

fatty acids have been found to be as one of the causes of atheroma in man. Medium fat bacon contains 25% proteins and 55% fat."

According to medical research, the fat content in pork is more than any other meat (beef, mutton etc.) and it takes longer to digest. Dr. M Jaffer in an article in the Islamic Review (London) of January 1997 issue has listed 16 kinds of harmful germs, which have been discovered in pork in modern researches and the diseases, which could be caused by them. The number of patients suffering from tapeworm disease is the highest in the world among pork eating nations. Other diseases attributed to pigs are caused by tri-chinella spirates and intestinal worms occupy first place among such nations too.

Dr. Glen Shepherd wrote the following on the dangers of eating pork in *Washington Post* (31 May 1952).

"One in six people in USA and Canada have germs in their muscles - trichinosis 8 from eating pork infected with trichina worms. Many people so infected have no symptoms. Most of those, who do have, recover slowly. Some die; some are reduced to permanent invalids. All were careless pork eaters".

He continued "No one is immune from the disease and there is no cure. Neither antibiotics nor drugs or vaccines affect these tiny deadly worms. Preventing infection is the real answer."

After reading the statement of Dr. Shepherd, one can realize that there is no real guarantee of safety when eating pork that one would not be affected by trichina worm. That is why modern doctors advise three prohibitions during illness: no liquor, no pork and no smoking.

Muslims follow the divine law which is much higher than the medical advice. The Glorious Qur'an says, "So eat of the lawful and good food which Allah has provided for you, and thank the bounty of your Lord if it is Him you serve. He has forbidden for you only carrion and blood and swine-flesh and that which has been immolated in the name of any other than Allah; but he who is driven thereto, neither craving nor transgressing, Lo! then Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (16:114-115)

The above is the order from the Creator of the universe and Supreme Law-Giver. All Muslims are under the obligation to obey it. This is a plain and straightforward answer to those, who usually ask why Muslims abstain from eating pork. Nevertheless, there is no sin, if a Muslim is forced by famine or starvation to eat pork in order to save his life. (The Muslim World League Journal, Rajab 1420 - October 1999)

intestines and become excreta. It is absorbed and metabolized into the system and circulated to all parts of the human body, including the brain, and this in no small way affects man's nature.

The pig is naturally lazy and indulgent in sex, it is dirty, greedy and gluttonous. It dislikes sunlight and lacks the spirit and will to "fight." It eats almost anything, be it human excreta or anything foul and unwholesome. Amongst all animal flesh, pork is the favoured cradle of harmful germs. Pork also serves as a carrier of diseases to mankind. It is for this reason that its flesh is not suitable for consumption.

Some people have argued that the "modern pig" reared in farms is given only clean foods, therefore, its flesh should be consumable. The answer is that you may feed the pig on clean, wholesome food, but you can't change its nature. It is still a pig. A pig is not a plant and you cannot change it by bud-grafting.

Medical Reports

Dr. E. Kazim, M.D. in his article "Medical aspects of forbidden foods in Islam" (July 1981 issue of Muslim Journal has described diseases carried or caused by the flesh of the swine. He writes:

The pig is a scavenger. It is an omnivorous animal. It eats everything. There are many disease carried from swine to man, particularly parasite infestations. Lately extensive research has been focused on senility-old age is characterized by hardening of inner lining of the blood vessels of the heart, brain etc. a process called atherosclerosis. When a clot forms, it results in coronary thrombosis or a heart attack, cerebral thrombosis or stroke.

Different dietary factors are responsible for atherosclerosis. Gross atheroma may be produced in rabbit by feeding it with cholesterol, but when you add lard (derived from hog fat) to the cholesterol, the incidence of atheroma is increased and thus you would produce coronary thrombosis, and myocardial infraction.

Besides, lard contains 2800 units of vitamin D per 100 grams and no vitamin A at all. Lately vitamin D has been held responsible for atheroma, by causing increased absorption of calcium in the blood vessels. In human beings, serum cholesterol is not dependent on the intake of cholesterol in the diet, but depends upon the proportion of animal fats in the diet, which elevate the beta-lipo protein level in the blood. Animal fats contain saturated fatty acids and these saturated

The Holy Qur'an has prohibited the swine-flesh, hence the Muslims would not dare touch it. The Bible has also forbidden swine-flesh, but Christians disregarded this order and started consuming it.

The Europeans now proclaim that pork is a very powerful diet, rich in protein. Some of them further argue that since there is a great scarcity of food-stuffs in the world and swines are available in abundant quantity, they should be consumed in diet to overcome the food shortage. If this argument is true, why don't they use dog's meat as dogs too are available in plenty? The Europeans perhaps hate the mention of dog's meat in the same way as the Muslims shun pork.

Another wrong notion about swine-flesh is that its consumption lengthens life-span, although this is a pure myth and absurdity. On the contrary, people, who abstain from pork and liquor, have a longer span of life. The Muslims in Central Asia bear a testimony to this truth. However, in the consumption of flesh Muslims are required to be selective and distinguish between Halaal (Lawful) and Haraam (Unlawful). This step leads automatically to the deeper understanding of the need for the cultivation of a pure human nature. As blood is virtually our life-stream and whatever we consume ultimately affects the blood system, it is, therefore, necessary to exercise choice in the selection of our food and drink as per the requirements of the Shariah.

There are certain foods and drinks specified by Allah, and His Messenger Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) as forbidden. The prohibition of these foods and drinks is not by any means an arbitrary action or an unwarranted decree of Allah. It is the first and foremost a divine intervention in the best interest of man and for his own benefit. The reasons behind the Divine intervention are numerous. They are of a nature intellectual and spiritual, moral and mental, physical and economic. And the sole purpose is to show man how to develop himself according to an upright course of life in order to be a healthy unit in the structure of the family, then of society and eventually of humanity at large.

Reliable medical doctors and social scientists are able to realize how those foods and drinks forbidden by Islam are harmful and destructive to the human spirit and morality as well as to the physique and moral fibre of man and to verify the benefits of Islamic legislations on the subjects.

The prohibition is based on the aim of the purification of one's nature, because food, when consumed, doesn't merely enter the stomach and

WHY ISLAM FORBIDS PORK?

By Rashid Shamsi

Food and drink have direct effect on our health. That is why Islam has prescribed regulations about our food and drink. It lays great emphasis on our physical as well as moral health, because both of these are equally important for a healthy society. The abstention from eating pork is one of the steps taken by Islam to practise hygiene and to attain purity of soul.

Islam, for the cultivation of inner faculties, insists upon the cleanliness of body and the purification of soul through Salaat (prayers) Zikr (remembrance of Allah) and other devotional duties. Islam teaches us how to attain the virtues and how to give up bad habits because both good and bad grow in the man according to his upbringing, education and environment.

A human being has natural desires: food, sleep and sex being the three primary ones. He has also natural emotions: sorrow, happiness, love, fear, disgust and avarice etc. Islam doesn't recommend the complete abrogation of these impulses but offers a method of controlling them through religious education and discipline.

The prohibition of eating pork in Islam is relevant in this context. There is a saying in English that "a man becomes what he eats." According to physicians and medical experts, pork is a harmful diet. Consumption of swine-flesh creates lowliness in character and destroys moral and spiritual faculties in a man.

Body & Soul

The life of a man is a compound of body and soul. Anything, which is harmful for the body, hurts the soul as well.

Consumption of swine-flesh reduces the feeling of shame and as such the standard of modesty. Those nations, which consume pork habitually, have a low standard of morality with the result that virginity, chastity and bashfulness are becoming a thing of the past in Europe today. The number of unwed mothers is on the increase despite the use of pills and other contraceptives.

According to a report, 60 to 70% girls in Sweden become mothers before marriage. The formula of "skin to skin is no sin" is having its toll but there is hardly any feeling of shame and remorse over the end-result. Since the European nations have become addicted to wine and pork, sexual freedom with all its attendant evils has got ingrained in their culture. Consequently, homosexuality has been legalized by the British Parliament.