

The effect of Ramadan weight loss on body composition of overweight and obese Muslims in University Putra Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Introduction: During Ramadan Muslims fast for a month and most research have reported significant decrease in weight and body mass index (BMI). The objective of this study was to observe the body composition changes in the decreased BMI during Ramadan fasting among a group of overweight and obese Muslims.

Methods: Forty-eight overweight and obese Muslims working in Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia volunteered to participate in the program. They were brief on the appropriate quantity of food to be consumed according to Malaysia Dietary Guideline 2010. They were also briefed the correct fasting and eating ethics according to the teachings of Islam which mainly stresses on the prohibition over consumption of food. Using a sensor body composition monitor, their baseline body composition were assessed pre Ramadan and reassessed at the end of Ramadan.

Results: There were significant reduction in weight, BMI, body fat and subcutaneous fat percentages, visceral fat level, resting metabolism rate and body age ($p < 0.01$). However no significant changes in skeletal muscle percentage were noted.

Conclusion: There were significant improvements in body compositions during Ramadan following Ramadan weight loss in this group of overweight and obese respondents. Ramadan weight loss may serve as a yearly opportunity to improve health.

Keyword: Ramadan; Weight loss; Body composition