Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. It holds great significance as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community for Muslims around the globe. The exact timing of Ramadan changes each year as it follows the lunar Islamic calendar. Eid ul-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan and is a special occasion celebrated by the Muslim community worldwide.

Here are some tips to support your pharmacy colleagues during this month:

1. **Be mindful of work scheduling and if possible, offer accommodations for people observing Ramadan.**
   Some accommodations may include:
   - Offering a quiet and clean space for prayer (e.g., counselling room or private area)
   - Supporting time-off requests for Eid
   - Enabling uninterrupted breaks during times of breaking fast (iftar)
   - Scheduling shifts throughout the day rather than in the evening

2. **Respect privacy, avoid assumptions and show cultural sensitivity.**
   - One way to show support is by sending warm wishes and using the correct terminology. Tip: use the phrase ‘Ramadan Kareem/Mubarak’ rather than Happy Ramadan!

### Questions to avoid vs. Replace with this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to avoid</th>
<th>Replace with this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You can't even drink water?</td>
<td>How has your Ramadan been so far?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t you find it difficult to concentrate while fasting?</td>
<td>Is there anything I can do to support you during this time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could never do what you are doing.</td>
<td>I admire your dedication to fasting during Ramadan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why aren’t you fasting today?</td>
<td>Engage in respectful conversation without commenting on personal fasting practices*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There are many reasons why someone may not engage in fasting. This could include travelling, health-related issues, menstruation, pregnancy/nursing, illness and frailty. This does not mean they are observing Ramadan any less than other members of the community.
Celebrate with your colleagues!
Create a safe, warm and vibrant space for your colleagues to share their religion, culture and part of their identity with you
- This could be through small potlucks or inviting people, if comfortable, to share cultural snacks or desserts.
- Encourage time for team bonding and healthy conversations.

Build community!
Get creative and find ways to immerse your pharmacy in the community! For many Muslims the month of Ramadan is a month of giving and charity, you can participate by:
- Joining or contributing to charitable initiatives (e.g., fundraisers).
- Setting up a booth at a Ramadan Bazaar to show support to the community and raise awareness about the pharmacy services you offer.
- Presenting safe fasting information sessions/or handouts at local mosques.

Footnotes
1. Eid-Ul-Fitr date differs each year and is reliant on sightings of the moon - please show understanding, consideration, and flexibility to your colleagues when they are requesting time off. Tip: ask your employees during the last week of the month or allow them to book 2 days off in advance.
2. Two Arabic greetings used during Ramadan are “Ramadan Kareem” which translates to “generous Ramadan” and “Ramadan Mubarak” which means “have a blessed Ramadan”.

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Are you prepared to support fasting patients during Ramadan? – Alberta College of Pharmacy (abpharmacy.ca) Available at: https://abpharmacy.ca/news/are-you-prepared-support-fasting-patients-during-ramadan/