 permanent and seasonal health centers. In addition to which, many advanced emergency centers have been provided in the Holy Mosque in Mecca.

All such health facilities have been aided with specialized medical teams, the latest medical technologies and equipment and specialized specific programs, such as cardiac catheterizations, open heart surgeries, endoscopies, and renal dialysis machines and systems.

In addition, the Ministry has prioritized preventive measures and protecting the health of pilgrims by launching and promoting several protection and awareness programs during the previous Hajj seasons.

Because of this responsibility and the importance of focusing on promoting health education during Hajj and Umrah, and acquainting pilgrims with proper health concepts, helping them improve their practices and thus better prevention against diseases and epidemics, which might make it hard for them to complete their rites, the Ministry has prepared this Guide to be a comprehensive reference. This Guide sheds light, in a summarized manner, on several subjects of interest to pilgrims.

We sincerely hope this Guide would help Hajj and Umrah pilgrims and visitors of Medina perform rites easily and smoothly. We beg Allah Almighty to accept their Hajj and Umrah and to forgive us all.

Minister of Health

Dr. Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah
Health Tips prior to Hajj and Umrah

Pilgrims, before coming for Hajj or Umrah, are supposed to abide by a variety of health tips and guidelines. Below are some such tips:

1. Taking necessary vaccines, especially people with chronic diseases and the elderly.

2. Bringing a sufficient amount of medicines, especially for diseases requiring taking drugs on a regular basis, such as heart and hypertension patients, kidney patients, asthma, diabetics, and respiratory patients.

3. Bringing a sufficient quantity of clothes, in order to change into fresh clothes regularly. Loose, light colored clothes are also recommended.

4. Holding a detailed medical report on any pre-existing illnesses, and about any prescribed medication, which helps follow up medical condition whenever necessary.

5. Maintaining your personal hygiene equipment, such as a towel, shaving tools, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, creams and moisturizing ointments in ample quantities, and an umbrella is also recommended when necessary.

6. Keeping a supply of necessary disinfectants, antipyretics and painkillers.

7. Bringing a glucose meter for diabetics.

8. While sitting for a long time on the plane or bus, it is advisable to walk or stand for a short while every one or two hours, and regularly moving one’s feet while sitting, which helps preventing swollen feet.

9. Having a medical checkup before coming to make sure of your ability to perform Hajj.

Visit your doctor to ensure you’re well and fit enough to perform Hajj.
Essential Hajj Tips:

Below are some key tips a pilgrim should follow during Hajj to ensure his safety and the safety of other pilgrims:

- Avoid spitting on the floor.
- Avoid overloading or overcrowding sockets at places of residence.
- In case you’re suffering from continual coughing for more than two weeks, you must undergo the necessary tests before traveling for Hajj, to be sure you do not have tuberculosis.
- Use handkerchiefs when sneezing or coughing, especially in overcrowded places, such as planes and buses since this helps protect you from the infectious diseases transmitted through coughing or sneezing.

Taking vaccines early enough before travelling for Hajj is necessary to protect against communicable diseases.
Hajj-related Vaccinations

Make sure to receive your vaccinations early enough before travelling for Hajj to protect yourself and other pilgrims against infectious diseases. Some of these vaccinations are compulsory while others are optional. Make sure to consult your doctor before taking any vaccine.

Before travelling for Hajj:

1. You should have been vaccinated with meningitis vaccine no fewer than 10 days and no more than 3 years before you travel for Hajj.

   * A period not less than 10 years for a polysaccharide vaccine or 5 years for a conjugate vaccine.

2. Seasonal influenza vaccination is recommended, particularly for those with chronic diseases and pilgrims with immune deficiency (congenital and acquired), metabolic disorders, pregnant women and children aged under 5 years, and those suffering severe obesity for their own safety.

   * In Saudi Arabia, seasonal influenza vaccination is obligatory for all health-care workers from other sectors in the Hajj areas.
# Table of Hajj Vaccinations:

<table>
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<th>Vaccine</th>
<th>For Whom?</th>
<th>When?</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tetravalent (ACYW) vaccine against meningitis</td>
<td>All pilgrims and children aged two years and up in addition to pregnant women</td>
<td>No less than <strong>ten days</strong> before arrival in Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Confers a protection of three years, and is obligatory</td>
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<td>Yellow fever vaccine</td>
<td>All pilgrims arriving from countries or areas at risk of yellow fever transmission, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and America</td>
<td>No less than <strong>ten days</strong> before arrival in Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Confers <strong>life-long</strong> protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal influenza vaccine</td>
<td>Seasonal influenza recommended, for those with chronic diseases and pilgrims with immune deficiency (congenital and acquired), metabolic disorders, pregnant women in 4th month and over, and those suffering severe obesity.</td>
<td>No less than <strong>two weeks</strong> before arrival in Saudi Arabia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poliomyelitis vaccine</td>
<td>Administered for Pilgrims of all ages arriving from infected areas</td>
<td>Four weeks before arrival in Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Will receive additional dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV) at border points <strong>on arrival</strong> in Saudi Arabia</td>
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[Your Health During Hajj & Umrah](#)
Hajj and Umrah Precautions at Border Points

Issuing Authority: International Health Regulations

Objective:
Protective measures taken at border points generally aim to prevent the entry of epidemic infectious diseases into the Kingdom in general and into the Hajj and Umrah areas in particular. Such measures include the following:

General Measures:
All health authorities at border points shall use visual triage methods to screen all visitors upon arriving. In case of any suspected case, it shall be referred to the nearest health facility to ascertain diagnosis and complete preventive measures. In addition, at border points, public health emergency plans are applied to encounter any public health risk, and coordination is made with other authorities who have received training in connection with such plans.

Special Measures:
(i) Meningococcal meningitis

Target Countries: All countries
Vaccination: All ages

Vaccination certificate: Visitors are required to submit a valid certificate of vaccination with the tetravalent (ACYW) vaccine against meningitis, proving the vaccine was administered no less than 10 days before arrival in Saudi Arabia. Target categories:
✓ Visitors arriving for performing Hajj or Umrah
✓ Visitors arriving for seasonal work of Hajj and Umrah in relevant areas (Mecca, sacred rites, Medina, and Jeddah)

Vaccination type: Tetravalent (ACYW) vaccine. The following vaccines are valid options:
✓ Polysaccharide, which confers a protection of at least three years
✓ Conjugate vaccine, which confers protection for at least five years.
Note: If the vaccine type is not indicated in the vaccination certificate, then it will be assumed that it is not the conjugate vaccine and the validity of the certificate will to be for 3 years.

**Others Measures:** Precautionary vaccine is administered against meningitis for the following categories:

1. For all Hajj and Umrah pilgrims arriving from countries in the African meningitis belt whether they have been vaccinated in their countries or not: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Côte d’Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and South Sudan.

2. Those vaccinated with a vaccine against meningitis but not the tetravalent (ACYW).

3. Holders of vaccination certificates issued within a period less than 10 days or more than 3 years for polysaccharide vaccine or more than 5 years for conjugate meningococcal vaccine.

4. For those not holding a certificate confirming vaccination, preventive treatment shall be as follows:
   - **Elderly:** They shall be administered oral Ciprofloxacin 500 mg (one dose), and could be replaced in case of contraindications in Rifampicin 600 mg, twice per day for two days (four doses)
   - **Pregnant women:** Ceftriaxone 250 mg injection (one dose)
   - **Children:** Rifampicin syrup as follows:
     - Less than 1 month: 5 mg/kg every 12 hours for two days (4 doses)
     - One month and over: 10 mg/kg every 12 hours for two days (4 doses)

   **Note:** For all above vaccinates, drug pamphlets enclosed with a vaccine/medicine should be carefully read and accurately complied with particularly in connection with storing and technical instructions for administering vaccines and contraindications for vaccination.

(2) **Yellow fever**

**Target Countries:**


Americas: Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, State of Bolivia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago
**Vaccination:** All ages

**Vaccination certificate:** In accordance with the International Health Regulations, all travelers arriving from countries infected with yellow fever, must present a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate. The life-long certificate of yellow fever vaccination is valid for the life of the vaccinated person, starting from 10 days after the vaccination date.

In the absence of such a certificate, the individual will be placed under strict surveillance until the certificate become valid or until a period of not more than 6 days from the last date of potential exposure to infection have lapsed, whichever is earlier. Health offices at entry points will be responsible for notifying the appropriate Director General of Health Affairs in the region or governorate about the respective data including his name, nationality, passport number, flight number, date of arrival, and full data on the temporary place of residence of the visitor in Mecca or Medina, and the name of the relevant Mutawaf.

**Other Measures:** Aircrafts, ships and other means of transportation coming from countries announced affected by yellow fever are requested to submit a certificate indicating that it applied disinsection (mosquitoes) in accordance with the International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005. In addition, all ships arriving shall be requested to provide a valid certificate of disinfection. Ships arriving from areas at risk for yellow fever transmission may also be required to submit to inspection to ensure they are free of yellow fever vectors, or disinfected, as a condition of granting free pratique (including permission to enter a port, to embark or disembark and to discharge or load cargo or stores).

(3) **Poliomyelitis**

**Target Countries:**
Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Laos People’s Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Myanmar, Niger, and Ukraine, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen

**Vaccination:** All ages

- **Vaccination certificate:** All visitors coming from these countries shall be required to submit proof of receipt of a dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV) at least 4 weeks prior to arriving to the Kingdom.
- **Vaccination type:** One dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV), or inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV).
Others Measures: Regardless of age and vaccination status, all visitors arriving in the Kingdom from these countries will also receive another dose of OPV at border points on arrival in Saudi Arabia taking into consideration contraindications of the vaccine as per the respective enclosed pamphlet.

(4) Zika virus disease:
Since the Aedes aegypti mosquito is present in some countries; particularly the Central and South Americas, and since Zika virus is transmitted via such mosquito, and in accordance with the International Health Regulations 2005, aircrafts, ships and other means of transportation coming from countries affected by Zika virus are requested to submit a certificate indicating that it applied disinsection (mosquitoes) in accordance with methods recommended by WHO. The list of such countries is regularly updated based on epidemic developments and appearance of Zika Virus cases in other countries.

(5) Cholera:
Due to the Cholera outbreak in Yemen, the following measures shall be taken along the southern border points:

1. Applying visual triage methods to screen all visitors upon arriving to the Kingdom at all times, particularly at Hajj and Umrah seasons, to detect Cholera cases.

2. Taking preventive measures whenever necessary to isolate suspected cases and immediately notify Director General of Health Affairs, and follow infection control rules.

3. Only properly canned or sealed food with easy access for inspection is allowed in small quantities, sufficient for one person for the duration of their trip, which shall be in coordination with Saudi Customs and the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA).

4. Communicating with Saudi municipalities, Ministry of Agriculture, and SFDA to correct any remarks related to environment health, or safety of foods and water.

5. Taking water samples for bacteriological analysis from all water sources at the border point on a regular, constant basis.
Health Tips during Hajj and Umrah

During Hajj, a pilgrim participates in many events and meets many people while moving from one place to another. As such, pilgrims should take care of their health and not underestimate the value of simple preventative measures. Many health problems happen due to ignoring simple health tips and guidelines. Below are some useful health tips that pilgrims should follow.

Hygiene and General Cleanliness Tips

The most important tips to be followed:

- Maintaining personal hygiene, bathing regularly, and washing hands well by using water and soap, or other disinfectants used for hand washing.
- Wash your hands well, especially after bathing, after coughing and sneezing, before and after eating, and when coming back to your residence.
- Avoid spitting on the floor, since it is a hazardous source of infection as well as being inappropriate.
- Use tissues when coughing or sneezing by covering the nose and mouth, and then dispose of them in the trash. If there are no tissues at hand, use the upper arms rather than hands.
- Use toilets to defecate and urinate in to prevent the spread of infectious epidemics, as well as in order to avoid any disagreeable conduct.
- Dispose of waste and remaining food in the trash.
- Change clothes with new ones every now and then to avoid potential health problem such as sun burn.
- Pay close attention to the cleanliness of your residence, on a daily basis.
- Make sure to clean your mouth and brush your teeth regularly.
Use tissues when coughing or sneezing by covering the nose and mouth, and then dispose of them in the trash. In case there are no tissues at hand, use the upper arms rather than hands to eliminate respiratory infectious diseases.

Use face-masks in crowded and congested places, and change them regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines, and then wash your hands with soap and water when taking them off; and make sure to take them off from behind your ears rather than from the front.

Dispose of waste in sealed bags and by placing them in the trash.
Tips for Protection Against Heat Exhaustion and Sun Stroke

Some pilgrims perform rituals, such as Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'ba), Sa'i (walking between Safa and Marwa), and throwing stones during peak times of congestion, which causes them to suffer heat exhaustion and causes troubles to other pilgrims. It is preferable to perform such rites outside of rush times when the temperature is also lower, as this would make one feel more comfortable and cause much tranquility and piety. Pilgrims should take sufficient sleep during night and avoid staying awake till late hours at night, which causes exhaustion and losing one's energy.

Prevention:

• Dehydration may cause pilgrims to lose massive quantities of liquids. So, it is recommended to drink enough liquids (water, juices, etc.) regularly.

• Take enough sleep and rest and avoid exposure to excessive physical exhaustion.

• To avoid heat exhaustion and sun stroke, use an umbrella when necessary. Light colored umbrellas are recommended. Avoid exposure to direct sun for long as much as possible.

To avoid heat exhaustion and sun stroke, use an umbrella. Avoid direct exposure to the sun as much as possible. Drink plenty of liquids and get enough sleep.
**Food Poisoning**

Some pilgrims, when coming for Hajj or Umrah, fail to follow healthy ways when preparing their foods, which makes some infectious and communicable diseases increase, such as diarrhea, vomiting, stomachache, intestinal catarrh, and food poisoning.

**Prevention:**

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before preparing food and before and after eating, and also after using the bathroom.
- Wash utensils and vessels used for preparing and serving food.
- Wash fruits and vegetables well before eating them.
- Do not leave any food uncovered, since it is exposed to insects, animals, and contamination.
- Verify expiry date when buying canned and preserved foods and drinks.
- Use pure water or canned mineral water for drinking and cooking; otherwise, it should be boiled before use.
- Avoid buying foods from street vendors, and keep away from foods exposed to insects and contamination.
- Avoid storing cooked food in buses for long and when moving from on Hajj site to another. This is one of the major triggers of food poisoning during Hajj. Remember that storing cooked food for more than two hours in the room/bus temperature may lead to the growing of bacteria causing food poisoning. Cooked food should be kept in the fridge or prepare quantities needed for one meal.

- During Hajj, pilgrims should take much care of their cleanliness.
- Drinkable and cooking water should be pure and free of any contamination and bacteria.
For Protection against Food Poisoning:

- Keep away from foods exposed to insects and contamination, and avoid buying foods from street vendors.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before preparing food and before and after eating.
- Verify expiry date when buying canned and preserved foods and drinks.
- Remember that storing cooked food for more than two hours in the room/bus temperature may lead to the growing of bacteria causing food poisoning.
- Wash fruits and vegetables well before eating them.
- Cooked food should be eaten immediately after cooking, and, when necessary, it could be kept in the fridge at a proper temperature.
Shaving and Haircutting Tips

Some pilgrims re-use shavers or razors used by others, which makes them subject to infectious diseases as Hepatitis B and C. Remember to use your own personal equipment, such as razors and shavers once, then throw them away in the trash.

**Recommendations:**
- Choose a suitable barber, and never go to street barbers.
- Ask the barber to wash his hands well (by using water and soap) before shaving or haircutting.
- Single-use shavers are recommended. Keep away from all other kinds of shavers, including the ones which have their razors changed after every shave.
- Never share your personal tools such as the brushes used to remove hair, sponges, alum, etc.

Remember that using your own shavers, and not sharing others with theirs, is the best way to protect yourself against the infection of serious communicable diseases.
Hajj season is full of events and situations. Large numbers of pilgrims gather for short periods and live temporarily at adjacent or adjoining tents, and all move around at the same time. They come from varied countries, and speak different languages and are of dissimilar educational background. All of which may cause accidents and health problems to occur.

Below are some common accidents:

1- Fires
   Tips for reducing or preventing fires:
   • Avoid kindling fires inside the tents and make sure to use the places designated for cooking.
   • Cigarette butts should be thrown away at designated places, and remember that the Hajj is a precious opportunity to give up smoking.
   • Acquaint yourself with emergency exits at your place of residency to use when needed.
   • Avoid storing flammable or explosive materials inside the tents or place of residence (such as gas cylinders, etc).
   • Make sure to shut electric power off when leaving your residence, and avoid overloaded sockets.

2. Car Accidents
   Below are some important tips by which a pilgrim/car driver should abide:
   • Avoid driving fast and always be careful to people in the middle of the road.
   • Avoid getting on top of the buses and vehicles, particularly when leaving Arafat to Muzdalifah.
   • If walking on foot, a pilgrim should be away from the road designated for cars and vehicles.
3- Bruises And Breaks

- Pilgrims should not stay above mountains and elevated places, and should also avoid climbing rocks and mountains, as this exposes them to danger.
- Avoid jostling and shoving during rush times, as this is the major cause of bruises and breaks.
- Choose the proper times for moving and performance of rites, and utilize the Islamic legitimate license once its requirements are met.
- Avoid sleeping on pavements and roadsides or under cars and vehicles for your own safety.
- Raise your umbrella at crowded places to avoid hurting others.
- Make sure to be gentle with the feeble, such as sick people, the elderly, women, and children.

Pilgrims should avoid walking in large groups as much as possible, as this could confuse and expose other pilgrims to danger.
Proper Storage of Medications:
A pilgrim should take care of how to store his own permanent or temporary medicines, particularly in hot weather. There are small bags in markets for storing medicines.

Sleeping Rough Is Unhealthy:
Sleeping rough is one of the wrong and harmful conducts seen in Hajj season. Some pilgrims tend to lay and sleep on the streets, under bridges, on vehicles throughout Hajj seasons. This contributes towards the spread of epidemics and infectious diseases. Pilgrims sleeping that way are subject to heat exhaustion and sun stroke, and may also obstruct passage of traffic, ambulances, and civil defense vehicles.

Giving up Smoking:
Remember that the Hajj is a precious opportunity to give up smoking, you should capitalize on successfully. The dangers of smoking are well-known. During Hajj season, smoking is more dangerous both to smokers and those around them due to congestion and adjacent places of residences of pilgrims.

Would wearing Face-masks be useful for pilgrims?
Face-masks should be properly used. They should be changed regularly (every six hours), or when dirty, in accordance with the guidelines provided by the manufacturer, along with washing hands with water and soap when taking them off. They should be taken off from behind ears rather than from the front.

Using face-masks is recommended for those suffering from common cold to help prevent transmission of infection.
Special Health Tips for Some Patients during Hajj and Umrah

Some patients require special care during Hajj and Umrah season.

Health Tips for Heart Patients

Generally, a heart patient with stable condition can perform Hajj rituals. However, it is recommended that he follows these tips:

• Seek medical advice to make sure of your ability to perform Hajj.
• Always hold enough quantities of your medicines, store them in a proper way and in a proper, easily reachable place.
• Hold a detailed medical report on your health condition and your medications.
• Avoid any excessive physical effort, and use a wheelchair during the Tawaf (circumambulation) and Sa'i (walking) when feeling exhaustion as allowed for Islamically.
• Avoid excessive reactions and nervousness, and remember that latitude is one of the pilgrim's feature.
• Follow a diet that is low in fat and salt, and abide by the diet prescribed by your doctor.
• It is recommended to be accompanied by relatives or friends while performing the Hajj rites in anticipation of any emergency.

If you feel any chest pain or difficulty in breathing, you should take some rest. If chest pain worsens, then head immediately to the closest health facility.
Diabetics can perform Hajj or Umrah having been subjected to medical examination and after verifying their ability to perform such rituals. However, they should be careful about the following:

- Low blood sugar due to exhaustion, exposure to the sun, and changing one's diet and foods.
- Suffering wounds or feet ulcers, etc, due to much movement and congestion.
- Sun burns which occur easily to diabetics due to congestion, excessive sweating, and disorders in blood sugar level.

Below are some tips for diabetics to avoid such problems:

- Put a bracelet around the wrist or hold an identification card indicating that you are a diabetic patient and the prescribed medicine in order to provide the necessary help when needed.
- Bring glucose meter to determine the glucose rate daily and regularly, especially when feeling the level of glucose has impaired.
- Hold a detailed medical report on your health condition, and inform the nearest of you in the residence place and the doctor of the convoy that you are suffering from the diabetes.
- Take an enough amount of the diabetic medicines and follow a diet in line with the diabetes doctor's tips.
- Make sure of keeping the insulin cool during its moving and storing through putting it in the proper ice pack (thermos) or in the refrigerator in your residence place.
- During the Hajj, wear a snug pair of socks to protect your feet from any ulcers, and avoid walking barefoot.
- It is recommended not to start Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'ba) or Sa'i (walking between Safa and Marwa) if you did not take the medicine and have enough food, in order to prevent reducing the glucose level of the body.
• Keep on having the main and light meals during the travelling and Hajj to avoid experiencing a severe reduction in the glucose level according to your prescribed diet.

• Temporarily stop performing the rites if you began to feel the symptoms of the glucose level reduction, such as shaking, giddiness along with fatigue and exhaustion, sudden feeling of hunger, excessive sweating or blurring, and take medical precautions in such case.

• Drink a proper amount of water and repeatedly.

• Bring some disinfectants to treat skin inflammations when occurring. If complications occur, such as the inflammations, skin ulcers occurred, you should consult the diabetes doctor.

• Use your own electrical shaving machine rather than the razor to avoid wounds and infection as much as possible.

What is the treatment for hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)?

If you were conscious (mild degree), you could do the following:

• Have a cup of sugary juice, such as orange, apple, and mixed fruits,
• Up to two spoons of honey,
• Up to two spoons of sugar stirred in a cup of water, or
• From 2 to 5 glucose tablets (you can buy them from the pharmacy).

If the diabetic patient loses consciousness, he should be transferred to the nearest health center as fast as possible.
Health Tips for Asthma Patients

During Hajj or Umrah, the asthma patient usually encounters an increase in asthma symptoms and dyspnea; and this is due to several reasons of which: being in crowded places fraught with dust and polluted with smoke emitting from vehicle exhausts pipes, excessive strain and continuous movement, and pneumonia which could increase because of the crowd.

Asthma patients are recommended to do the following:

• Put a bracelet around the wrist with your name and age, and a diagnosis or your disease and prescribed medicines.

• See the respiratory diseases doctor to make sure of the stabilization of your condition and your ability to travel and the steps to take in asthma attacks.

• Take enough quantities of medicines, particularly inhalers

• Before making any physical effort, it is recommended to use a bronchodilator, especially during Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'ba) and throwing stones.

• Take a great deal of rest repeatedly.

• Avoid overcrowded places in order to prevent any asthma attack.

• Hasten to use an inhaler when you feel symptoms of an asthma attack and head for the nearest health facility or hospital if you encounter a severe asthma attack.

When an asthma patient feels symptoms of an asthma attack, he should hasten to use an inhaler and head for the nearest health facility or hospital if he encounters a severe asthma attack.
Health tips for Allergy Patients

In some cases, allergy symptoms may increase due to some materials in the surroundings, such as smokes, dust, foods, chemicals, etc), and affect the skin, eyes, nose, chest (asthma). During the Hajj and Umrah such symptoms may increase because of the congestion, dust and dirt, temperature, car smokes, etc.

Health tips for reducing such health problems:

• Avoid places and times causing allergy, such as direct exposure to the sun and congestion.

• In case of skin/nose and eye allergy:
  A patient should bring with him proper anti-allergic agents (pills, nasal sprays, or eye drops) in accordance with medical instructions. Allergy is not a serious threat to the pilgrim except in cases of asthma attacks.

• In case of food allergy:
  In case of an allergic reaction to specific foods, the proper treatment is avoiding such foods.

Allergic patient should avoid being in places, times, activities, or foods causing an allergic reaction, such as direct exposure to the sun and congestion.
Health Tips for Kidney Patients

Recommendations for patients with renal failure, impaired kidney function, and kidney stones:

• See urologist to make sure you are able to perform the Hajj and give you the proper health tips.
• Hold the prescribed medicines and store them in a proper, easily reachable place.
• Adhere to taking the medicines regularly and on time.
• Have fluids and salts according to what is determined by the urologist previously.
• Avoid exposure to the scorching sunlight for long periods to prevent losing the body's fluids and salts.
• Avoid eating meat to excess in order not to affect the kidney function.
• See the convoy's doctor or the nearest health center/hospital when any disturbances occur to the body such as gastroenteritis and urinary tract infections.
• Head for the nearest health center or hospital when needed.

Patients with renal failure:

Hajj or Umrah could be extremely difficult or even a threat to you unless you are accompanied with a medical convoy, and you previously made arrangements with a hospital to do a renal dialysis.

Patients with kidney stones:

It is recommended to drink much fluids and to avoid direct exposure to the sun. You should also perform some rituals after sunset or deputize another person to do it on your behalf as per Islamic legitimate license.

Have fluids and salts according to urologist advice, avoid the sun as much as possible, to help your body maintain liquids and salts.
Common Diseases during Hajj and Umrah

When performing the Hajj and Umrah rites, pilgrims are vulnerable to the diseases commonly associated with the Hajj season, including, influenza, cold, food poisoning, skin burns, sun strokes, heat exhaustion, low blood sugar, angina, and diarrhea.

Respiratory Diseases:
These are the most common diseases in Hajj season. They are transmitted through the droplets of coughing or sneezing. These are of two types:

1. **Upper respiratory tract diseases**, such as common cold, bronchitis, and laryngitis: These do not usually lead to complications, but cause harm to pilgrims, and lead to exhaustion and weakness.

2. **Lower respiratory tract inflammations** (such as Pneumonia): These are less common but more serious. Symptoms include: cough with mucus, fever, or difficulty in breathing. If not treated, these symptoms lead to serious complications.
Prevention from respiratory infections:

- Keep away from respiratory patients and avoid using their own tools and personal belongings.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or hands with the hands until after washing them well.
- Keep away from congestion as much as possible.
- Do not drink ice water.
- Keep away from direct air, such as air conditioner, especially when sweated. Big variance in body temperature affects health.

On the incidence of any of these diseases (such as cold & influenza), follow these tips:

- Drink much water and warm liquids, and avoid very cold liquids and drinks.
- Take enough sleep.
- Take antipyretics and painkillers (unless otherwise prescribed) in accordance with health instructions.
- Take nasal congestion treatments for a short time unless there is an impediment, such as high blood pressure or ischemic heart.
- Take anti-cough medicines whenever necessary, especially for dry cough, or if it becomes severe during sleep.
- Avoid taking any antibiotic except with a doctor's advice.
- See a doctor on the onset of acute symptoms.

Respiratory diseases are of the most common diseases in Hajj season. Lower respiratory tract inflammations (such as Pneumonia) are less common but more serious. Upper respiratory tract diseases include common cold, bronchitis, and laryngitis.
Middle East Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus

Symptoms of Infection with Middle East Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus (MERC-CoV):
- Fever and cough
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Congestion in the nose and throat

Transmission:
Like influenza, this virus is transmitted through direct contact with infected patients, droplets produced during coughing or sneezing, Indirect transmission through touching surfaces and devices contaminated with the virus, and then touching the mouth, nose or eyes. Camels are also one of the transmission sources of infection.

Ways of protection:
1. Wash your hands well and continually with water and soap, or with other disinfectants, especially after coughing, sneezing and using toilets. Also, wash your hands before and after handling or preparing foods.
2. Try as much as possible to avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth with your hand.
3. Make sure camel meat is properly cooked, and their milk is pasteurized before drinking it.
4. Use handkerchief when coughing or sneezing and cover your mouth and nose with it, then get rid of the handkerchief in a waste basket and make sure to wash your hands. If there are no handkerchiefs, it is preferred to cough or sneeze in the top of your arm, not in the hands (palms) with your mouth closed.
5. Put on face-masks only if you are sick or visiting sick patients or when using their tools.
6. Adhere to hygiene.
7. Wash fruits and vegetables well with water before eating them.
8. Pay attention to other health habits as the nutritional balance and physical activity, as well as taking enough share of sleep, as it helps to increase the body's immunity.
Importantly Health Tips for using Face-Masks

When to use a face-mask

• When visiting a patient
• When catching infection
• At places of gatherings and crowdedness

Right way for using a face-mask

• Wash your hands well before wearing them.
• Select a size fitting your face, and the recommended one if the face-mask having a metal piece at the nose place.
• Hold it with one hand and place it precisely to cover nose, chin, and moth area.
• Pull the lower rubber lace and place it in the area under your nose, then pull the upper rubber lace and fix it above head from behind using the other hand.
• Gently press the metal piece until it takes the shape of nose bone and the mask fits your face.
• Test how your face-mask is fit by placing your hand on the mask borders and breathe ensuring whether air comes out from there to the face.
• Take off the face-mask from behind ears rather than from the front.
• Face-masks should be changed regularly (every six hours), or when dirty.
• Make sure to wash your hands with water and soap after taking off the face-mask.
Digestive Diseases (Diarrhea, Constipation, and Nausea and Vomiting)

These infections are caused by viruses or bacteria transmitted through contaminated foods or drinks. Such infections include Viral gastroenteritis (stomach flu), etc.

Prevention:

- Ensure the safety and cleanliness of your foods.
- Maintain personal hygiene, wash your hands well, and avoid using others' tools.
- Avoid non-pasteurized milk, and foods whose color or taste changed. Keep away from fatty foods and sugars, and cook meat well.
- Eat much fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Drink much liquid, such as water and juices.

Treating Diarrhea:

You should drink much liquid to avoid dehydration. Head for the nearest health center/hospital if diarrhea is severe with dehydration symptoms to be given intravenous fluids alongside rehydration solution.

Prevent yourself from diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting etc, by eating safe foods, adhere to personal hygiene, such as washing hands and keeping away from using others' tools.
Cholera

Symptoms:
- Cholera symptoms appear suddenly with an explosive watery diarrhea (sometimes called “rice-water stools” (without any abdominal symptoms), then vomiting.
- Severe diarrhea and vomiting cause the body to lose fluids and salts (dehydration) then a shock can occur followed by death in case such fluids are not compensated.
- In some cases of cholera, mild diarrhea occurs without any complications among children.

Prevention:
- Adhere to proper healthy habits regarding your food, drinks, and place of residence, and maintain your personal hygiene. Wash your hands well with water and soap before and after eating to prevent the transmission of infection.
- You should always wash your hands thoroughly with water and soap after defecating.
- Use paper towel (or kitchen paper) enough to reduce finger contamination. In case toilets are unavailable, defecate and bury stool away from any drinkable water source.
- Maintain complete cleanliness in preparing and having your food, and cool it properly. Also, make sure to properly store vegetables and fruits which are served cold. These tips apply to all houses and public places of dining. In case of unsure whether workers are observing healthy practices, you should select cooked foods and serve them hot.
- Wash vegetables well and peel off fruits before eating.
- Maintain the safety of foods and drinks by never leaving them uncovered for contamination by flies.
- Get rid of flies and means of their reproduction, by collecting wastes and dispose of them in properly the trash.
- Use pure water or canned mineral water for drinking and cooking; otherwise, it should be boiled before use.
Vaccination:
Two safe oral vaccines are available and provide a high level of protection for several months.

Importance of Notification:
1. Identifying sources of infection (such as drinking water source or food), and then taking proper steps sufficient to prevent increase of infection from the same source.
2. Identifying infected individuals to prevent spread of infection from them.
3. Identifying individuals dealing with infected persons and taking preventive measures to eliminate the transmission of infection.
Skin Diseases

Crowdedness, hot weather, excessive sweating, high humidity, and excessive exposure to the sun during the Hajj season among people who come from around the world increases the incidence of infections, especially Skin diseases.

The following are the most common skin diseases during Hajj season:

1- Skin abrasions (Abscess in Curves of the Body):

This is a common skin problem occurring among overweight or obese people or diabetics, under the armpits and breasts (especially women), upper thighs and sensitive areas in men. In these cases, the skin becomes inflamed and red, and if the disease worsens, more severe symptoms come into play, such as secretions accompanied by painful wisely.

Prevention and Treatment:

- Proper ventilation of upper thighs and armpit area.
- Personal hygiene
- Applying proper ointments on such parts before walking.
- Spraying an anti-inflammation cream after seating.

Upon infection, you may apply ointment related to this problem, and wash affected area with water and soap before applying medicine on a repeated manner.

2- Skin burns (sunburns):

Skin burns occur when a pilgrim is exposed to the direct sun for a prolonged period, causing skin inflammation and redness. This is usually seen among some pilgrims in parts of their bodies exposed to the sun. However, sometimes, sunburns turn into water bubbles, which are very painful. Infection increases among individuals of white skin and visitors arriving from moderate climate countries.

Avoid skin inflammation and sunburns during Hajj season through good ventilation of your body.
Sunburn Prevention:
- Use your umbrella regularly between 10am-3pm.
- Avoid exposing your body except as required by Hajj and Umrah rituals.
- It is recommended to use sun protective creams or ointments.

Treatment:
- Use cold ice packs and moisturizing creams.
- In case of water bubbles, avoid tampering so that they should not rupture. If ruptured, apply a local antibiotic. However, if your case worsens, you should see a doctor.

3. Fungal Diseases

Fungal diseases are a group of infectious skin diseases that are capable of causing different diseases. Such parasitic infections are widely spread in areas with hot weather conditions. Among these diseases is Tinea cruris. It is a fungal skin taking the form of dark spots, and the spots perimeter is usually darker its middle area. This disease spreads through using the clothes or towels of an infected person. In addition, great overcrowding, excessive sweating, and hot weather at the time of Hajj cause this disease to widespread among the pilgrims.

Prevention:
Adhere to hygiene. Avoid using the clothes and towels of others, and wash all one's underwear clothes.

Treatment:
Varies according to type. Ointments can be used, and sometimes pills. However, you should consult the doctor before taking any medicine.
Heat Injuries

Heat injuries are a common problem facing pilgrims while performing rituals. These are caused by high temperature accompanied with much movement and excessive sweating.

Heat injuries are frequent in these areas:
• Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'ba), especially at midday times.
• Sa’i (walking between Safa and Marwa), especially in cases of crowding and high temperature.
• Arafat at midday time.
• Mina (places of slaughtering the sacrificial animals and stoning), due to the long distance and congestion.

Types of heat injuries:

1. Sun stroke

Sun stroke is defined as a core body temperature usually in excess of 40°C for a long period. This is an extremely serious condition body systems would not endure it. This is accompanied with headache and dizziness, dehydration, and skin redness. If temperature is not reduced, the patient shall lose consciousness and will feel abdominal pain. He may also vomit and get diarrhea. If case worsens, he may undergo heart dysfunctions, convulsions, or nervous system dysfunction, and end with death.

Sun stroke is an emergency and patient should be given first aid immediately by the following:
• Moving the patient to a cold place.
• Taking off his outer clothes and cooling his body with cold water.
• Exposing him to an air source, such as an air-conditioner or a fan.
• Giving him fluids.
• Heading for the nearest health facility or calling ambulance if necessary.
2. Heat Exhaustion

This a less serious condition than sun stroke. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion appear with an extreme fatigue in hot weather, and include cold and wet skin, excessive sweating, low heart beat, fast breathing, thirst, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, or losing consciousness.

The major difference between heat exhaustion and sun stroke in signs and symptoms is that the sun stroke is caused by high temperature in body, while heat exhaustion is due to fatigue and exhaustion resulting from excessive sweating and lack of salts.

3. Convulsions or heat cramps

Heat cramps are painful, muscle cramps. Heat cramps can occur during work in a hot environment due to imbalance of some essential minerals due to sweating.

Prevention from all heat injuries:
• Avoid exposure to direct sun for a prolonged period.
• Using an umbrella, and light colored ones are recommended.
• Drinking enough liquids (water, juices, etc.).
• Taking enough sleep and avoiding exhaustion after performing every rite, whenever possible.
• Wearing light, cotton clothes and avoiding heavy, dark clothes.

Treatment of heat injuries:

Upon the occurrence of symptoms, it is recommended to follow the below instructions:
• Transferring the patient away from the sunny to a shady place.
• Cooling the body by cold water by taking off his outer clothes and spraying body with cold water (or directing body to an air-conditioner or a fan), or covering body with wet clothes or gauze.
• Taking antipyretics and painkillers when necessary before losing consciousness.
• Transferring the patient quickly to the nearest health center in severe cases to receive treatment, or call ambulance if necessary.
Meningitis

Hajj season is one of the environment where meningitis spreads since pilgrims arrive from different infected parts, especially from some African countries. Besides, crowdedness, cleanliness problems, and fatigue help meningitis spread. This is why meningitis is an actual threat to Hajj season.

Meningitis is an acute inflammation of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord, known collectively as the meninge. It may lead to death if not treated quickly.

Symptoms:

- Fever or high temperature
- Neck stiffness
- Acute headache
- Confusion or altered consciousness
- Vomiting
- Inability to tolerate light
- Young children often exhibit irritability and rash.
- Purple spots or red rash may appear.

Causes:

Inflammation may be caused by infection with viruses, bacteria, or other microorganisms.

Prevention:

- Vaccine against meningitis confers a protection of almost three years.
- Adhering to health instructions to maintain personal hygiene and reducing the transmission of infectious diseases.
- Avoiding congestion times.
- Providing good ventilation at place of residence.
- Isolating patient and properly getting rid of secretions.
**Ebola Virus**

This is an extremely serious, infectious disease, marked by fever and internal bleeding. The disease has a high risk of death. It infects man and some infected animals, such as chimpanzees, gorillas, and monkeys. Despite the fact that it is unlikely that this disease is transmitted to the Kingdom, yet preventive measures should be taken, especially for pilgrims contacting with visitors coming from infected regions outside the Kingdom.

**Transmission:**
- Through close contact with infected animals through secretions, organs or other bodily fluids.
- Ebola spreads through human-to-human transmission via direct contact through broken skin or mucous membranes with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people.
- Via direct contact with surfaces and materials (e.g. bedding, clothing, shaving tools, and used needles) contaminated with infected person's fluids.
- Burial ceremonies that involve unsafe direct contact with the body of the deceased can also contribute in the transmission of Ebola.

Symptoms may start to appear from 2 to 21 days from infection with the virus, and often appear during 8-10 days.

**Symptoms:**
- Sudden onset of fever
- Headache and severe fatigue
- Sore throat
- Muscle pain

This is followed by vomiting, diarrhea, rash, symptoms of impaired kidney and liver function, and in some cases, both internal and external bleeding.

**Treatment:**
There is as yet no proven treatment available for the virus. However, a range of potential treatments, including relieving symptoms, compensating liquids, and intensive care if necessary.

**Any available vaccine?**
Until now, there is no licensed medication or vaccine, and many research institutions are working to develop medicines and a vaccine.
Preventive measures and reduction:

- Adhering to good hygiene and maintaining a clean environment, including washing hands well with water and soap, or other disinfectants used for hand washing regularly, especially: after using toilets, touching surfaces and materials contaminated with infected person's fluids, before and after eating foods or preparing them, and after sneezing or coughing.
- Reducing the risk of wildlife-to-human transmission from contact with infected fruit bats or monkeys/apes at infected regions.
- Animal products (blood and meat) should be thoroughly cooked before consumption.
- Avoiding direct or close contact with people with Ebola symptoms, particularly with their personal care tools, such as towels, shaving tools, drinking glasses and spoons.
- Gloves and appropriate personal protective equipment should be worn when taking care of body of the deceased patient, and burying them immediately.
- Following up directives issued by the Ministry of Health.

In case any symptoms appear, head for the nearest health facility, where the Ministry of Health provides its services free for pilgrims.

Ligament and Muscular Fatigue

Ligament and muscular fatigue may afflict some pilgrims due to much movement while performing rituals.

Symptoms:

Severity of muscle fatigue varies according to one's fitness and the strength and extent of movement:

- **Ligament Fatigue:** Symptoms vary between pain and swelling and even partial or complete ligament tear.
- **Muscular Fatigue:** Symptoms vary between pain and muscle stiffness and may reach slight or severe muscle tear.
Causes of Ligament and Muscular Fatigue:

- Lack of muscle fitness
- Excessive tiredness
- Continuous violent movement

Treatment:

- You should stop moving once you feel pain.
- Press the affected area to relieve pain and prevent blood and fluids from collecting. You may also wrap an elastic bandage around the affected muscle. These bandages are available in pharmacies.
- Cool the affected area with ice or cold water to relieve pain.
- Lift the injured organ to lessen swelling; when asleep or when staying at place of residence.
- Consult the doctor if necessary.
Women and Children during Hajj and Umrah

The Hajj is a hard journey and requires great effort. Women may face additional difficulties during the hajj: they may be pregnant, experience their menstrual period, or suffer in other ways because of the physical demands of Hajj.

Menstrual Period:
If a woman going on Hajj chooses to use premenstrual syndrome (PMS) pills in order to make it easier to perform the Hajj rites completely, she may follow these tips:

- Consult a gynecologist before going on Hajj, a minimum of 7 days before departure, or as recommended by your gynecologist;
- Make sure you know how to take the pills and the proper dose at their specific time according to your gynecologist.
- Be aware that you may experience some side effects from these pills, such as nausea, headache, pain in the breast area, mood swings, and irritability.

Pregnant Women and Hajj:
It is recommended for pregnant women to postpone their Hajj. However, if you are unable to postpone, we advise you to take some preventive measures to avoid potential harm to you and your fetus due to physical exhaustion, including danger of:

- Early delivery
- The newborn baby requiring intensive care
- Increased vulnerability to infection due to lack of immunity and overcrowding.
Pregnant women should postpone Hajj in the following cases:

- Preterm birth disease history
- Early miscarriage cases
- Suffering from pregnancy diabetes
- Heart and hypertension diseases or kidney patients and others
- Pregnancy bleeding
- Placenta previa – a condition in which your placenta is too close to your cervix

Health Tips for the Pregnant Woman:

- Consult your obstetrician in order to know if you could go on the Hajj without sustaining any health complications.
- Consult your obstetrician if you could be vaccinated against meningitis and influenza at least ten days before Hajj.
- Make sure to bring sufficient quantities of all necessary medicines to last through the whole Hajj period.

Tips for pregnant women during travel:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Get up and walk around every hour or two to avoid venous thrombosis of legs
- Walk every one or two hours inside the plane or the bus. If you are travelling to the Hajj in a private vehicle, the vehicle should stop every two hours so you can walk a little.

Pregnant women should avoid crowds and choose the proper times to perform the rituals to avoid their bodies being pressed.
Health Tips for Pregnant Women During Hajj and Umrah:

Pregnant women may suffer dehydration due to the frequent vomiting especially in the first months of pregnancy, at which period she is at risk of miscarriage due to fatigue and crowdedness. To decrease such risks, make sure to do the following:

• Avoid crowding and choose the proper times to perform the rituals to avoid your body being pressed.
• Make sure to wear the proper, snug clothes and shoes.
• Have enough amount of fluids and avoid high temperature.
• Walk around a little every hour or so to avoid venous thrombosis of legs.
• If you feel bleeding, abdominal contractions, migraine, or high temperature, you should head to the nearest health center or hospital.
• Avoid any excessive physical effort and take advantage of Islamic allowances according to circumstances when necessary such as using a wheelchair during Tawaf (circumambulation) and Sa’i (walking) when feeling strain.

Infants and Children during the Hajj:

It is recommended not to be accompanied by children who are below the age of puberty during Hajj for the following reasons:

• Children are more susceptible to get infected with diseases such as respiratory tract and digestive tract infections, or gastroenteritis.
• Children are more vulnerable to lose fluids than adults either because of the high temperature or the small amount of water they consume.
• Exhaustion tires children during the Hajj and could suppress their appetite; hence leading to the loss of the body's fluids.
• Children are more vulnerable to get lost because of the overcrowding during the Hajj.

A pregnant woman should immediately head to the nearest health center or hospital if she feels any of the following symptoms:

• Bleeding or unusual vaginal secretions
• Severe abdominal contractions
• Migraine with confused vision
Important Tips for Parents bringing their children along:

- Put a bracelet around the child's wrist showing their full name, place of residence, telephone number, and the name of the convoy.
- Make sure that the child has taken the main vaccinations, and ask the doctor about the other vaccinations.
- Have plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Wash hands regularly.
- Make sure of the cleanliness and dryness of the in-between thighs' area to prevent chafing.
- Make sure of the food cleanliness.
- Avoid bringing children along to overcrowded places as much as possible.
- It is recommended to see a doctor when any health problems occur, such as diarrhea, vomit, and high temperature.

If your children accompanied you for the Hajj, make sure of giving them the main vaccinations, in addition to other Hajj-related vaccinations.
Post-Hajj Disorders

Some pilgrims may experience a variety of symptoms after the Hajj, which may be called post-Hajj disorders. These symptoms are not diseases; rather a group of common symptoms affecting pilgrims while performing rituals, such as strain, aches, irregular sleep, etc. However, such symptoms disappear quickly over time and by taking painkillers. Such symptoms include the following:

- Strain, laziness, and fatigue;
- Muscle pains and aches;
- Headache and irritability;
- Complexion-darkening;
- Cold;
- And irregular sleep.

And such symptoms result from:

- Long exposure to sunlight;
- Excessive movement without adequate fitness;
- And getting infected with cold and influenza.

As we previously explained, such symptoms disappear over time, taking rest and having some painkillers. In case such symptoms become severe or continue for a long time, you should seek medical advice.

When returning, a pilgrim should avoid mixing with others when infected with common cold, flu, and etc., and see the doctor if they worsen.
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This guide was developed under the supervision of the General Directorate for Health Education
Contact and Inquiries:
Hpromotion@moh.gov.sa