

40527 - Is Bodybuilding Haram?

the question

What is the ruling on our body building in Islam? Are we allowed to put our bodies in structures like the wrestlers so long as we don't show it out and it's to our own good?

Summary of answer

Those who engage in bodybuilding uncover their `awrah when practicing this sport, which is undoubtedly haram. The `awrah of a man extends from the navel to the knee, and it is not permissible for him to uncover it in front of anyone other than his wife.

If the aim is relaxation and maintaining good health, then sport is permissible. If it involves something haram, such as missing prayers, uncovering any part of the `awrah or mixing with women and so on, then it is haram.

Detailed answer

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Islam's care for man's well-being

Bodybuilding aims to make the body strong and sound, which is an important and desirable goal.

Islam is concerned with man's well-being in both body and soul, and it encourages all kinds of sport that will strengthen the body and [maintain good health](#) as well as providing relaxation and leisure, such as [swimming](#) , shooting, horse-riding, sword-fighting and wrestling.

Purpose of sports in Islam

But when Islam accepts sports and encourages us to engage in them, it does not make them a goal in and of themselves, rather sport is considered to be a means of protecting the sacred limits of Islam and the dignity and rights of the Muslims, in the belief that strength is one of the most important means of achieving victory and prevailing in the face of challenges and warding off the threats that face Islam.

If the purpose of sport is to prepare the body to be fit to carry out the duty of jihad so as to make the word of Allah supreme, then sport is essential. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war...” [al-Anfal 8:60]

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer.” (Narrated by Muslim, 6774)

If the aim is relaxation and maintaining good health, then sport is permissible. If it involves something haram, such as missing prayers, uncovering any part of the `awrah or mixing with women and so on, then it is haram.

Is bodybuilding haram in Islam?

Those who engage in bodybuilding [uncover their `awrah](#) when practicing this sport, which is undoubtedly haram. The `awrah of a man extends from the navel to the knee, and it is not permissible for him to uncover it in front of anyone other than his wife. It is also not permissible for him to look at the `awrah of anyone else.

The basic principle concerning this matter is the hadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “What is between the navel and the knee is `awrah.” Al-Albani said in Irwa al-Ghalil, 281; (it is) a good hadith.

Points to consider when practicing sports in Islam

If the sport is free of these haram things, then there is nothing wrong with engaging in it.

But two points should be noted:

- Some of those who engage in this sport are motivated by self-admiration and love of pride and showing off before others because of their beautiful bodies and strong muscles... and other bad motives, some of which are worse than others. The believer should shun such things and seek the adornment of good attitude, humility and fairness.
- Going to extremes in making the body look good and being concerned with that is not a good thing. What is good in this regard is that which helps the Muslim to maintain good health, to practise Islam, to engage in jihad for the sake of Allah and to do the acts of worship which require physical strength such as Hajj.

But doing more than that and going to extremes usually distracts the Muslim from doing things that are more important, as happens in the case of those who practise many kinds of sports nowadays, so you see them training for many hours each day.

What benefit can a Muslim gain if his body is as strong as a bull, but his heart is devoid of faith and all virtue?

We ask Allah to help us to do that which is good for us and will bring us happiness in this world and in the Hereafter.

And Allah knows best.

For more, please see these answers: [3895](#) , [115676](#) , and [10427](#) .