**Religion (Islam)**

**Judging from your religious beliefs and practices, how religious can you say you are?**

I would consider myself religious by fundamental beliefs and guidelines about how to live life and treat others but in terms of practices I’m not very religious.

**The religion of Islam has some forbidden food restrictions that are deemed haram when consumed, what is your diet like in relation to these food restrictions?**

I don’t eat pork or any products that contains pork. About eating halal food I’ll eat it if it’s available if it’s not available then eating non-halal food doesn’t bother me.

**In regards to medications made up of gelatin and medications containing alcohol as an ingredient, what are your personal experiences and opinion in relation to this concern?**

Personally I think it’s okay to take medications that are made up of gelatin derived from pig, only if there is no alternate substitute to replace the medication and it is required for serious conditions. If there are alternatives such as medications that are halal certified or made of veggie capsules/ tablets then ill choose these alternatives over gelatin capsules. In terms of alcohol in medications, strictly being drunk is forbidden in my religion not alcohol so it’s reasonable for me to use medications that contain alcohol as an ingredient.

**I know that fasting is a fundamental element during the period of Ramadan. However, there are many elderly Muslims who have chronic conditions and thus, should be taking their medications on a regular basis. How do your family members with chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and hyperlipidemia go about with fasting and taking their medications?**

For myself I have the belief that fasting is about feeling a sacrifice of something that is pleasurable not about being in pain or inflicting damage upon yourself. The elderly members in my family fast if they choose to but they continue taking their medications on a daily basis but of course they don’t even have to fast as you’re allowed to not fast while you’re sick. Also, it’s good to not fast since some medications are required to take with or soon after food.

**The last question relates to your personal experience with medications during the period of Ramadan. How would you clarify your boundary for the need to take medications for a condition and thus, break your fast?**

I think that if I’m making a sacrifice to my religion by fasting then it’s okay to take medications when I require them such as a cold & flu medication for a cold as the principal of fasting still holds true. I know people say it’s bad to fast and eat but sometimes you still want to be part of the religious rituals but a sickness may be too debilitating that you need to eat.