

In the name of God, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate

Paraphrase of the Fatwa Request

Regarding the questions we received for Qatar Biobank, by asking about the nature of the **Sample**. They replied, the sample is obtaining 60ml of the participant's blood, urine and saliva.

The fatwa will be based on the mentioned **Sample**, as follow:

Is it permissible in Islam to store biological samples for a long time after the death of the participants? Is it required to get the consent of the participants?

The Answer

- Taking biological samples is permitted in Islam as long as their purpose is to serve research and studies that will benefit society and humanity. It is permissible to take, store and make use of these samples for research, whether during the life of the participant or after their death.
- But it is required to get the approval of the donor before taking the samples, and explain that they may be used in scientific research in their lifetime or after their death. The participant should be clearly briefed about the purpose for which the samples are to be used. This right is permanently exercised by the participant, even after the samples are taken from them, and they may withdraw their approval or require that they must not be used after their death.
- As long as the purposes of this research center in utilizing the participant's samples are useful and scientific, we advise participants to participate unless there is a prohibition that makes them disagree.

Does taking a blood sample nullify fasting?

The Answer

- Most Islamic Madhhabs (schools or doctrines of law) agree that drawing blood samples do not impact fasting. This is the verdict of Hanafi, Maliki and Shafie doctrines. This verdict is based on their consideration that cupping does not break fasting.
- Hanbali Madhab says cupping nullifies the fasting of the cupper and the cupped, but they vary regarding drawing blood for other purposes than cupping.
- In summary, the verdict we reached is that drawing blood does not nullify fasting. But this should not be an issue as the participant can delay donating until after sunset or after Ramadan.

Is donating samples an act of goodness and can it be part of Zakat and Sadaqa?

The Answer

- Giving samples supports useful scientific research and is categorized as an invaluable deed of goodness and acts of righteousness and piety, but it can't be described as charity or Zakat because there is no possession involved, as the samples are not owned by the research centers or researchers.
- Giving samples for research purposes can be regarded as charity as long as the samples or data are available for scientific research. The donor will be rewarded if they have good intentions.

Guiding principles governing the research of biobanks include:

- Biobanking should cause no harm.
- Biobanking should stick to transparency, the participant should know the purposes and uses of their samples.
- Biobanking should keep privacy and personal information discreet according to the preference of the participant.
- Biobanking should use the samples in research directly.
- The samples must be used for research that benefits society.
- The participant retains the right to withdraw their approval any time regarding the storage and gathering of samples and data.

How far do these principles align with Islamic Sharia law?

The Answer

- These principles are aligned with Islamic Sharia law such as “No harm for oneself and no harm for others, for seeking knowledge,” is a condition set by the participant. These are all principles applied by Islamic Sharia law that adheres to every principle that applies to the general morality in common between all people.

What does Islamic Sharia law say about fees to use preserved human samples?

The Answer

- Imposing fees on donations is not accepted in Islam as the bank does not have the right to sell them as these samples can't be owned. But if these fees are for administrative work such as sorting, storing, and other services that have nothing to do with possession or purchasing samples, Qatar Biobank is permitted to charge some fees for these services, but they can't be prohibitive, and can only cover the cost of administrative work.

END

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