



مہینہ نامہ کونسل

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**POSITION PAPER # 14**

**COVID-19 Vaccine  
& its Permissibility for Muslims**

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**MARCH 03, 2021**

## **ABOUT THE MAJLIS UL ULAMAA (MAJLISTT)**

The Majlis ul Ulamaa is a forum to facilitate the collaboration of Islamic Scholars resident and active within Trinidad and Tobago. It seeks to define the authentic Islamic position as it relates to Islam and the Muslim community of the country, considering the various scholastic positions and schools of law. To this end, it deliberates on issues of importance, and defines the Islamic position. The due process is meticulous, spanning the issuing of a draft position paper, inviting stakeholders and public comment and consultations before a final position is issued.

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*Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*  
*Allahumma salli alaa sayyidinaa Muhammadin wa baarik wa sallim*

# **COVID-19 Vaccine & its Permissibility for Muslims**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Majlistt has been asked for its opinion and position on the Covid-19 vaccine, and its permissibility for Muslims in Trinidad and Tobago.

Majlistt notes there are at least 2 other papers put out by Islamic organisations in Trinidad and Tobago on the same topic, as well as fatawa done in other jurisdictions globally and are accessible to (and circulating within) the local Muslim community (Appendix A)

For the Covid-19 Vaccine, there are many companies (15 are listed at the time of this publication) currently developing and/or deploying vaccines for use globally [1].

The key issue pertaining to the permissibility of the vaccines is whether the ingredients used in the vaccines are halaal, and whether the vaccine is permissible to take notwithstanding the ingredients used. In particular, concern surrounds the following:

- ***Presence of Alcohol in Vaccines***

Alcohol in its form Ethanol is used in some vaccines. This conflicts with the Islamic prohibition of *khamr* (wine or alcohol derived from grapes) and classification of alcohol as *najis* (impure), and handiwork of the Devil (Quran 5:90-91). [“Every intoxicant is *khamr* and every intoxicant is *haraam*.” [Reported by Muslim]]

There is a hadith in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) is reported to have said, “Whatever intoxicates in large quantities, a small quantity of it is forbidden.” [Abu Dawood, in an-Nasa’i]

- ***Use of Porcine Products in Vaccines***

Porcine (substances derived from swine) gelatine, and the enzyme trypsin sourced from swine, are sometimes used in vaccines. This is a concern to Muslim populations, since Islam explicitly prohibits consumption of the ‘flesh’ of swine (understood and accepted to relate to the entire animal) (Quran 2:173; 5:3; 6:145; 16:115).

- ***Use of human fetal cells in vaccine cultures***

Some vaccines have been grown in fetal fibroblast cells, originally derived in the 1960s period. This creates the concern that the human DNA used in the vaccine culture can still be present

in the vaccine when one is injected, and further that the foreign DNA can affect the vaccine recipient's DNA and cause complications or changes.

Majlistt recognizes that these concerns were also expressed by other religions globally, in particular from people of *Ahlul Kitaab* (Jews and Christians), and in many cases have drawn reactions from their scholars.

## 2. DELIBERATIONS

Firstly, Majlistt recognizes that some manufacturers have given assurances (based on media reports and assessments conducted by Ulama globally of information provided on ingredients), that their products meet the halaal criteria, and contain no human or animal -based ingredients. Such companies mentioned include Pfizer and BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca / Oxford University, and Sinovac.

That there are halaal options means little to Trinidad and Tobago in the context that some countries are sourcing their entire vaccine supplies from single or various specific manufacturers. This means that the vaccines which become available for citizenry may or may not be sourced from a manufacturer who has assured that vaccines contain only halaal ingredients.

Secondly, the use of the aforementioned ingredients in vaccines raises concerns by some Muslims in nations throughout the world, as to permissibility to take the vaccine.

The context for assessing and answering these concerns are based on 2 essential principles within Islamic Shariah:

1. The transformation of base substances into some other form, makes it acceptable or unacceptable depending on what the resulting form is. The legal rulings on *Istihlaak* (pertaining to the volume of alcohol in a substance) and *Istihaala* (equivalent to tahawwul, relating to chemical transformation of the properties of a substance that removes the impurities).
  - a. In this case, the transformation of porcine gelatine into peptides makes it acceptable in Islam.
  - b. Similar to porcine gelatine, the use of porcine trypsin enzyme (where applicable) is in a form that is radically transformed from its original substance, and on which basis it becomes acceptable to use.
  - c. In the case of alcohol (in the form Ethanol), which is used as an ingredient in small quantities, in medicine, it also becomes acceptable for Muslims to use.
  - d. For those vaccines that are grown in fetal cells, and based on the science explained on the resulting effects of the process on the human cells originally used, this also is acceptable for use in vaccines by Muslims.

An additional consideration is that these substances in the vaccine are injected into the body, not ingested – which removes further concern regarding the consumption of the substance.

2. In Islam, it is clearly established that
  - a. dire necessity removes restrictions (Quran 5:3; 2:173; 6:119) – in this regard, taking the vaccine as a necessary preventative, precautionary or protective measure is permissible and does not contradict Islam.
  - b. there is a high emphasis on saving human lives (Quran 5:32)
  - c. Muslims should take care to not harm themselves nor be harmful to others [2]
  - d. we as Muslims must choose the lesser of 2 evils when we are in a position where we have no other choice.

It is also noted that up to this point, in many countries, the decision to take the vaccine is an individual one, and therefore there is for many no mandatory requirement to take the vaccine.

Within these parameters, Majlistt wishes to advise the Muslim and wider communities that:

1. If taking the vaccine is mandatory in the country, then Muslims should obey the law of the land.
2. If halaal vaccines or halaal options are available, then these should be taken. In this vein we would urge those responsible for procuring the vaccines to consider sourcing them from vaccine manufacturers who use only halaal ingredients, as a first priority.
3. If the only vaccines available are those containing derivative porcine or alcohol -based substances, or vaccine cultures that used fetal cells, it is permissible for Muslims to take them.
4. Majlistt notes that these positions are consistent with other Ulamaa globally as reported by various Council of Ulamaa media channels, and in international media [3]

### **3. VACCINE HESITANCY**

There have been other concerns expressed about the effects of the vaccine, and suspicions about the timing of development of the vaccine, the motives for its dissemination, and so on. These are classed as vaccine hesitancy, defined as “delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccination despite availability of vaccination services..., and relate to complacency, convenience and confidence” [4]. We note a number of contextual, individual, group and vaccine-specific influencers that drive these concerns, many of which are outside the scope of Islamic Theology, and thus unaddressed in this paper.

Of singular mention is the fact that, while Majlistt recognizes the slate of ethical transgressions by some pharmaceutical companies globally over time as established in studies of Ethics [5], we reference our reminder to the public for our recent paper on Covid-19 (Issue #12, pg. 6) and reiterate persons should be cautious to not be the originators of false narratives and false content (Quran 33:70), nor should they propagate unverified information (Quran 49:6), nor spread

mischievous in the land (Quran 28:77; 2:60; 26:183; ), nor work to endanger the lives of others without sound evidence [6].

Majliss reiterates that persons who either decide to take or refuse to take the vaccine (once it is not mandatory to be taken in the country) should know it is entirely in their prerogative to decide if to take it, and when. Other Muslims should not discriminate, castigate or ridicule these persons on the basis of this decision.

Majliss concludes with a reminder to everyone that Almighty Allah tells us in the Holy Quran:

“Nothing can befall us except what Allah decrees. Our Protector is He, and in Allah should the faithful place their trust.” (Quran 9:51)

**May Almighty Allah protect us all and keep us in good health and Iman. Ameen**

## NOTES

[1] Status of Covid-19 Vaccines within WHO EUL/PQ evaluation process (20 January, 2021) [https://extranet.who.int/pqweb/sites/default/files/documents/Status\\_COVID\\_VAX\\_20Jan2021\\_v2.pdf](https://extranet.who.int/pqweb/sites/default/files/documents/Status_COVID_VAX_20Jan2021_v2.pdf) Accessed February 2021

[2] Abu Hurairah r.a. reported that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) said, “The Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe, and the believer is the one people trust with their lives and wealth”. (An-Nisa’i 4998)

[3] Questions and Answers – Fatwas concerning issues related to Health, Medicine and its related subjects from the Islamic point of view, Islamic Organisation for Medical Sciences, <http://islamset.net/questions-answers/?lang=en> Accessed February 2021

[4] Vaccine hesitancy: Definition, scope and determinants, N.E. MacDonald, SAGE Working Group on Vaccine Hesitancy, Vaccine, Vol 33, Issue 34, August 2015, pp 4161-4164, Elsevier, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0264410X15005009?via%3Dihub>

[5] See, for example, D.W.Light, J.Lexchin, and J.J. Darrow, Institutional Corruption of Pharmaceuticals and the Myth of Safe and Effective Drugs, The Journal of Law Medicine and Ethics, 41(3): 590-600, August 2013, DOI: [10.1111/jlme.12068](https://doi.org/10.1111/jlme.12068), [Link](#)

[6] Ibn Abbas r.a. reported that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) said, “One shall not harm oneself and shall not harm others”. [Ahmad, al-Baihaqi, al-Hakim, Ibn Majah]

## APPENDIX A Fatawa on Covid 19 Vaccine and its Acceptability (In Order of Date)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### Response on the Covid Vaccines in the UK

**Question:** Are the Covid vaccines permissible and is refusing the vaccine tantamount to suicide?

**Answer:** The three vaccines available in the UK for Covid (Sars-Cov-2), namely, Moderna, Pfizer BioNTech and Oxford Astra-Zeneca, are permissible for Muslims as a precautionary measure to protect themselves from this disease. This opinion is carefully based on the current and officially released information about Covid vaccines and after consultation with medical and legal experts.<sup>1</sup> The permissibility of these vaccines for one is contingent upon the recommendation of a credible physician, since people who are likely to have a severe allergic reaction to one of the components in the vaccine will be advised against it. However, these are very small in numbers.<sup>2</sup> Every individual should consider their personal medical condition, the potential side effects of these vaccines and make an informed judgement to vaccinate.

The purpose of these vaccines is to build protection and reduce the degree of possible suffering from the disease. Islamic rulings are not based on myths and rumours about the impurity or prohibition of substances in a product,<sup>3</sup> and there is no evidence to support the claim that the named vaccines are haram to utilise in their current forms. Additionally, there is no indication in the Islamic law that makes the refusal of getting vaccinated tantamount to suicide as the vaccines are used before one fall ill, and it is not a highly efficient *curative* measure to treat *seriously ill* patients who would otherwise most likely or certainly die. This is acknowledged by Public Health England who state, "There is no cure for COVID-19, although some newly tested treatments do help to reduce the risk of complications."<sup>4</sup> Had vaccine refusal been tantamount to suicide, it would classify as a major sin, and many Muslims would become transgressors (*fussaq*), but this is not the case as explained above. Thus, this guidance is a balanced response to the matter without overstating or understating the Islamic position.

This statement is congruent with the subsequent resolutions of the Majlis-e-Shari' of Mubarakpur, a reputable fatwa council of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah:

- Resolution (no.37, 2008) regarding the medical recommendations and prognosis of non-Muslim physicians to Muslim patients
- Resolution (no. 12, 2000) on the permissibility of blood transfusions and the difference between oral and non-oral use of prohibited substances
- Resolution (no.1/2, 1994) on the permissibility of the use of alcohol based medicines.

And Allah Almighty Knows Best.

Written by Dr Shaykh Monawwar Ateeq	Allamah Qamaruzzaman Azmi	Mufti Syed Shamsul Arifeen	Mawlana Naveed Jameel	Dr Hafiz Ather Hussain
PhD in Islamic Medical Ethics & specialization in Hanafi Fatwa, Birmingham	World Renowned Scholar, North Manchester	Imam and Academic Researcher, Greenwich, London	الجواب صحيح والمجيب موفق Research Scholar, Nottingham	PhD in Islamic Studies, Imam Leicester

23/01/2021

Source: www.scholarsink.wordpress.com

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-pfizer-biontech-vaccine-for-covid-19>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-covid-19-vaccine-moderna>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca> (accessed 21/01/2021).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See: al-Ahla Min al-Sukkar, Fatawa Radawiyah (4:473-553) for a detailed assessment of this matter.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-guide-for-older-adults/covid-19-vaccination-guide-for-older-adults> (accessed 21/01/2021).



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30 January 2021

16 Jumaad al Ukhraa 1442

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
إِسْلَامًا عَلَى كَيْفِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَعَلَى الْكَيْفِ كَمَا جَاءَ فِي الْكِتَابِ

## CORONA VIRUS VACCINATION

Question: Is it permissible for Muslims of South Africa to get vaccinated by the Covid Vaccine?

Answer:

باسمه تعالى

Yes, it is permissible. The vaccine that will be reaching the shores of South Africa will be that of AstraZeneca Oxford.

The ingredients of this vaccine have been analysed and they contain the following excipients:

1. L-histidine. 2. L-histidine hydrochloride monohydrate. 3. Magnesium chloride hexahydrate. 4. Polysorbate 80. 5. Ethanol. 6. Sucrose. 7. Sodium chloride. 8. Disodium edetate dihydrate. 9. Water for injection.

From this list, the ethanol is used as a solvent. It is part of the synthetic alcohol family. However, the use of alcohol as solvents is found in many items, both pharmaceuticals and consumables. In pharmaceuticals, such solvent is found in anesthetics and medicinal injections, such as Furosemide - a commonly used antihypertensive medicine. In consumables, this is used in ice creams, biscuits,

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bread, rolls, fruit juices and cooldrinks. Though, it is used in minute quantities in both groups. The majority of righteous scholars of Ahl e Sunnah have issued permission to use these items, for they are found in every Muslim home and to avoid them is a cause of difficulty.

In the current state of the pandemic, the need of vaccination is present, and the research on previous vaccinations has shown to prevent illnesses or, at least, it degrades the severity of the particular illness. Hence, to get vaccinated is permissible.

Shariah emphasises us to bring ease in matters, e.g. of this is 'The Harm must be eradicated'.

### قاعدة: الضرر يزال

Once it is commonly known that a particular medication is benefiting people and is being utilized as a source of recovery then Shariah will give the permissibility of its usage

أما إذا علم أن فيه شفاء، وليس له دواء آخر غيره يجوز الاستشفاء به  
المحيط البرهاني في الفقه النعماني، ج ٨، ص ٨٢

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والله تعالى اعلم ورسوله اعلم عزوجل و صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم

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Answered by: Maulana Tehseen Raza Nuri & Maulana Habib Ebrahim Osman  
Madani Ridawi

(Al-Mutakhassis fil Fiqhil Islamiyyah)

Checked and Approved by: Mufti Abdun Nabi Hamidi Sahib Qiblah: (The Answer is Correct)

Darul iftaa Sunni Ulama Board South Africa

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7<sup>th</sup> February 2021

To Whom It May Concern.

The Darul Uloom Halaal Committee (DUHC) has reviewed the contents of the

### COVID-19 VACCINE ASTRAZENECA (ChAdOx1)

And has found it to be compliant with halaal ingredient requirements.

We therefore, conclude that it is permissible for use by the Muslim community.

Respectfully,

Mufti Waseem Khan  
Chairman,  
Darul Uloom Halaal Committee  
Darul Uloom Trinidad and Tobago Ltd.

## ASJA Trinidad and Tobago



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Anjuman Sunnat ul Jamaat Association Inc.

مجلس علماء جمعية أسجا بترينيداد و توباغو

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
لِصَدَقَةِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ عَلَى رِسْوَالِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَمِنَ الْآلِهِ.

What is the Shariah's ruling on Corona Vaccines and its Permissibility?

Answer:

In the Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.  
All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and Peace and Blessings be upon His Messenger.

It has been almost a year now that the Corona Virus is with us and it has caused millions of deaths across the globe and still is a great threat to the health and lives of people. As a human family, the entire world eagerly awaited a vaccine to combating this deadly virus.

After a rigorous work with many experiments, vaccines were developed, but still many people around the world, psychologically and religiously are very skeptical about the contents of these vaccine.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has encouraged us to treat our bodies and seek cures when we fall sick. "Hazrat Usamah bin Sharik narrated, "A Bedouin came to the Messenger of Allah said, '*O Messenger of Allah Should we seek treatment for illnesses?*' *The Messenger of Allah said, 'Yes. Seek treatment because Allah did not make a disease*

*without making a cure for it; some know of it and others do not'* "[Recorded by Ahmed].

Before any verdict on its permissibility or impermissibility is given, we need to understand some laws of Fiqh and its principles as follows:

1. Use of forbidden things such as wine, swine flesh or any parts of it, is unanimously Haram (strictly prohibited) under normal conditions.
2. But, according to Islam, the **necessity** makes the same Haram things permissible. As Allah says in the Holy Quran:  
**"He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."** (173/ 2)
3. The origin in the things is permissibility and cleanliness unless the evidence of harm (prohibition) is proven.  
"الأصل في الأضياء الطهارة والإباحة"
4. When medicine or vaccine is prepared by the firm and companies, its process passes through many steps and is mixed with necessary ingredients including halal and Haram as the case may be, but many ingredients do not remain in their original forms, and they take new shapes and names.  
According to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Muhammad, (may Allah be please with them both) rulings about the things are dependent on its reality and originality when it changes, the ruling also change.

ASJA (continued)

One of the Hanafi book Fathul Qadeer ( page 201/1) has mentioned as follows:

وَهُوَ بِالتَّغَالِبِ الْعَيْنِ فِي عَذْرِ الْخَمْرِ كَالْخَنزِيرِ وَالْمَيْتَةِ تَغْفِي فِي الْمُمْتَلِكَةِ فَصَيْبٌ وَلِحَاثُ تَوَكُّلٍ،  
وَالسَّيِّئِينَ وَالْعَذْرَةَ تُخْفِرُ فَصَيْبٌ زَمَانًا نَطَهُرُ عِنْدَ مُحْكَمٍ جَلِيفًا لِأَيِّ يَوْمَعَتٍ....  
وَكَيْفٌ مِنَ الْمَسْلُوبِ احْتَارُوا قَوْلَ مُحْكَمٍ، وَهُوَ الْمُحْتَارُ

“That the change in the state in something besides wine or the swine flesh or the dead animal (carcass) that falls on salty water. It becomes salty hence it could be eaten. Or like the manure or the faeces burnt to ashes it becomes pure according to Mohammed who disagree with Imam Abu Yusuf. Most of the scholars (Mashayekh) chose the saying of Imam Mohammad and that is the chosen one.

- 5. When the status of the things is unclear in terms of its permissibility or impermissibility, (Halal and Haram) then it would be regarded as halal and permissible.

"مَنْ أَنْبَيْتَ بَيْنَهُنَّ، وَهِيَ مُتَسَلِّمَاتَانِ يُلْخَذُ بِكُلَيْهِمَا شَاءَ، وَإِنْ اِخْتَلَفَا بَحْتَارُ أَهْوَيْهِمَا، لِأَنَّ مَنَاسَرَةَ الْحَرَامِ لَا تَجُوزُ إِلَّا لِلْمَسْرُورَةِ وَلَا مَسْرُورَةٌ فِي حَقِّ الرِّبَاةِ. (الاشباه والنظائر، ابن نجيم، ص76"

When any medicine contains an ingredient, which is deemed Haram, and the group of expert doctors are certain that it would cure and benefit people and will be the only means of saving lives, then in this condition, it would be permissible to use it in order to save lives. (This changes according to the condition, situation and places)

The people are in dire need of this vaccine as it is the only means of combating this deadly virus, (if it contains Haram elements, which is uncertain) thus, this necessity will render a haram as permissible.

In conclusion, the majority of Islamic scholars in the world are of the opinion that vaccines for Covid 19 such as AstraZeneca, Moderna and Pfizer are permissible to use in order to protect lives,

bearing in mind that we don't have an option to choose or select a vaccine for Covid19 because it is the government who has authority in this regard.

**Therefore, the Anjuman Sunnatul Jamaat Association of Trinidad and Tobago encourages Muslims to take a vaccine and don't deem it as impermissible.**

And Allah knows the best.

13/02/ 2021

Fatwa issued by: THE ASIA COUNCIL OF ULAMAA, Markez: al-ASIA, Charleville, Trinidad and Tobago.  
Chairman of the Council of Ulama: Mufti Asrarul Haque Al-Azhar

Date: 13/02/2021



*In the name of Allah Most Beneficent Most Merciful*

#### VACCINATIONS

1. Historically, vaccines have been developed as preventative measures against various diseases such as polio, small pox, etc.
2. In principle, taking a vaccine as a preventative or protective measure against an illness is permissible and does not contradict the concept of *Tawakkul*; *adopting measures deemed necessary while placing implicit trust in Allah believing that whatever Allah decrees will ultimately prevail*
3. The vaccine should not contain impure or impermissible substances. However, where there are no Halaal suitable alternatives, senior Ulama have permitted the use of medication that contains impermissible substances.
- 4 Vaccinations may or may not negatively affect the user; however, once cohorts of Allah-fearing Muslim physicians deem its use necessary, it would render the use of vaccines permissible.
- 5 Taking the vaccine is a matter of choice and preference; no individual may be compelled to take it, nor should one who refuses to take it be criticized or ridiculed.

*This statement has not been endorsed by the Jamiatul Ulama KZN (JUKZN)*

**The Board**

**22 February 2021**