



How a Patient  
**CAN PURIFY**  
Himself and Pray



All the praises and thanks be to Allah. Prayers and peace of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon all his family and companions.

This is a concise paper about (How a Patient Can Purify Himself and Pray). May Allah benefit by it and write it in the balances of our deeds. He is All-Hearing and Responsive. Prayers and peace of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon all his family and companions.

## **How Can a Patient Purify Himself?**

Allah (Glorified and Exalted) has legalized purification for each prayer. Purifying the body and removing impurity from the body, cloths and the praying place are two conditions of the validity of prayers.

If a Muslim wants to pray, he must perform the known ablution from the minor impurity (urinating, letting out gas...) or perform total ablution for major ritual impurity.

Before ablution, the one who urinates or excretes has to clean the two natural orifices with water or stones to fulfill purification and cleanness. Following are some related provisions:

First: cleaning the two natural orifices with water for everything that comes out from the two natural orifices such as urination and excretion. There is no cleaning for the two natural orifices because of sleeping or breaking wind; however, there is ablution; as cleaning the two natural offices by water is legalized to remove impurity which is not found here.

Second: cleaning by stones or what replaces them. They must be three pure stones, as it is proven about the Prophet (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) that he said, “whoever cleans the two natural orifices with stones, he is to use odd ones.” [Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim]

«ومن استجمر فليوتر» رواه البخاري ومسلم

And he (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) has said, “If one of you goes to excrete, he is to go with three stones to clean himself with as they suffice to him.” [Reported by Abu Dawud and said to be good by al-Albany].

«إذا ذهب أحدكم إلى الغائط فليذهب معه بثلاثة أحجار يستطيب بمن فإنها تجزئ عنه»  
رواه أبو داود وحسنه الألباني

In addition, he (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) prohibited cleaning the two natural orifices by less than three stones, [Reported by Muslim].

It is not allowed to clean the two natural orifices using dung, bones, food and anything that is of honour. It is better to clean the two natural orifices by stones and the alike such as tissues and to follow that with water. Stones remove the essence of the impurity while water purifies the spot so this is more profound.

A man can choose between cleaning by water or by stones and the alike. If he wants to choose only one, so water is better. As it purifies the spot and removes the impurity and its trace. It is more intensive in cleaning. It is not allowed to clean by water or stones with the right hand.

Third: as the Islamic legislation is based on ease. Allah Almighty lightened for the people of excuses their acts of worship according to their excuses so that they would be able to worship Him, the Almighty, without difficulty. Allah Almighty has said that He {has not laid upon you in religion any hardship} [Surat Al-Hajj: 78]

{وَمَا جَعَلْ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ} الْحَجَّ: ٧٨

Transliteration: wama jaAAala AAalaykum fee alddeeni min harajin

He has also said, {Allâh intends for you ease, and He does not want to

make things difficult for you.} [Surat Al-Baqarah: 185]

{يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمْ الْعُسْرَ} البقرة: ١٨٥

Transliteration: yureedu Allahu bikumu alyusra wala yureedu bikumu alAAusra

and, {So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can;} [Surat At-Taghâbun: 16].

{فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ} التَّغَابُن: ١٦

Transliteration: Faittaqoo Allaha ma istataAAatum

He (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) said, “And if I order you to do something, then do of it as much as you can.” [Reported by al-Bukhari]

«وإذا أمرتكم بأمر فأتوا منه ما استطعتم» رواه البخاري

He said, “Verily such religion is ease.” [Reported by al-Bukhari].

«إن الدين يسر» رواه البخاري

If a patient cannot purify himself by water by performing ablution from the minor ritual impurity or having a bath from the major ritual impurity due to his incapability or fear from illness to increase or the delaying of recovery, he can purify himself by dust that is: to hit the pure dust one time by his hands and wipe over his face by the inside of his fingers and the palm of his hands by the other palm of his hands as Allah Almighty has said, {O you who believe! When you intend to offer As-Salât (the prayer), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles. If you are in a state of Janâba (i.e. after a sexual discharge), purify yourselves (bathe your



whole body). But if you are ill or on a journey, or any of you comes after answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (i.e. sexual intercourse), and you find no water, then perform Tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands} [Surat Al-Mâ'idah: 6].

{وَأِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ} المائدة: ٦

Transliteration: wain kuntum junuban faittahharoo wain kuntum marda aw AAala safarin aw jaa ahadun minkum mina alghaiti aw lamastumu alnnisaa falam tajidoo maan fatayammamoo saAAeedan tayyiban faimsahoo biwujoo hikum waaydeekum minhu

The one who is unable to use water has the same verdict as he who does not find water, as the Prophet (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) said to 'Ammar ibn Yasser, "It was enough for you to do that; he stroke the ground with his hands and then blew (the dust) from his hands and then wiped his face and palms." [Reported by Muslim]

«إِنَّمَا كَانَ يَكْفِيكَ أَنْ تَقُولَ هَكَذَا وَضَرَبَ بِيَدَيْهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ. فَفَضَّ يَدَيْهِ فَمَسَحَ وَجْهَهُ وَكَفَيْهِ» رواه مسلم

Dust ablution is not valid but with intention; as the Prophet (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) has said, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended." [Reported by al-Bukhari]

«إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى» رواه البخاري

Dust ablution is annulled by the same things that annul water ablution and by the ability to use water or finding it after it was not found.

## The conditions of a patient:

1- If he is of light illness with which using water is not feared to cause harm, or a dangerous illness, a delayed recovery, augmenting pain or a grievous thing such as headache, tooth pain or the like; or that he can use warm water with no harm, such an ill person is not allowed to perform dust ablution. The permissibility of dust ablution is to prevent harm, which is not found here; and as he finds water, so he has to use it in ablution.

2- If he is ill and is afraid to harm himself psychologically or physically; or he fears the occurrence of a disease that may harm the body or lose a benefit, he is then allowed to perform dust ablution, as Allah Almighty has said, {And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allâh is Most Merciful to you.} [Surat An-Nisâ': 29].

{ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا } النساء: ٢٩

Transliteration: wala taqtuloo anfusakum inna Allaha kana bikum raheeman

3- If one is ill and cannot move and does not find anyone who can hand him water he is allowed to perform dust ablution.

4- If one is unable to purify himself, another one can help him perform water or dust ablution.

5- If one of the limbs to be purified by ablution is injured, he can wash it with water. If washing with water affects him, he can wipe over it by witting his hand with water and passing it over the wound. If wiping also affects him, he can purify it by dust ablution.

6- If one of his limbs is broken and is tied by a piece of cloth or gypsum he can wipe it, instead of washing it with water. He does not need to perform dust ablution as wiping replaces washing.



7- It is allowed to perform dust ablution by using a wall or any pure thing that contains dust. If the wall is polished by another kind other than soil such as paint, he is not to perform dust ablution by using it unless it contains dust.

8- If dust ablution is not possible on ground, wall or anything that contains dust, there is no sin to put some dust on a vessel or a handkerchief and perform dust ablution.

9- If one performs dust ablution for a prayer and stays purified to the time of the next prayer, he prays it with the first dust ablution. He is not to repeat dust ablution for the next prayer, because he is still purified and there is nothing that annuls it. If one performs dust ablution for a major ritual impurity, he does not repeat it until he is in a state of another major ritual impurity. He is, however, to perform dust ablution during this period for minor ritual impurity.

10- A patient must purify his body from impurities. If he cannot, he is then to pray in his status and his prayer is right. He is not to repeat it.

11- A patient must pray in pure clothes. If his clothes are ritually impure, he must clean or replace them with pure clothes. If he is not able to do that, he prays at such case and his prayer is right. He is not to repeat it.

12- A patient must pray on a purified place. If the place becomes ritually impure, it must be cleaned, or he should replace it with a pure place or put a purified thing over it. If he is not able to do that, he prays at such case and his prayer is right. He is not to repeat it.

13- It is not allowed for a patient to delay a prayer after its due fixed time because of the disability for purification. He is, however, to purify himself as much as he can, and then prays at the time of the prayer, even if there is impurity on his body, clothes or his place which he is unable to remove.

Allah Almighty has said, {So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can;} [Surat At-Taghâbun: 16].

{فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ} التَّغَابِين: ١٦

Transliteration: Fattaqoo Allaha ma istataAAatum

14- If a person is afflicted by involuntary urination, he is not to perform ablution for a prayer until the time of the prayer begins. He is to wash his private parts and wrap them with a pure thing that prevents his clothes and body from being impure. He is then to perform ablution and pray. He is to do that in each obligatory prayer. If it is difficult for him, he can combine between the noon and afternoon prayers or between the sunset and evening prayers. As for optional prayers, he is to do the same if he wishes, unless it is the time of an obligatory prayer, then his ablution for the obligatory prayer is enough for him.

## How Can a Patient Pray?

- 1- A patient must stand while praying. He must stand even with bending or leaning to a wall a stick he needs to support him.
- 2- If he cannot stand while praying, he prays in a sitting position. It is better to be cross-legged in the positions of standing and kneeling.
- 3- If he cannot sit while praying, he prays on his side while he is directed to the qibla. The right side is better. If he cannot be directed to the qibla, he prays whatever his direction is. His prayer is right. He is not to repeat it.
- 4- If he cannot pray on his side, he prays as lying down with his legs directed to the qibla. It is better to raise his head a bit to be directed to the qibla. If he cannot direct his legs to the qibla, he prays in his status. He is not to repeat the prayer.



5- A patient must kneel and prostrate himself in his praying. If he cannot, he nods his head for them. Prostrating is to be lower than kneeling. If he can kneel without prostrating himself, he is then to kneel upon kneeling and nod his head upon prostration. If he can prostrate himself without kneeling, he is to prostrate himself upon prostration and nod his head upon kneeling.

6- If he cannot nod his head either in kneeling or prostration, he is to indicate by his eyes. He is to close his eyes a bit during kneeling and close them more for prostration. Indicating by a finger, as done by some people, is not right. I do not know a reference for it in the Quran, Sunnah or the opinions of the scholars.

7- If he cannot either nod his head or indicate by his eyes, he is to pray by his heart and sit by his heart. Each person is rewarded according to his intention.

8- If one is afflicted in his eyes and expert physicians say that he must pray while he is lying down otherwise he cannot be cured, he can pray while lying down.

9- Whenever a patient becomes able to do something which he was not able to do during prayer, such as standing, sitting, kneeling, prostrating, or nodding, he is to do that and continues his prayer.

10- A patient has to pray each prayer at its specified time and does whatever he is able to do. If it is difficult to pray in time, he can combine between the noon and afternoon prayers and between the sunset and evening prayers either by advanced combination by advancing the afternoon prayer to the noon prayer and the evening prayer to the sunset prayer or delayed combination by delaying the noon prayer to the afternoon prayer and the sunset prayer to the evening prayer, whichever is easier for him. The dawn

prayer, however, is not combined either to the prayer previous or after it.

11- If a patient or any other one sleeps or forgets a prayer, he has to pray it upon awaking up or remembering it. He is not allowed to wait until the time of the same prayer to pray it. He (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) has said, “If one of you sleeps or forgets a prayer, he is to pray it when he remembers it. Allah says, {and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) for My Remembrance.} [Surat Tâha: 14]” [Reported by Muslim].

«إذا رقد أحدكم عن الصلّاة أو غفل عنها، فليصلها إذا ذكرها. فإن الله يقول: {أقم الصلّاة لذكري} طه: ١٤»  
رواه مسلم

12- By any means, it is not allowed to leave a prayer. A person of age must observe prayers while he is ill at the same level as he observes it while they are healthy. It is not allowed to leave an obligatory prayer until its time passes even if he is ill as long as his mind is sound. He has to pray it during its time to the best of his ability. If he deserts it purposely while he is wise, of age and able to do it even by nodding by head, he is then a sinner. A number of scholars say that he is infidel by that. The Prophet (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) has said, “The pledge between us and them is prayer, whosoever leaves it has rejected faith.” [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi and authenticated by al-Albani]

«العهد الذي بيننا وبينهم الصلّاة، فمن تركها فقد كفر» رواه الترمذي وصححه الألباني

The Prophet (prayers and peace of Allah be upon him) has also said, “The head of matter is Islam, its pillar is prayer and the top of its hump is jihad”. [Reported by at-Tirmidhi and said to be good by al-Albani].

«رأس الأمر الإسلام، وعموده الصلّاة، وذروة سنامه الجهاد» رواه الترمذي وحسنه الألباني

13- If a patient travels to be cured in another country, he is to shorten the four-prayer-unit- prayers. He is to pray the noon, afternoon and evening



prayers as two prayer units until he returns to his country, whether such staying is long or short.

These are some matters that are related to the conditions of patients in prayers and purification.

I ask Allah –Almighty– to cure the Muslim patients, expiate their sins and bestow forgiveness and good health upon all of us in this worldly life and the Hereafter. He is Oft-Giving and Generous. Prayers and peace of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon all his family and companions.

## **References:**

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- “How a Patient is to be Purified” by Sheikh Mohamed ibn Salih al-’Uthaymin.
- “How Should the Patient Pray” by Sheikh Mohamed ibn Salih al-’Uthaymin.