



School of Medicine, Keele University,  
Keele ST5 5BG, UK

f.mughal@keele.ac.uk

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## COVID-19 VACCINE HESITANCY AMONG MINORITY GROUPS

### Covid-19 vaccination during Ramadan

Faraz Mughal *general practitioner and National Institute for Health Research doctoral fellow*

Vaccine hesitancy has been reported among people and healthcare staff from ethnic minorities.<sup>1</sup> This is a serious concern given covid-19 is the largest global public health challenge in recent years. Vaccination offers hope in preventing morbidity and mortality and helps to build community immunity.

This year, Ramadan, the month of fasting, spans April to May. People from some ethnic minority backgrounds, such as black, Bangladeshi, and Pakistani, may be more hesitant to receive a covid vaccination because they don't want to compromise their fast. It is important for these groups to know that having vaccines intramuscularly during fasting time (dawn to dusk) does not nullify one's fast and vaccination should not be delayed.<sup>2</sup>

Internationally, healthcare advocates need to work with Muslim faith leaders to disseminate this information. Those fasting may also be concerned that potential side effects of vaccination—for example, myalgia, headache, and tiredness—may make it difficult to maintain their fast. Clinicians and covid-19 vaccinators can advise those fasting to drink more clear fluid and take simple analgesia outside of fasting times to mitigate any side effects.

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1 Razai MS, Osama T, McKechnie DGJ, Majeed A. Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy among ethnic minority groups. *BMJ* 2021;372:n513. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n513 pmid: 33637577

2 British Islamic Medical Association. Fasting and covid vaccinations. 2021. <https://britishima.org/operation-vaccination/hub/statements/#FAST>.

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