

## COVID-19 PREVENTION IN REGARDING TO PERFORM ABLUTION (WADHU) FOR DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

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### ABSTRACT

Ablution in the language means washing, while in Sharia it means washing certain organs with a specific intention, and those organs include the mouth, nose, face, hands, hair, ears and feet.

In the Islamic religion, ablution is required to perform the five daily prayers and the supererogatory prayers. Recent studies have proven the importance of ablution in protecting the body from many diseases, as many disease-causing microorganisms can enter the body through the mouth, nose and ear, and contamination of the hands may cause many diseases. Therefore, we find it necessary to maintain ablution to protect the body from diseases.

Using the media of the day Efforts to stop Covid-19 are now linked to Muslim advice against following cleanliness regulations. All countries throughout the world are presently attempting to prevent and break the chain of distribution of co-19 in various ways. Ranging from large-scale organizations, such as the World Health Organization on an international level, to small-scale groups, such as within the family. All efforts are inextricably linked to the genuineness of each person who fills that function. From the perspective of Islamic principles, this article is inspired by the need to prevent the spread of Covid-19. The goal of this work is to investigate the Covid-19 protocol policy and its impact on wudhu internalization as a means of prevention using a literature review approach that includes government policies and circulars connected to the Covid-19 prevention protocol. According to the findings of this study, every policy or circular issued emphasizes and regulates clean and healthy lifestyles by requiring people to wash their hands thoroughly at all times. As a result, Wudhu' is a Muslim discipline exercise whose implementation is inextricably linked to hand washing. As a result, this research emphasizes a clean and healthy lifestyle as part of prevention efforts. One of the most important ways to fight infection is to cut the chain or prevent the transmission of these epidemics, and personal hygiene is one of the most important ways to break this chain. For more than 1440 years, Islam has called for the importance of ablution, which reaches five times a day. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization has clarified the importance of personal hygiene in limiting the spread of Covid 19. So, in this review, the importance of ablution in light of the Covid 19 pandemic will be explained.

**KEYWORDS:** Covid-19, prevention, Islamic principles, Muslim Communities, Wadhu.

### INTRODUCTION

The viruses which are resembled with solar corona are called Corona viruses having core shell hence

enveloped and single-stranded RNA which is also positive nature; infect animals as well as humans. Till now four variants of corona viruses are known such as

alpha, beta, gamma and delta. The origin of these subfamilies of coronaviruses is apparently from mammals and birds.<sup>[1, 2]</sup> The SARS-CoV-2 being beta-coronaviruses cause severe infection and fatalities and evidence of human to human transmission is confirmed in January 2020.<sup>[3]</sup> Many elements involved in to become pandemic of coronavirus like more infectivity, quick transmission through upper respiratory organs (also contact transmission), long incubation and viral shedding period and overall travelling pattern globally.<sup>[4-6]</sup> The recent evidence has specified that different routes are involved in the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 as the human angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (hACE2) is the viral receptor.<sup>[7]</sup> HACE2 being vital gene expressed in many cell types like alveolar cells of lungs, blood vessels, endothelial cells and gastrointestinal tract cells, hence whole Humans are vulnerable to SARS-CoV-2. Currently many studies confirmed that SARS-CoV-2 transmission occur through respiratory droplets as well as by contact with infected subjects and contaminated matters.<sup>[8-10]</sup> The First health care workers and COVID19 infected members are at higher risk of viral attack.<sup>[11]</sup> Many reports confirmed the detection of SARS-CoV-2 in gastrointestinal tract creating possibility of fecal oral transmission, similarly detection of SARS-CoV-2 in conjunctiva cells signifying another transmission route.<sup>[12]</sup> The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has established in more than 210 countries and still many countries are taking strict measures like facemask usage, social distancing, quarantine and lockdown for eradicating the virus infection.<sup>[13]</sup>

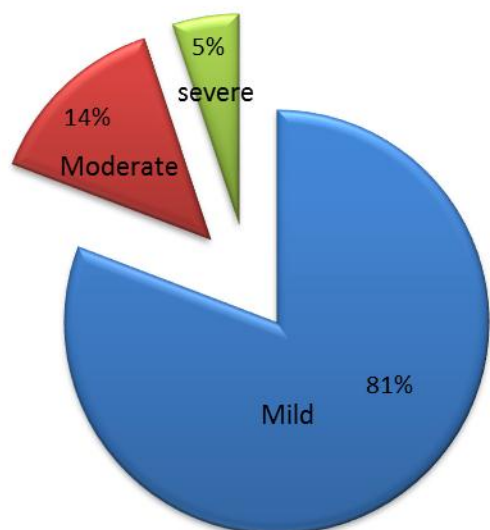
In light of the Covid-19 crisis, we find that personal hygiene has greatly contributed to reducing the rate of the epidemic. We find that the summary of personal hygiene and in accordance with the standards of the World Health Organization came in accordance with what was stipulated by our great religion represented in the pillars of ablution that Islam approved nearly 1440 years ago.

The religion has great impact in establishing and shaping the mindset and beliefs of people hence directing the attitude and perception towards any phenomenon.<sup>[14]</sup> Almost every religion has principles for guiding people for tackling any antagonized condition.<sup>[15]</sup> Islam being a complete codex of life also established distinctive rules of living for their followers. What kind of teachings that Islam established for handling any pandemic is very important to know for all communities. Cleanliness is an essential part of Islamic life, and scientific research has proven that washing these organs reduces the chances of contracting various diseases. Furthermore it is also important to know that are the Islamic teachings are in support for the prevention of

spread of pandemics like COVID-2019.<sup>[16, 17]</sup> In this scenario, the beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) adopted stout measures for handling plaque pandemic in his times. For reducing the transmission of plaque the beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ordered his followers to keep stay at homes and don't move toward infected areas. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) clarified that "whoever knows about outbreak of plaque in any land, he should not visit that land and if the outbreak occur in land where one has residency then one should not flee from the land."<sup>[16]</sup> Similarly, the companions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) were also implemented the similar precautions whenever they had such pandemic in their times. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) asked the people to keep yourself away from leprosy person and said: you should make off from the leprosy person as you make off from a lion".<sup>[18,19]</sup> He rigorously banned to contact with infected person so as to avoid it transmission.<sup>[20]</sup> The WHO also mentioned similar guidelines of keeping away from infected person and wash hands with soaps for 20 seconds.<sup>[16]</sup> The Islamic Principles concerning cleanliness are very clear. It is compulsory for every Muslims to make ablution five times a day for praying hence cleaning him for every dirt and germs. According to Muhammad (PBUH) teachings, "Neatness is the half faith" and "God loves neatness".<sup>[20]</sup> The act of sneezing is also explained by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself as reported by his companion that "Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) whenever sneezed, he would shield his face with hand or with garment and muffle the sound with it".<sup>[21]</sup> It has also been illuminated that Islamic teachings are in accordance with WHO strategies concerning COVID-2019.<sup>[16]</sup>

## CLINICAL FEATURES

There is much closed similarity between the symptoms of pneumonia and COVID-19. The SARS-CoV-2 incubation period ranges between 3 to 7 days and US CGC predicted a 2-14 days. The initial classic symptoms reported includes fever, cough and breathe shortness while sore throat, chills, muscle pain and loss of sense of smell were also reported.<sup>[22]</sup> Some patients experienced diarrhea indicating the involvement of gastrointestinal tract and headache and myalgia also. The severe symptoms of SARS-CoV-2 include dyspnea within 7-10 days, chest tightness developing acute respiratory syndrome, coagulopathy, septic shock and metabolic acidosis. It should also keep in mind that some patients experienced initially mild symptoms but later on deteriorated.<sup>[23]</sup> As for as the presentation of symptoms in individuals, 81% of individuals had mild illness, 14% of individuals present severe illness while 5% of individuals had developed severity and need for mechanical ventilation and intensive care as shown in figure 1.<sup>[13]</sup>



**Figure 1: Showing demographic representation of COVID-19 symptoms.**

The risk of severity increases manifold in elderly and people with other chronic issues like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, hypertension and heart disease. The initial symptoms in certain patients having such complication showed mild but progressively boost later.<sup>[23]</sup> Most of the COVID-19 patients get recovery while a small portion of about 0.5 to 5% get worsen and need intensive care.<sup>[24]</sup> In the latest observation it is concluded that there is chance of reinfection by SARS-CoV-2 because of dropping of antibody titer in recovered patients.<sup>[25]</sup> The variants of clinical features in different individuals along with affected organs are shown in table1.<sup>[26]</sup>

**Table1: Clinical features in relation to affected organs.**

Most common symptoms	Less common symptoms	Serious symptoms
Fever Cough tiredness loss of taste or smell	Sore throat headache aches and pains diarrhoea a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes red or irritated eyes	Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath loss of speech or mobility, or confusion chest pain

**Concepts of cleanliness in Islam for whole world**

Islam being the complete codex of life provides health, social, spiritual, moral and political aspects of life. Moreover the praying and strong trust on ALLAH for getting healthy from disease, Islam also endorse people to take proper medication and precautions for the safety and wellness of all communities. The

Prophet (PBUH) said “Every disease ALLAH has created also created its cure”.<sup>[27]</sup> Likewise maintenance of health and physical comfort is an important object of Islamic teachings. As Muhammad (PBUH) said that- “Do not cause harm or return harm”.<sup>[28]</sup> The Islam introduces the beautiful concept of protection and maintaining good social relationship between different communities without any discrimination of race and religion as mentioned in Holy Book (Quran):  
 “Whoever saves one- it is as he had saved mankind totally”

Islam stresses individuals as well as all communities for adopting healthy lifestyle especially in the managing the pandemic conditions. The strategies adopted today by different communities, organizations and governments for preventing COVID-19 spread are almost similar with Islamic strategies. The big proof of that is the act of introducing the quarantine and hygiene practice by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), when there was nothing to do with contagious diseases.<sup>[27]</sup> Currently, Dr Anthony Fauci (2020) describe that better hygiene and act of isolation and quarantine are the most effective measures for the prevention of spread of COVID-19 as well as others pandemics.<sup>[29]</sup> Similarly, Craig Considine (March 2020) also mentioned that Muhammad (PBUH) has proposed better hygiene and quarantine in earlier period when nothing to know about such measures.<sup>[30]</sup> The literally means of Ablution (wadhu) is to clean and mentioned in Holy Quran as:

“O ye who believe, when you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles” (Al Maidah: 6).<sup>[31, 32]</sup>

In some studies, Wadhu in the light of Holy Quran is a good tool for maintaining healthy life style and cleanliness.<sup>[33]</sup> Ablution (wadhu) has also many other benefits like improve sleep,<sup>[34]</sup> reduce stress,<sup>[35]</sup> subside asthma symptoms,<sup>[36]</sup> improve spiritual intelligence<sup>[37]</sup> and as a therapy for rehabilitation of narcotics addicts.<sup>[38]</sup>

**The value of Ablution (wadhu) steps as effort for COVID-19 prevention**

By applying the general along with transmission specific infection control precautions, the transmission of infections can be easily controlled and prevented. A lot of diseases are carried by air and droplet like pneumonia, diphtheria, pertussis, influenza type B, meningitis and mumps.<sup>[39]</sup> The large size particle droplets (>5 microns) and nose and mouth mucous membranes of susceptible person are the sources of droplet transmission.<sup>[40]</sup> Droplets are produced through act of coughing, loudly talking and sneezing.<sup>[41]</sup> According to research done by Neeltje van

Doremalen and Vincent J Munster described that virus can survive for 3 hours after releasing in air. So the Muslims perform prayer five times a day and ablution is obligatory for every prayer and the time span between three prayers is about 3 hours and this total time almost 8 hours is most critical for performing duties and daily works. In this context, performing ablution during the day time is very effective measure for the maintaining healthy life style and also for prevention of COVID-19.<sup>[42]</sup> The COVID-19 being respiratory virus predominantly spread through droplets of saliva and mucous from

infected person accelerated by coughing and sneezing. The capability of transmission of virus is also through infected surface touch through mouth and nose. So the most effective rule for preventing COVID-19 spread is through adopting strict hygienic practices as per WHO guidelines in accordance with Islamic teachings regarding hygiene and dealing with pandemics.<sup>[27, 43]</sup> In Islam there are many teachings urging the need to pay attention to the cleanliness of the body, food and drink. Ablution procedure can be summarized in Fig.2.

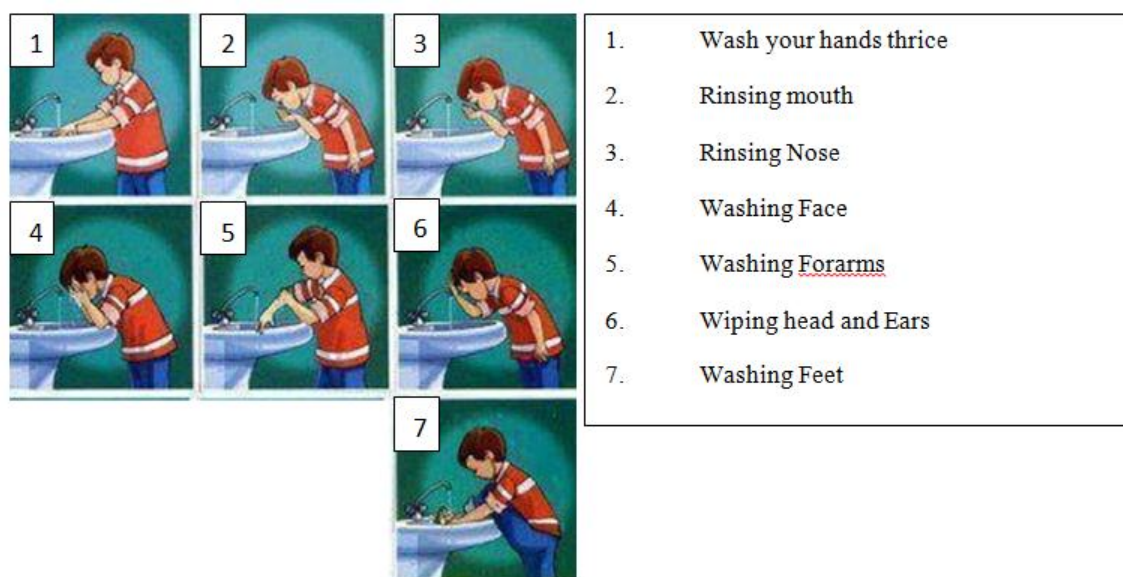


Fig. 2: Ablution procedure.

### Hands washing

Hand washing is an important act of cleanliness for avoiding the risk of transmission of any kind of infectious agents at home and in social life from person to person. Islam put attention on washing hands after getting bath and before eating any food. Similarly daily practicing of washing bare parts of body like hands, nose, mouth, face, forarms, and feet five times a day is the best practice for avoiding infections and good for respiratory hygiene. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) advised his companions to “Wash your hands thrice after you wake up; while you sleep you have no idea where your hands moved.<sup>[44]</sup> Another act of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) proved later was the rubbing of hands on clay for disinfectant as clay has antiseptic properties and highly recommended for hand cleanliness in current scenario.<sup>[45]</sup> Hand washing should carry throughout the day as everyone is at risk of potentially dangerous bacteria.<sup>[46]</sup> Semmelweis also described the principles of hand hygiene for the prevention of infection transmission from person to person.<sup>[47]</sup> Similarly hand washing with any soft detergent like soap is important and effective health behavior to establish

and expressively decreases the rate of respiratory and diarrheal disease and also many other benefits include improvement in school attendance.<sup>[48]</sup> The human hands are frequently carrying the germs and transmit pathogens from person to person and also from nature to another directly or indirectly. October 15 is the World Hand Washing Day designated by United Nations in 2008. Hand washing is the dominant thing describe by WHO guidelines for the prevention of spread of COVID-19 as primary preventive action. The behavior and attitude of washing hands properly is very efficient tool for the prevention of spread of COVID-19. This year’s theme, “Our Future is at Hand – Let’s Move Forward Together”.<sup>[49]</sup>

### Rinsing mouth

The oral hygiene is also very important for preventing infections as mouth is the entryway of getting infection. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself takes care of his teeth by using miswak (a toothbrush from *Salvadora persica* tree) and also recommended for his followers before every prayer.<sup>[50]</sup>



### Rinsing Nose

Nasal rinsing is the important part of ablution and very effective act of nasal hygiene. The saying of Prophet (PBUH) narrated by much closed companion Abu Hurairah "let enter water into nose then oust it during ablution".<sup>[51, 52]</sup> Nasal rinsing has various health effects as it ejects antigens and different pathogens that have reside into nasal cavity and it also facilitate mucociliary movement by diluting nasal secretions thus improve clearance of thick mucus.<sup>[53-58]</sup> For treating rhinosinusitis and allergic rhinitis nasal rinsing technique is adopted as adjunctive therapy.<sup>[59-61]</sup> Another study established that nasal rinsing is good method for reducing the symptoms of cough, nasal blockage and rhinorrhea.<sup>[62]</sup> Thus performing ablution many times a day is effective for cleaning the nose from germs and contaminants.<sup>[39]</sup> Nose cleanliness is also important because nose is very efficient in processing the air that have to reach into lungs. Thus nose is helpful in filtering the air and prevents small pollen grains size particles from entrance into lungs.<sup>[63]</sup>

### Washing Face

The skin diseases are known to spread effectively and faster in congested areas. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated that "When should discharge his phlegm and clean it way as it can sticks to skin and cloths of another one and can harm him".<sup>[39]</sup> Face washing "F" being integral part WHO SAFE strategy helpful in decreasing the amount of nasal and ocular discharge and prevalence of trachoma globally.<sup>[64, 65]</sup>

### Washing Forarms

The Prophet companion Abdullah ibn Zaid said, "The Prophet fills his palm with water and rubbed it on his forarms." It is expected that skin is the hub of about 500-1000 species of bacteria. Through performing ablution pathogenic germs can be wash off.<sup>[39]</sup>

### Wiping head and Ears

The cleaning the body hair from dust and dirt is also highlighted by Prophet (PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) said that head hair should be washed thrice a day in ritual bath and wiped in every ablution.<sup>[66]</sup> Washing the ears is important in removing plankton and dust in the air, which may stick to the waxy substance inside the ear. This may cause an imbalance in the body and the middle ear is responsible for it. Therefore, washing the ear during ablution helps to remove those blockages in the ear.

### Washing Feet

The feet good hygienic practice helps in the prevention of foot and toenails ailments. For example athlete' foot and fungal nail are common infections and can be circumvented and treated easily by adopting good routinely hygiene infection.<sup>[67]</sup> It is

concluded in a study that there is less chance of incidence as well as prevalence of diabetic foot ulcers in individuals who are taking care of her/his feet by washing regularly as compared to those who are less conscious about feet hygiene.<sup>[68]</sup> Ablution includes washing the feet, and washing the feet is a very important process in maintaining human health, as fungi and many types of bacteria grow in wet places, especially between the fingers. Plankton help in the growth of these microorganisms and limit their reproduction.<sup>[69]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

One of the most important ways to fight infection is to cut the chain or prevent the transmission of these epidemics, and personal hygiene is one of the most important ways to break this chain. For more than 1440 years, Islam has called for the importance of ablution, which reaches five times a day. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization has clarified the importance of personal hygiene in limiting the spread of Covid 19. So, in this review, the importance of ablution in light of the Covid 19 pandemic will be explained.

ALLAH Almighty is very merciful to all creatures especially humans and tells us the beautiful rules of living in every aspects of life so that no one could get hearted from any cause. The practice of ablution is a beautiful and logical act of keeping himself/herself clean and free from pathogenic germs. Anyone from any religion easily can get cleanliness and can prevent from pandemic diseases by adopting the practice of ablution and remain healthy throughout his/her life. Because the steps involved in ablution practice are enough for oral health, dental health, nose health, skin health, mind health, ear health, and for maintaining blood pressure at optimum level. Furthermore the author recommends that every person should adopt the practice of ablution for getting good health and for the prevention of contagious diseases like COVID-19 pandemic.

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