

154257 - Black Seed in Islam: A Healing for Every Disease?

the question

Are there any guidelines on consumption of black seed? I have found some websites that stipulate some conditions; for example, they stipulate that one should consume seven seeds, mixed with honey, and that one must close the mouth when chewing them, and so on. I hope that you can explain this matter. I would also like to ask you to pray for healing for me, as I am suffering from a chronic illness and by Allah I wish for death at every moment.

Summary of answer

The black seed is mentioned in an authentic Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a healing remedy for all diseases except death. Scholars and physicians have discussed its effectiveness, suggesting that its healing properties apply to specific illnesses, particularly cold-related ailments. While the Hadith emphasizes its medicinal value, its effectiveness depends on proper use, medical knowledge, and divine will.

Detailed answer

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The Prophetic Hadith on Black Seed

Al-Bukhari (5688) and Muslim (2215) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say

concerning the black seed: “In it there is healing for every disease, except As-Sam.” Ibn Shihab said: As-Sam is death.

Does Black Seed Cure All Illnesses?

There are two scholarly views concerning the words “healing from every disease”. It was suggested that it is to be understood according to the general meaning, so it includes all diseases, or that it is general in wording but specific in meaning, so what is meant is some diseases.

Al-Hafidh Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It was said that the words “every disease” refer to every disease that could be treated with it, because it is beneficial in the case of cold diseases; as for hot diseases, it is not.

Al-Khattabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “From every disease” are general terms but what is meant by them is something specific, because there is no medicine made from plants that could be used to treat all diseases; rather what is meant is that it is healing for every disease that is caused by moisture.

Abu Bakr ibn Al-`Arabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

According to physicians, honey is more likely to be a remedy for every disease than the black seed. Nevertheless, there are some diseases that if a person drinks honey, it will make matters worse. If what is meant by the description of honey as something “wherein is healing for men” [An-Nahl 16:69] is that it is healing for most diseases, then it is more appropriate to say that with regard to the black seed. (End quote)

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “healing from every disease” are like the verse in which Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): {Destroying everything by the Command of its Lord} [Al-Ahqaf 46:25]. That is, it (the storm or wind referred to in the previous verse) destroyed everything that could be destroyed, and the like. (End quote from Zad Al-Ma`ad, 4/297)

Shaykh Abu Muhammad ibn Abu Jamrah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Some people commented on this Hadith and made its general statements specific, referring it to the views of people who have medical experience, but the one who says that is obviously mistaken, because if we believe the physicians – whose knowledge is based on experience, the foundation of which is what is most likely to be right – then to believe the one who does not speak on the basis of his whims and desires [i.e., the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] is more appropriate [than believing the doctors]. (End quote from Al-Fat-h, 10/145)

How Should Black Seed Be Used?

Al-Karmani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It may be that the general meaning is the intended meaning, that it may bring healing for all diseases, but that is on condition that it is put together with other ingredients, and there should be no prohibited component. Rather the general meaning of the text must be what is intended, because the fact that an exception is mentioned indicates that it is general in application. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said it intending that general meaning; the evidence for that is the fact that he made an exception. Therefore we must accept that it is general in meaning. (End quote from `Umdat Al-Qari, 31/301)

The fact that the general meaning is what was intended is obvious, because the wording indicates that. It is also indicated by the exception in the phrase “except As-Sam (death).” If the general meaning had not been intended, there would have been no need to mention the exception. The fact that an exception is made for death indicates that for all other diseases, black seed may be useful as a remedy, but that is dependent upon there being no impediment and upon the conditions being met.

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Just taking appropriate means and measures does not necessarily lead to the expected results. If rain falls and seeds sprout, that is not sufficient for vegetation to grow; rather it is also essential that there be fecundating winds, by Allah’s leave, and it is essential that there be an absence of

impediments. It is essential for all conditions to be met and all impediments to be absent, and all of that happens by the will and decree of Allah.

A child is not born as the result of merely depositing semen in the vagina. How often that happens, but no child is born. Indeed it is essential that Allah should will to create the child, then the woman conceives, then the embryo begins to grow in the uterus, and all other conditions that are needed, and the impediments that must be absent, for the creation of a child. (End quote from Majmu` Al-Fatawa, 8/70)

The Role of Faith and Healing in Islam

Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Many people do not benefit from the means and measures, or [from Ruqyah done by reciting the Quran or other words](#) , because the conditions are not met and the impediments are not absent. If every sick person could be healed [by means of Ruqyah](#) or [medical treatment](#) , no one would die. But it is Allah, may He be Glorified, in Whose hand is control of healing. If He wills that, He makes the means thereof easily available, and if He does not will that, the means will be to no avail. (End quote from Majmu` Fatawa Ibn Baz, 8/61)

Al-Hafidh Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) stated that the way to treat disease using the black seed varies from one disease to another, and he said:

What is meant by this seed being a [healing for every disease](#) is that it should not be used on its own; rather it may be used on its own or with other ingredients. It may be used ground up or otherwise, and it may be eaten, drunk, used like snuff, applied as a poultice, and in other ways. (End quote from Al-Fat-h, 10/144)

Is There a Right Way to Use Black Seed?

The ways in which it is used vary according to what people of experience and knowledge suggest, or what modern medical research suggests, based on experience and on the properties of the black seed and its effect on disease.

Al-Bukhari (5687) narrated that Khalid ibn Sa'd said: We went out, and Ghalib ibn Abjar was with us, and he fell sick. When we came to Madinah he was still sick. Ibn Abu 'Atiq visited him and said to us: You should use this little black seed: take five or seven of them and grind them, then mix it with olive oil and put drops in his nose, on this side, and on this side, for 'A'ishah told me that she heard the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: "This black seed is a healing for every disease except As-Sam." I said: What is As-Sam? He said: Death.

Based on that, there is nothing wrong with stipulating that the black seed should be taken in a particular manner, according to the type of sickness, on condition that this method is proven to be beneficial, either from experience or on the basis of scientific research.

As for stipulating that [Surat Al-Ikhlās](#) should be recited three times, or that a particular Du'a' (supplication) should be recited, there is no basis for such stipulations.

The Prohibition of Wishing for Death Due to Hardship

With regard to the questioner stating that he wishes for death constantly because of the pain caused by his sickness, this is contrary to what Allah, may He be Exalted, and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) have stipulated of patience [in the face of calamity](#) and acceptance of the divine decree.

Allah, may He be Exalted, tests His slave so as to expiate his bad deeds and raise him in status. It was narrated by At-Tirmidhi (2398), who classed it as authentic, that Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: O Messenger of Allah, which of the people are most sorely tested? He said: "The Prophets, then the righteous, then the next best, then the next best of people. A man will be tested according to his level of religious commitment. If there is some solidness in his religious commitment, he will be more sorely tested, and if there is some weakness in his religious commitment the test will be lightened for him. A man will continue to be tested until he walks upon the face of the earth with no sin on him." (Classed as authentic by Al-Albani in Sahih At-Tirmidhi)

Al-Bukhari (6351) and Muslim (2680) narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "No one of you should

wish for death because of some harm that has befallen him. If he must wish for it, then let him say: ‘O Allah, keep me alive so long as living is good for me, and cause me to die when death is good for me.’”

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This indicates that [it is clearly disallowed to wish for death](#) because of some harm that befalls one, such as sickness, poverty, trials caused by an enemy, and other worldly hardships. It also indicates that if a person feels that he cannot bear patiently the situation in which he finds himself, being tested with sickness and the like, [then let him say](#) , “O Allah, keep me alive so long as living is good for me...”, But it is better to be patient and be content with the divine decree.
(End quote)

What you must do is be patient with that which Allah has decreed for you, and look for the good consequences, which are forgiveness of sins and a great reward, if you are patient. {Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning.} [Az-Zumar 39:10] A long life is better for the believer, because he may increase his righteous deeds thereby.

Muslim (2682) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “No one of you should wish for death or pray for it before it comes to him. When one of you dies, his good deeds come to an end. A longer life of a believer is nothing but good for him.”

We ask Allah, may He be Exalted, to grant you healing, good health and well-being and in this world and the hereafter.

And Allah knows best.