

Islam and medical ethics

Islam considers [medical](#) ethics the same as ethics in other areas of life. Islamic medical ethics is restating general ethical principles using medical terminology and with medical applications. Modern medicine has caused some ethical dilemmas in relation to end-of-life decisions and what is or is not euthanasia.

Euthanasia and suicide in Islam

Muslims are against [euthanasia](#). They believe that all human life is sacred because it is given by Allah, and that Allah chooses how long each person will live. Human beings should not interfere in this.

Life is sacred

Euthanasia and suicide are not included among the reasons allowed for killing in Islam.

Do not take life, which Allah made sacred, other than in the course of justice.

Qur'an 17:33

Allah decides how long each of us will live

When their time comes they cannot delay it for a single hour nor can they bring it forward by a single hour.

Qur'an 16:61

And no person can ever die except by Allah's leave and at an appointed [term](#).

Qur'an 3:145

Suicide and euthanasia are explicitly forbidden

Destroy not yourselves. Surely Allah is ever merciful to you.

Qur'an 4:29

The Prophet said: "Amongst the nations before you there was a man who got a wound, and growing impatient (with its pain), he took a knife and cut his hand with it and the blood did not stop till he died. Allah said, 'My Slave hurried to bring death upon himself so I have forbidden him (to enter) Paradise.' "

Sahih Bukhari 4.56.669

End of life decisions and DNR orders

Many devout Muslims believe that Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) orders represent a soft form of euthanasia which is strictly forbidden in Islam. Muslims cannot kill, or be complicit in the killing of another, except in the interests of justice.

However, the Islamic Code of Medical Ethics states "it is futile to diligently keep the patient in a vegetative state by heroic means... It is the **process** of life that the doctor aims to maintain and not the process of dying". This means doctors can stop trying to prolong life in cases where there is no hope of a cure.

According to the Islamic Medical Association of America (IMANA) "When death becomes inevitable, as determined by **physicians** taking care of terminally ill patients, the patient should be allowed to die without unnecessary procedures."

IMANA say that turning off life support for patients deemed to be in a persistent vegetative state is permissible. This is because they consider all mechanical life support procedures as temporary measures.

While turning off a life-support is allowed, hastening death with the use of certain pain-killing drugs is not allowed as this would equate to euthanasia.