

Health Awareness Guide for Pilgrims



Brief

The Hajj health guide will provide pilgrims with health and safety tips before, during and after their pilgrimage.

We have put together this handy Hajj guide to help pilgrims through this blessed journey.

Hajj mabroor wa sa'ay mashkoor!

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General Hajj health advice:



A. Health advice before performing Hajj:

1



Start preparing for Hajj about 4-6 weeks prior to the date of your pilgrimage and visit your family physician if you have any medical condition, to assess your health, your ability to perform Hajj and to provide you with all the medicines that you may need on your trip.

2



Get all the necessary vaccinations for Hajj such as seasonal influenza, meningitis, pneumococcal and (covid-19) vaccinations at least two weeks before your date of travel.

General Hajj health advice:



A. Health advice before performing Hajj:



Maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating healthy foods and drink plenty of fluids and get enough rest.

Increase your Physical Fitness before Hajj:

- Exercise from 20 to 60 minutes per day start Gradually.
- Engage in aerobic exercises such as cycling and swimming.
- Ensure to begin any activity with a warm-up of (5-10)
 minutes, as well as a cool-down period of (5-10)
 minutes before completing the activity.



Prepare a first-aid kit that contains antiseptic, antipyretic, pain reliever, moisturizing cream, antibiotic cream, wound and burn creams, blood pressure measuring machine and a glucometer if needed.

General Hajj health advice:



B. Health advice during the Hajj pilgrimage



Get to know your Hajj campaign doctor and keep him informed of your medical condition, if you have any ailments.



Keep a medical card or a wrist band with details of your medical condition/s at all times, stating your name, age, nationality, illness, place of residence and contact numbers.



Avoid direct exposure to sunlight, use sunscreen, stay in a shaded area and use an umbrella.



Eat healthy meals that are adequately cooked and refrain from overeating.



Avoid food poisoning by eating food from a known source (avoid street vendors), avoid storing food and do not share your food with others.



Drink enough water.

General Hajj health advice:



B. Health advice during the Hajj pilgrimage



Make sure you go to a licensed barber and use your own shaving tools.



Adhere to your prescribed medications and if you have diabetes, measure your blood sugar regularly.



Maintain personal hygiene, shower, cut your nails and brush your teeth regularly.



Do not stress and get enough rest and sleep.



Go to the nearest health centre when needed.

General Hajj health advice:



C. Health advice after returning from the Hajj rituals



Go to the nearest health centre to assess your health condition, especially if you suffer from any chronic disease.



Make sure you comply with the doctor's instructions and the treatment he prescribes.



Follow a healthy and balanced diet to rejuvenate.



Sleep well, get enough rest and avoid physical stress.

Chapter two

Precautionary measures for a healthy pilgrimage:

Due to the presence of such a mass gathering from all over the world to perform the Hajj rituals in the Holy Land, the possibility of infection and transmission of infectious diseases among pilgrims increases, so the pilgrim must follow all precautionary measures by adhering to the following:

A. Precautionary measures before performing Hajj

- Make sure you take all the necessary vaccinations.
- 2. Make sure you are up to date with recommended vaccinations such as diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, chickenpox and mumps.
- 3. Stay updated with the current infectious diseases (COVID- 19 and Monkeypox) and the guidelines issued from the official health authorities.
- 4. Make sure you carry all necessary personal tools (prayer rug, sanitiser, Holy Quran, tasbeeh, prayer books and umbrella).
- Do not travel if you develop a fever, respiratory symptoms or a rash.

Chapter two

Precautionary measures for a healthy pilgrimage:

B. Precautionary measures while performing Hajj

- 1. It is advised to wear a mask at all times and wear it correctly.
- 2. It is advised to maintain physical distance with others at all times and avoid crowded places as much as possible.
- 3. Wash or sanitise your hands frequently, especially after touching surfaces, using the toilet and before eating.
- 4. Refrain from touching your nose, mouth and eyes.
- 5. Do not share your personal tools with others.
- 6. Adhere to the cough and sneeze etiquette.
- 7. Make sure you have your own personal tools (prayer rug, sanitiser, Quran, tasbeeh, prayer books and umbrella) and do not share them with others.
- 8. Avoid spitting on the ground, as this is a source of infection.
- Avoid direct contact with people who show respiratory or other medical symptoms.
- 10. If you begin to develop a fever, respiratory symptoms or a rash, inform the administrator immediately to confirm the extent of your disease and to receive advise on safety measures for you and others
- 11. Avoid contact with live or dead wild animals.

Chapter two

Precautionary measures for a healthy pilgrimage:

C. Precautionary measures after returning from Hajj



Be aware of and follow all laws and guidelines after returning from Hajj.



Be careful when you come in contact with those with chronic illnesses & elderlies and those who cannot get vaccinated due to their medical conditions.



Consult your physician if you develop symptoms such as: fever, cough, headache, muscle aches, rashes ...etc.

Chapter Three

Nutrition during Hajj:

Important tips:



Eat in moderation to avoid feeling full and bloated.



Avoid fatty and fried foods.



Do not eat foods that cause bloating, such as radishes, onions, etc.



Eat enough fruits and vegetables (up to five servings a day) because of the high-fiber content that prevents constipation.

Additionally, fruits and vegetables are full of vitamins and boost the body's immunity to protect it against diseases.

Chapter Three

Nutrition during Hajj:

Important tips:



Read food labels on food products to know their nutritional facts/information.



Drink enough fluids, especially water, to replace the fluids lost during Hajj.



Avoid drinking soft drinks because they contain high amounts of sugars.



Do not use any stimulants such as tea and coffee because they cause dehydration and extreme thirst.



Eat honey and unsalted nuts to provide the body with energy and minerals to boost immunity.

Chapter Three

Nutrition during Hajj:

You should consult a doctor before traveling. It is also preferable to consult a nutritionist to know the diet that must be followed during Hajj.

Water and Hajj:

 Your body depends on water to survive. Every cell, tissue, and organ in your body needs water to work properly. For example, your body uses water to:

Maintain its temperature, remove waste and lubricate your joints.

 Throughout hajj, the pilgrim loses substantial amounts of liquids through perspiration or sweat and is more prone to dehydration.



Why is water important?

Benefits of drinking adequate amount of water include prevention of:

- Migraines
- Nosebleeds
- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Asthma
- Dry cough
- Dry skin
- Acne

Water and Hajj:

Tips to stay hydrated:

- Keep a bottle of water with you during the day.
- If you do not like the taste of plain water, try adding a slice of lemon or lime to your drink.
- Drink water throughout the day

If you have trouble remembering to drink water, drink on a schedule.

For example:

- Drink water when you wake up.
- Drink water at breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Drink water before going to sleep
- Drink a small glass of water at the beginning of each hour.

Water and Hajj:

Dehydration:

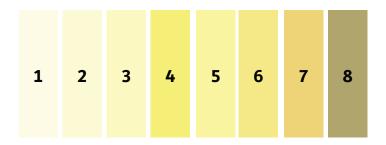
If you do not drink enough water, you may become dehydrated. This means your body will not have enough fluid to operate properly.

Indicators you are dehydrated:

1. Urine:

- Little or no urine
- Colour

Urine colour can be an indication of dehydration. If it is colourless or light yellow, you are well hydrated. If your urine is a dark yellow or amber color, you may be dehydrated.



- 1-3 Excellent, keep drinking water.
- 4-7 The percentage of your water consumption is not enough.
- 8 It is preferable to consult a specialist.

Water and Hajj:

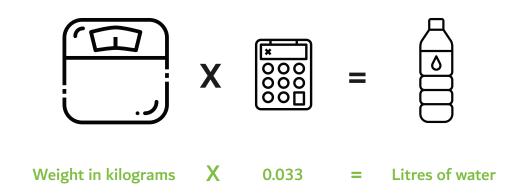
Dehydration:

Indicators you are dehydrated:

- 2. Dry mouth.
- 3. Sleepiness or fatigue.
- 4. Extreme thirst.
- 5. Headache.
- 6. Confusion.
- 7. Dizziness or lightheadedness.
- 8. No tears when crying

Water and Hajj:

How to calculate your daily water requirement?



For example, if you are 60kg, you should drink about 2 litres of water every single day.

$$(60 \times 0.033 = 1.98)$$

Please note that calculations may vary especially for those with health conditions (such as conditions which require them to be on medications or cause loss of muscle mass or decreased kidney function) as they could be at an increased risk of dehydration or increased perfusion. They must consult a doctor to assess their daily hydration requirement.

Water and Hajj:

Keep in mind

- There are other sources of water: You can also get water through liquid foods and beverages, such as soup, milk, tea, coffee, soda, drinking water and juices.
- You should drink 1 cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes.
- To adequately rehydrate, drink more than the fluid you lost. Do not do all this in one go. Spread it over the next two to six hours.
- You need to drink more fluid than you lost because you continue to lose fluid through sweating and urination.

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Patients with High Blood Pressure can participate in hajj safely after following the below guidelines:

- Consult your physician about your ability to participate in the pilgrimage.
- Carry an adequate supply of medications in a safe and appropriate manner.
- Carry medications prescribed by your physician as instructed.
- Regularly monitor your blood pressure and ensure it is controlled.
- Follow healthy habits, drink less tea and coffee, reduce your consumption of salt, avoid processed and fatty-foods.
- Consume a balanced diet that contains fruits, vegetables, dairy products and proteins.
- Get enough rest whenever possible.

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Diabetic individuals can participate in Hajj safely after following the below guidelines:

- Consulting his physician about the ability to participate, and explaining potential risks he may face (hypoglycemia, foot ulcers,..)
- 2. Carrying an adequate supply of medication in a safe and appropriate manner.
- 3. Getting medications prescribed by his physician as instructed.
- 4. Wearing a bracelet or carrying an ID card stating their diabetes condition and treatment details for emergency use.
- Regularly measuring blood sugar levels using a glucometer.
- 6. Following dietary instructions from their physician (reducing sugar and fat intake)
- 7. Keeping insulin cool during transport and storage using appropriate containers or refrigeration.

Health Conditions and Hajj:

- 8. Carrying sweetened juices or sweets to address symptoms of hypoglycemia.
- Wearing comfortable socks to protect feet and avoid going barefoot.
- 10. Taking their medications and eating adequately to maintain blood sugar levels before Tawaf or walking between Safa and Marwa.
- 11. Temporarily pause rituals if experiencing hypoglycemia symptoms.
- 12. Using an electric shaver instead of a blade.
- 13. Stay hydrated by drinking water regularly.
- 14. Regularly checking foots

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Heart disease

Patients with heart disease can participate in Hajj safely after following the below guidelines:

- 1. Consult your physician before going for Hajj to assess your health condition.
- 2. Carry an adequate supply of medications in a safe and appropriate manner.
- 3. Carry medications prescribed by your physician as instructed.
- 4. Wear a bracelet around your wrist with details of your name, age, diagnosis, type of treatment and medications that you are currently taking.
- Avoid excessive physical exertion and consider using a wheelchair during certain rituals.
- 6. Seek immediate medical attention if you experience chest pain or shortness of breath.
- 7. Avoid stress.
- 8. Reduce fats, salty foods and eat a high-fiber diet (fruits& vegetables).
- 9. Stay hydrated.

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Kidney disease

Patients with kidney disease, particularly those with kidney failure, poor kidney function, or kidney stones, can participate in Hajj safely after following the below guidelines:

- 1. Consult with your physician to ensure your ability to perform Hajj and receive appropriate health instructions.
- 2. Carry an adequate supply of medications in a safe and appropriate manner.
- 3. Carry medications prescribed by your physician as instructed.
- 4. Avoid prolonged exposure to the sun to prevent dehydration and electrolyte imbalance.
- 5. Limit consumption of meat and protein.
- Seek medical assistance at the nearest health centre or hospital if any health issues arise, such as a urinary tract infection.

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Gastrointestinal patients are advised to eat low-fat/fat-free foods such as boiled, grilled and steamed foods. They should not add spices and hot sauces. They should avoid eating foods that cause stomach irritation and discomfort.

There are many causes of gastrointestinal disease:

- Malnutrition
- Virus infection.
- Food poisoning.
- Allergy to certain foods.
- Complications resulting from some medications.
- Low intake of dietary fiber

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Asthma

Asthmatic patients can participate in Hajj safely after following the below guidelines:

- Consult your treating physician to check the treatment plan and ensure your asthma is controlled.
- Take all the recommended vaccinations, e.g. annual influenza.
- Carry an adequate supply of medications in a safe and appropriate manner.
- Carry medications prescribed by your physician as instructed.
- Wear a bracelet around your wrist with details of your name, age, diagnosis, type of treatment and medications that you are currently taking.
- Avoid crowded times for performing rituals to minimize the risk of asthma attacks.
- Carry an emergency nebulizer at all times during the rituals for immediate use when necessary.
- Use an inhaler when engaging in a strenuous activity (Tawaf, walking between Safa and Marwa, and stoning the Jamarat).
- Seek medical help if asthma symptoms arise.

Health Conditions and Hajj:



Allergy

Patients suffering from allergies can participate in Hajj safely after following the below guidelines:

- Visiting their treating physician to prescribe appropriate anti-allergic medications.
- Avoiding places, times, tasks, and foods known to provoke allergies, such as direct sunlight exposure and crowded areas.
- Being cautious of drowsiness caused by certain allergy medications.
- Wearing a bracelet or a labelled card with their allergy and the intervention needed in emergency situations.

Chapter Six

Cough and Sneeze Etiquette:

Following the coughing and sneezing etiquette protects against many respiratory infectious diseases, specifically COVID-19.

Cough and sneeze etiquette:



Cover your mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and dispose of it quickly.



If tissue isn't available, cover your mouth with the inside of your elbow.



Wash your hands under warm water and soap for 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser.

Chapter Seven

How to wear a mask:

Face mask acts as a barrier to help prevent the spread of respiratory droplets in the air and it is considered to be one of the most important prevention methods.

How to wear face mask correctly:



Wash your hands.



The coloured side should face outward.



Squeeze the metallic tape or the hardened tip until it takes the shape of your nose.



Pull the mask from bottom to cover the mouth and chin.



Make sure the mask is sticking to the face and there is no air outlet.



After use, remove the mask using the rubber band behind the ears while ensuring you do not touch your face.



Throw away the mask immediately and wash your hands thoroughly.



Face masks are single use only and must be disposed of immediately after getting wet or torn and after using them.

Chapter Eight

Hand washing and use of sanitisers:

Wash your hands frequently if water is available, otherwise use a sanitiser.

Duration of the entire procedure: 40 - 60 seconds



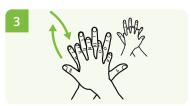
Wet hands with water



Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces



Rub hands palm to palm



Rub right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa



Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



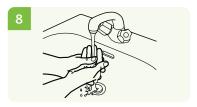
Rub back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa



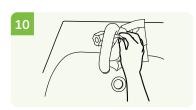
Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa



Rinse hands with water



Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel



Use towel to turn off faucet



Your hands are now safe

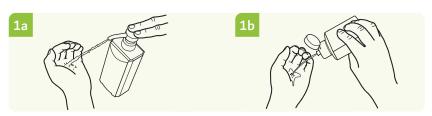
Chapter Eight

Hand washing and use of sanitisers:

Sanitise your hands by rubbing them with a sanitiser.

Wash them frequently and when visibly soiled.

Duration of the entire procedure: 20 - 30 seconds



Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces



Rub hands palm to palm



Rub right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa



Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



Rub back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa



Once dry, your hands are safe

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

1. Heat related stress:

- a. Heat exhaustion
- b. Heat stroke

In the Gulf countries, summer is very hot and sunny, with daytime temperatures ranging from 38°C to 42 °C between May and September. Performing Hajj during this hot season may lead to an increased risk of summer prone diseases such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion:

Is a heat-related illness that can occur after being exposed to high temperatures and is often accompanied by dehydration.

There are two types of heat exhaustion:

As result of water depletion:

Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache and loss of consciousness.

As a result of water depletion:

Signs include nausea and vomiting, muscle cramps and dizziness Heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke, which can damage the brain and other vital organs, and even cause death.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

Heatstroke:

Can occur if the body temperature rises to 40°C or higher because of direct and prolonged exposure to sunlight.

Symptoms:



Headache



Dizziness and light headedness



Red, hot and dry skin



Muscle weakness



Nausea and vomiting



Rapid heartbeat



Rapid, shallow breathing



Unconsciousness

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

Complications of a heat stroke



This depends on how long the body temperature has been elevated:

Vital organ damage: Without a quick response to lower body temperature, a heatstroke can cause your brain or other vital organs to swell, possibly resulting in permanent damage.

Death: Without prompt and adequate treatment, a heatstroke can be fatal.

How to react (what to do)?

- Notify the ambulance immediately
- Get the person to a shade or a cool place
- Take off excess clothing
- Help the person to lie down, raise his head higher than the level of the body, and elevate his legs

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

2. Muscle Stress:

Muscle stress occurs as a result of poor physical fitness and excessive fatigue.

Response:

- Use a wheelchair if you suffer from muscle fatigue.
- Compress the affected area to relieve pain.
- Cool the affected area to relieve pain & elevate when possible.
- Take painkillers to help soothe pain.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

3. Falls

Anyone is prone to falling but it is more likely for older people, especially those with chronic health illnesses.

Response:

- Remain calm.
- If you don't get hurt and feel strong enough stand up slowly.
- Hold on to a strong object with both hands to support yourself,
 and when you feel ready, get up, then sit down and rest a bit
 before continuing with your activity.
- If you are hurt or unable to get up call out for help.

Prevent fall during Hajj:

- Wear suitable, well-fitting shoes that support the ankle and have a strong grip on the floor.
- Take care of your feet by regularly trimming your toenails.
- Consult a general practitioner if you have any foot problems.
- Avoid collision when being in crowded places.
- Get help doing things you can't do safely on your own.
- Do not walk on slippery floors with socks.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

4. Ankle sprain

It is a rupture or stretching of the ligaments that surround and tie the ankle when tripping while walking or jogging due to a roll or a twist.

Symptoms:



Loss of ankle movement



Pain



Redness and Bruising



Swelling

Response:

If you think you have sprained your ankle, do the following:

- Relax.
- Use ice-bag and apply it on the ankle for a third of an hour.
- Remove the bag when you feel numbness in the ankle.
- Press it.
- Lift the feet higher than the body level, and do not put weight on the ankle.
- Use pain killer
- If the pain and swelling continues, consult the physician to rule out fractures.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

5. Nosebleeds

Nosebleeds, also called epistaxis are common. They happen when the thin blood vessels in the nose break.

Response

- Sit up and lean forward to avoid swallowing blood.
- Gently blow your nose to clear it from any blood clots.
- Pinch the nose to stop the blood flow. Apply pressure by using your thumb and a finger to pinch both nostrils shut and breathe through the mouth.
- Keep pinching for 10 to 15 minutes (5 minutes for children).
- Apply cold compresses or an ice pack to the nose.
- Repeat the previous instructions for another 15 minutes.
- Seek emergency care if the bleeding did not stop after the second cycle.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

6.Injuries

The mass movement of millions of pilgrims from one ritual place to another, in a short time and in a small area, significantly increases the risk of trauma.

Accidents and injuries that hajj pilgrims may face and tips to follow:

A. Bruises

- 1. Rest and elevate the affected area to reduce swelling and pain.
- 2. Apply cold packs no more than 15 minutes at a time.
- 3. Use a cloth to wrap the ice bag.
- 4. Take pain relievers as necessary.

B. Minor Injuries:

- Wash your hand to avoid infection.
- Cover the wound with a sterile bandage or clean cloth and apply pressure.
- Keep your bandage clean and change it every day.

Seek emergency help if:

- a. Your redness, swelling, or pain has increased.
- b. The wound is still bleeding.
- c. A foreign body has entered the wound.
- d. You have a medical condition such as diabetes, etc.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

C. Deep wounds Injuries:

- 1. Do not remove any sharp object embedded in the wound or attempt to clean it until aids arrives.
- 2. Apply strong pressure to the wound with a sterile bandage or clean cloth until aid arrives.
- 3. Transport the patient immediately to the hospital.

7. Hypoglycemia

Common symptoms may include:

• Fast heartbeat.

Shaking.

Sweating.

Nervousness or anxiety.

Irritability or confusion.

Dizziness.

Hunger.

 Tingling or numbness of the lips, tongue or cheek.

Response:

- Eat or drink a fast-acting carbohydrate. Eg. fruit juice, honey, or sugary candy.
- Recheck blood sugar levels 15 minutes after treatment.
- If blood sugar levels are still low, eat or drink another fast-acting carbohydrate.
- Recheck your blood sugar level again in 15 minutes. Repeat these steps until the blood sugar is normal.
- Have a snack or meal once your blood sugar is back to normal to maintain it.
- Seek emergency medical help in case your blood sugar continues to drop or in case your symptoms worsen.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

8. Food poisoning

Food poisoning is a common health condition in the Hajj mass gathering.

Response:

- Rest.
- Abstain from eating .
- Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- If the condition subsides, you can go slowly back to your normal diet.
- Seek emergency medical advice if symptoms are severe, do not subside or you have an underlying medical condition.

First Aid Tips in Hajj:

Nutritional advice for pilgrims to avoid food poisoning and disease transmission:

The rules of food safety must be observed to avoid food poisoning during the Hajj period by:

- Do not leave foods open as it can cause bacterial growth on the food and the possibility of food poisoning.
- Ensure the cleanliness and safety of food before eating it.
- Wash vegetables and fruits well.
- Cook the food well.
- Wash hands with soap and water, especially before meals.
- Ensure the validity of food products.
- Keep foods at the appropriate temperatures.
- Avoid eating foods that are exposed to dust and insects.

Most Hajj campaigns have a general doctor; consult with the practitioner if any problem occurs.

Your Hajj bag:

The pilgrim must carefully prepare his bag, with the necessary tools to facilitate the Hajj journey, performing the rituals easily while maintaining his safety:

A. First-aid kit:



Sticky tape



Plasters in a variety of different sizes and shapes



Tweezers and Scissors



Disposable sterile gloves



Distilled water for cleaning wounds



Cotton balls and swabs



Eye wash and eye bath

Your Hajj bag:

B. Medication:



1. Antipyretic.



2. Pain reliever.



3. Cough medicine.



4. Powder for skin abrasion.



5. Mosquito repellent and ointments to reduce mosquito bites.



6. Burn, wound and allergic ointments.



7. Laxatives in case of constipation.



8. Antacid.

 Medications for some chronic diseases, if present, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma and heart disease medications. Consider taking an adequate amount.

Your Hajj bag:

C. Necessary devices:

- A thermos to store the medicines that need to be kept in an ice pack such as insulin.
- A glucose meter.
- Pressure measuring device.

D. Health cards:

- If you suffer from any disease, carry a medical card or a wrist band with details such as your name, age, nationality, nature of your disease, type of treatment, place of residence and contact numbers.
- Vaccination card
- A card containing the names of the medicines you use and the dosage

Your Hajj bag:

E. Personal bag:

The pilgrim must ensure that his personal bag contains the following:



Personal care items such as (soap, towels, toothbrushes, hair cut machine and nail cutter).



Umbrella.



Loose, appropriate clothing.



Sunscreen.



A sufficient number of masks and hand sanitiser.

Hajj mabroor wa sa'ay mashkoor!