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Prophetic Health Maintenance: Fresh Dates and Cucumber in Balancing Hot-Cold Temperaments via Tibb al-Nabawi

Arwansyah Kirin¹, Mohd Shafiq Sahimi², Wan Ainaa Mardhiah³, Faisal Husen Ismail⁴, Nurul Hidayah Tumadi⁵, dan Ramdan Baba⁶

^{1,2,3} Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, ⁴Universiti Sains Malaysia, ⁵Institut Agama Islam (IAI) An-Nadwah Kuala Tungkal, dan ⁶Persada Electrical & Engineering Work Sdn.Bhd, Malaysia

¹arwansyah@uthm.edu.my, ²mohdshafiq@uthm.edu.my, ³mardhiah@uthm.edu.my, ⁴faisalhu@usm.my, ⁵nurulhidayahtumadi@an-nadwah.ac.id, dan 6ramdan@epersada.com.my

Abstract

This study presents an alternative approach to ideal body maintenance based on the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), particularly through the dietary combination of fresh dates (rutab) and cucumber within the framework of hot-cold temperament balance. In the context of Tibb al-Nabawi, foods are classified according to their thermal properties hot or cold as reflected in the Hadiths and the practices of the Prophet (PBUH). The core issue addressed in this study is the lack of a systematic scientific model that explains how this Sunnah-based dietary combination contributes to the regulation of bodily homeostasis and the attainment of an ideal physique. The main objective of this study is to formulate a holistic dietary model rooted in the Prophet's Sunnah by integrating physiological, nutritional and spiritual dimensions. This research adopts a qualitative-descriptive methodology grounded in critical literature analysis of authentic Hadiths, classical medical texts and contemporary scientific findings in nutrition. The findings indicate that consuming seven fresh dates and seven slices of cucumber daily has the potential to support metabolic functions and regulate internal body temperature, though it does not serve as a primary source of calories. The proposed model emphasizes that dietary applications based on hot-cold principles should be adapted to individual physiological conditions whether hot, cold, thin, or overweight thus contributing to systemic bodily balance. The implications of this study extend beyond the scientific validation of prophetic dietary practices it offers a new discourse in Islamic health sciences and promotes the integration of tradition and science in shaping a spiritually rooted and culturally relevant healthy lifestyle.

Keyword: Tibb al-Nabawi, Fresh Dates, Cucumber, Hot-Cold Balance, Ideal Body, Prophetic Nutrition, Homeostasis.

A. Introduction

The teachings and guidance of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) have long served as foundational pillars for Muslims over the centuries (Dwi Kofsoh, 2009). His instructions not only conveyed religious doctrines but also provided practical advice on daily life matters (Nur Hafidz et al., 2022), including nutrition and health (Mir'atun Nisa, 2016). One notable aspect of the Prophet's Sunnah is his practice of consuming cucumbers with fresh dates. This unique combination of two contrasting fruits is not only a traditional legacy but also offers a deeper basis for scientific health analysis, emphasizing the connection

between prophetic guidance and physical well-being. In contemporary society, there has been a significant increase in interest regarding ideal body formation and nutrition as part of efforts to enhance health and overall quality of life. This can be observed through a growing awareness of dietary choices, with more people opting for healthier foods and adopting various dietary regimes. To understand how the Prophet maintained his health, one must consider the religious and historical contexts surrounding his teachings (Ahmad Paruqi Hasiolani, 2023). Since the Prophet's time, the Arab community faced harsh geographical and climatic conditions (Hawwin Muzakki, 2021), which made dietary health an essential component of daily life. Numerous hadiths from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are related to health and many contemporary studies have validated them. These health-related traditions are known as *Tibb* al-Nabawi (Prophetic Medicine) referring to the Prophet's sayings, actions and approvals concerning the maintenance of physical and spiritual health based on divine revelation and empirical observation (Yusuf al-Qaradawi, 2001). In several narrations, the Prophet is reported to have combined watermelon with dates or cucumber with fresh dates, stating: "We balance the heat of this with the coolness of that, and the coolness of this with the heat of that" (Hadith narrated by Abu Dawud [n.d.], from Aisyah, Book of Foods, No. 3836). This demonstrates a balanced eating pattern consuming foods with opposing properties simultaneously a practice believed to have physiological and medical relevance even today (Serdar Demirel, 2011).

In light of rising global obesity, malnutrition and metabolic disorders the search for a health-conscious lifestyle that is both scientific and spiritually grounded has intensified. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2023 that global adult overweight prevalence had reached 39%, posing a serious health threat. A model of ideal body maintenance based on the Sunnah offers a holistic approach that integrates physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. The consumption of foods like dates and cucumbers is not merely nutritional but symbolically represents the harmony between thermal properties of food hot and cold as taught in Greek medicine and *Tibb al-Nabawi* (Fakher, 2019). This is exemplified in the case of the Prophet's wife, Aisyah (RA), as narrated in a hadith from Ibn Majah (n.d.), Book of Foods, No. 3324:

Translation: "My mother tried to make me gain weight before I was taken to the Prophet, but nothing worked until I ate cucumber with fresh dates and then I gained weight in the best way."

Modern research supports the notion that dates are rich in natural sugars, antioxidants and dietary fiber, while cucumbers possess cooling properties high water content and detoxifying effects. The combination is believed to maintain the body's thermal balance, improve digestion and support ideal body weight (TheHub.News, 2023). This fruit pairing is especially relevant in the present era where people frequently seek ideal body shapes through slimming or fattening pills many of which pose health risks. Most modern medications marketed through social media or pharmacies do not truly cure diseases but merely suppress symptoms (Jerry D. Gray, 2016). To date, few scientific studies have systematically developed a health model based on the date-cucumber combination within the hot-cold conceptual framework as a method of maintaining an ideal physique. This reveals a research gap between traditional practices and their scientific validation, which can be bridged through multidisciplinary approaches. In classical medical epistemology, every food is classified as either hot or cold. Dates are considered hot providing energy, while cucumbers are cooling and soothing. This combination embodies the principle of balance (homeostasis), which underpins physical fitness (Siddig Jamal, 2024). This idea aligns with the Yin-Yang theory in Chinese medicine, where foods rich in water are considered cold (Yin), while those high in energy or fat are categorized as hot (Yang) (Herman Tan Manado, 2012). In this framework, cucumbers with high water content are *Yin*, while dates with high caloric value are Yang. The balance between Yin and Yang is essential to sustaining life, and their imbalance may result in disease, premature aging or even death. Interestingly, this concept is also rooted in the Sunnah of the Prophet, making it highly relevant for Muslims seeking a healthy lifestyle consistent with spiritual values. Simultaneously, this model is inclusive and can be examined and adopted across cultures by anyone interested in natural bodily equilibrium. Theoretically, this research seeks to enrich interdisciplinary studies intersecting theology, public health and nutrition. Practically, it may serve as a locally rooted and spiritually grounded guide to healthy living for both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Therefore, this article aims to formulate a model for ideal body maintenance based on the combination of dates and cucumber through the hot-cold balance concept within the framework of Tibb al-Nabawi. It is hoped that this study contributes to the advancement of a more scientific Islamic health paradigm, raises awareness of Sunnah-based dietary practices and fosters a new consciousness that tradition and science can complement one another in promoting bodily wellness.

Based on the review conducted by the authors, it was found that no previous research has directly addressed or examined the same topic as presented in this study. However, several pieces of literature are thematically related to the current topic. For a more detailed analysis the following table (Table 1) summarizes the core discussions of relevant studies:

Table 1: Literature Review

No	Author(s)	Title	Year	Publisher	Objective	Method	Findings
1	Sumaiyah Mohd Tamizi	Selected Plants According to the Perspective of Islam and Health Sciences	2015	University of Malaya	To analyze the benefits of plants in Islam, including dates and cucumber based on the Qur'an and scientific evidence.	Literature review of classical and modern Islamic sources.	are beneficial for maintaining bodily balance.
2	Nur Annisa Istifarin & Andris Nurita	Understanding Hadith Bukhari Index No. 5445 on Dates as Herbal Medicine: A Health Science Perspective	2023	Mushaf Journal	To examine the medicinal properties of dates based on hadith and science.	Hadith analysis and study of active compounds.	Dates help regulate blood pressure and are rich in antioxidants.
3	Ahmad Syamil bin Ahmad	The Special Status of Dates in the Qur'an from a Health Science Perspective	2013	UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Thesis	To examine dates in the Qur'an and their medical benefits.	Qualitative - Qur'anic and nutritional literature.	Dates contain high natural glucose, beneficial for stamina and essential nutrients.
4	Mir'atun Nisa	Portion and Nutrition in the Diet of Prophet Muhammad SAW: A Hadith-Based Contextual Analysis	2016	Jurnal Living Hadis	To analyze the Prophet's eating habits in terms of nutrition.	Qualitative - Hadith and nutritional science study.	Dates consumed before worship offer optimal energy supply.
5	Rostita Nugraheni	The Benefits and Wonders of Dates The King of	2012	Qanita Rapha	To compile scientific and spiritual information about dates. To reveal	Islamic texts and scientific literature. Health and	Dates help alleviate anemia, constipation, and fatigue.

		Natural Remedies: The A–Z Health and Beauty Benefits of		Publishing	the medical benefits of cucumber.	beauty literature review.	has cooling effects, is water-rich, and supports skin and
		Cucumber					kidney health.
7	Halim, R.	The Prophet's	2020	Jurnal	To interpret	Literature	The
	& Munir,	Diet and Its		Kesehatan	the	and limited	Prophet's
	S.	Implications on		Islami	Prophet's	clinical	dietary
		Modern Eating			diet for the	studies.	patterns
		Patterns			modern era.		were
							balanced
							and low in
							toxins.

The majority of these works acknowledge the health benefits of dates and the importance of bodily element balance. However, none of the studies directly investigate the combined consumption of dates and cucumber as a model for achieving an ideal body. Likewise, the hot-cold (HC) combination within the *Tibb al-Nabawi* context has not been sufficiently explored. Most research focuses on nutritional value alone rather than on integrating physical, spiritual and thermal dimensions of health. Therefore, this study seeks to formulate a holistic and systematic model for ideal body maintenance grounded in the Sunnah of the Prophet. Additionally, it aims to provide both theoretical and practical foundations for Muslim communities to adopt a balanced diet that is spiritually and functionally aligned.

B. Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive design (V. A. Lambert & C. E. Lambert, 2012) with a critical analytical paradigm in the form of a literature-based study (John G. Cawelti, 1972). The primary sources used in this research include classical hadith compilations such as the *Kutub al-Tis'ah* (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, *and Sunan Ibn Majah*). Additional references consist of health-related books, scientific journals, reputable websites and other relevant literature. The health analysis is conducted by comparing scientific findings in the field of health with the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), focusing on identifying parallels and scientific realities as well as evaluating their implications for human health.

C. Findings and Discussion Introduction to Cucumber and Dates

Cucumber belongs to the Cucurbitaceae family and is scientifically known as *Cucumis* sativus L. (Budi Samadi, 2002). It is also referred to by other names such as kokomer, concombre and cucumber (Hieronymus Budi Santoso, 1998). This plant is a creeping and climbing species with coarse hairs and moist stems, typically growing to lengths between 0.5 and 0.2 meters (Daniel Mangoting et al., 2008). Cucumber is rich in nutrients that offer numerous health benefits. It contains zinc and silica, which aid in hair growth and development, prevent brittle nails and support joint health by strengthening connective tissue. Additionally, cucumber contains alkaloids that can help expel tapeworms from the intestines, saponins with anti-cancer properties, skin-firming effects, and cholesterol-lowering capabilities. It also contains ascorbic acid and caffeic acid, which help reduce water retention and swelling in the body. Other nutrients found in cucumber include potassium, magnesium, sterols that reduce blood cholesterol and manganese that can help treat diabetes. Furthermore, it is rich in amino acids, betacarotene, alpha-carotene, vitamins C and A, lutein, zeaxanthin and linoleic acid which helps prevent premature aging and cellular damage caused by free radicals, supports heart health and improves cognitive function (Nugraheni, 2016). It also contains carotenoids, phenolic flavonoids, polyphenols, tannins and lycopene which exhibit significant antioxidant activity (Hina Saeed and Anam Waheed, 2017).

Dates are fruits derived from the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) (Siti Zamilatul Azkiyah & Hayatul Rahimah, 2022), known for their sweet and rich flavor. They are commonly consumed as snacks or processed into various food products such as stuffed dates, jams and raisins. Dates have been cultivated in the Middle East for thousands of years (Lia Ernawati, 2019) and later spread to Asia, Africa and the Americas. There are numerous varieties of dates cultivated globally (Iqra Anugrah et al., 2022). Ajwa dates, for example are sweet and rich in flavor and are believed to offer many health benefits such as boosting energy, supporting heart health and preventing cancer. *Mediool* dates are large and sweet often used in baking, while Sukari dates are soft and sweet and are commonly used for stuffed dates. Dates are not only delicious but also nutritionally dense. They contain vitamins A and C, fats, potassium and magnesium (Nisrina Fauziyah Sholihah, 2022). Carbohydrates serve as the main energy source (Evi Hasnita & Silvia Suradi, 2022), proteins help build and repair body tissues, fats support brain and heart health, vitamins A and C are vital for maintaining healthy vision, skin and immune function, potassium helps regulate blood pressure (Widya Pebryanti Manurung & Adityo Wibowo, 2016) and magnesium contributes to bone and muscle health (Hasto Ridho Prianggoro, 2022). In the context of this study, the type of dates referred to is rutab (fresh or ripened dates). According to the al-Bisri dictionary, rutab means dates that are ripe (Abid Bisri & Munawwir A. Fatah, 1999). Al-rutab refers to dates that have nearly ripened before becoming fully dry. Imam Abu Hanifah noted that dates in this stage, when chewed offer a distinctly sweet taste (Muhammad ibn Mukaramah, 1993). The development of dates follows five stages over approximately six months. The first stage is al-hababuk or as-sada, occurring after pollination when the date is round and bitter. The second stage, al-bath (unripe date) is when the fruit begins to elongate and

turn green with an astringent taste. The third stage, *al-busru* or *al-khalal* refers to dates that have turned yellowish-red with a mildly sweet and astringent taste. The fourth stage, *ar-rutab* represents the ripened date dark in color with wrinkled skin (Yusuf al-Hajj Ahmad, 2008), characterized by a soft texture and sweet taste (Mir'atun Nisa, 2016).

Model of Ideal Body Maintenance Based on the Combination of Dates and Cucumber

Every type of food contains specific health benefits. Likewise, cucumber and dates are two foods highly beneficial for the human body, as both are rich in nutrients essential for maintaining health. Dates contain natural sugars and provide energy, while cucumbers are refreshing and have a mild diuretic effect. The combination of the two can help balance the digestive system and relieve constipation. The fiber in dates promotes regular bowel movements, while cucumbers provide hydration and help flush out toxins from the body. Additionally, dates are a quick source of energy as they contain glucose, fructose, and sucrose. Cucumbers help maintain the body's hydration. This combination is refreshing and provides stable energy throughout the day (Siddiq Jamal, 2024) This study analyzes the nutritional values of these two prophetic foods and explores their potential contribution to shaping an ideal body based on the principle of hot-cold (temperamental) balance (Ibn Qayyim, 2015; Rostita, 2012). The nutritional data were obtained from the Ministry of Health Malaysia (2010) and Rostita (2012), as shown in the table below:

Table 2: Nutritional Comparison Between Dates and Cucumber

Component	Cucumber	1 Slice	7 Slices	Date	1 Fruit	7 Fruits
	(per 100g)	(10g)		(per	(7g)	
				100g)		
Energy (kcal)	12	1.2	8.4	275	19.25	134.75
Protein (g)	0.70	0.07	0.49	1.97	0.13	0.91
Fat (g)	0.10	0.01	0.07	0.45	0.03	0.21
Carbohydrates	2.70	0.27	1.89	73.51	5.14	35.98
(g)						

Assuming an individual consumes 7 slices of cucumber per day and each 10g slice provides 1.2 kcal of energy the total energy derived from 7 slices would be 8.4 kcal. Similarly, the consumption of 7 dates per day yields approximately 134.75 kcal. Based on this analysis, the simultaneous intake of cucumbers and dates does not serve as a primary source of energy. However, it acts as a complementary nutritional intake that may stimulate appetite, accelerate metabolism and contribute to the balance of body temperature according to the hot-cold (temperamental) principle. This effect is exemplified in the physical development of Siti 'Aishah RA, as described in a hadith narrated by Ibn Majah (n.d.) in Sunan Ibn Majah, Chapter: Foods (Bab At'amah), No. 3324, which states: Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Numayr narrated to us, from Yunus ibn Bukayr, from Hisham ibn 'Urwah, from his father, from 'Aishah, who said: My mother tried to fatten me so that I could be presented to the Messenger of Allah, but her

efforts failed until I ate cucumber with fresh dates. Then I gained weight, in the best possible manner."

Siti 'Aishah RA was a young woman who experienced rapid growth and development. By the age of nine or ten, she had gained weight and appeared healthy although she had previously been very thin and underweight in her early childhood. Over the following years, she continued to gain weight and eventually had a fuller figure during adulthood (Sulaiman An-Nadwi, 2017). It can be inferred from these accounts that Siti 'Aishah RA, before being brought into the household of the Prophet Muhammad SAW at around the age of 6 was significantly underweight. Her mother attempted various treatments to help her gain healthy weight, but these efforts were unsuccessful until she consumed a combination of cucumbers and fresh dates. This regimen led her to achieve ideal weight gain, over a period of approximately three years from age 6 to age 9 (Sulaiman An-Nadwi, 2017). In nutritional science, this aligns with the concept of Body Mass Index (BMI), or *Indeks Jisim Tubuh* (IJT), which is classified into five categories as described by Marhaposan Situmorang (2015):

Category BMI (kg/m²) Description Severely Underweight < 17.0 High risk of severe malnutrition Mildly Underweight 17.0 - 18.4Risk of mild malnutrition Normal 18.5 - 25.0Ideal body weight range Overweight 25.1 - 27.0Beginning stage of excess weight > 27.0Obese At risk of obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

Table 3: Body Mass Index (BMI)

From Table 3 above, it can be inferred that the body of Siti 'Aishah RA at the age of six most likely fell under the Severely Underweight category with a BMI of less than 17.0 kg/m². Therefore, to attain a healthy and well-formed body, Siti 'Aishah RA consumed cucumber and dates so that her body became fuller and more ideal falling within the Normal BMI range (18.5 – 25.0 kg/m²). Siti 'Aishah RA began consuming cucumber and dates based on the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, as conveyed in a hadith narrated by al-Bukhari and explained by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (2008), in *Bab: Foods (At'amah)*, Hadith No. 5445: "Whoever consumes seven Ajwa dates in the morning will be protected from poison and magic on that day."

Based on this hadith, the author assumes that Siti 'Aishah RA consumed 7 slices of cucumber together with 7 dates per day. Accordingly, based on the nutritional calculation previously presented, it can be estimated that the total energy intake Siti 'Aishah RA obtained from consuming 7 slices of cucumber and 7 dates amounted to 143.15 kilocalories per day. Meanwhile, the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA)

or Angka Kecukupan Gizi (AKG) for human nutritional needs according to age is presented in the table below:

Table 4: Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) Based on Age and Gender (Moderate Activity Level)

Age Group	Male (kcal/day)	female (kcal/day)
1–3 years	1200	1200
4–6 years	1650	1600
7–9 years	1750	1650
10–12 years	1900	1800
13–15 years	2200	2000
16–18 years	2500	2000
19–29 years	2700	2100
30–49 years	2600	2000
Elderly (50+)	2100	1800

Logically, according to the theory of nutritional balance if energy intake exceeds the body's daily requirement weight gain may occur. In this case, the combined energy produced by consuming 7 slices of cucumber and 7 dates per day is approximately 10% of the daily required intake (based on the 1600 kcal/day requirement for a girl aged 6-9). Therefore, a much greater energy intake would be needed to meet the full 1600 kcal daily requirement. If 7 slices of cucumber and 7 dates only yield around 143.15 kcal, then it would take approximately 70 slices of cucumber and 70 dates to fulfill the total energy needs of 1600 kcal per day. This calculation suggests that Siti 'Aishah RA's energy intake from dates and cucumber alone was insufficient to meet her full nutritional needs at her age. For weight gain to occur, her energy intake would have had to exceed her body's needs. Hence, based on the author's analysis, the 7 slices of cucumber and 7 dates were most likely supplemental not her main dietary intake. This indicates that Siti 'Aishah RA likely consumed other sources of nutrition, such as cereals, wheat, lamb, and bread, which were common in that era and provided more substantial caloric value. Meanwhile, cucumber and dates served as complementary foods that supported her overall calorie intake and contributed to healthy weight gain toward an ideal body condition. It can be concluded that if Siti 'Aishah's daily energy requirement was 1600 kcal, then through a combination of breakfast, lunch, and dinner which likely included whole wheat bread and meat plus the additional 143.15 kcal from cucumber and dates the total energy intake would increase helping her achieve healthy weight gain.

It can be concluded that dates should be incorporated into a healthy diet, as they contain sugars, proteins and essential vitamins. When dates are consumed together with cucumbers which help regulate body weight the combination becomes nutritionally complementary. One kilogram of dates contains approximately 3,000 calories, which can meet the body's daily energy needs provided they are consumed alongside other foods (Seruni, 2019). Additionally, eating dates and cucumbers can stimulate the appetite especially when dates are consumed in greater quantities than cucumbers. Conversely, if the goal is to reduce body weight (from overweight to lean), then

cucumber intake should be increased while other caloric foods are reduced. In this way a person can maintain a lean but fresh physical appearance. From the perspective of the Sunnah and nutritional science, the combination of dates and cucumbers is not intended as a sole energy source, but rather as a nutritional supplement that improves metabolism and promotes digestive system balance. Dates, which are warm in nature and energy-rich, serve as a metabolic activator, while cucumbers, being cool in nature, balance internal body temperature and support hydration (Ibn Qayyim, 2015; Tan Manado, 2012).

In general, neutralizing the harmful effects of a cold substance with a warm one and vice versa or balancing dryness with moisture, is one of the most important strategies in health preservation (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, 2015). Based on the above explanation, fresh dates are classified as warm, while cucumbers are cool in nature. However, they are mutually compatible and neutralize each other's potential negative effects. A harmful property in one substance can be mitigated by combining it with its opposite or antidote. This principle underpins the entire science of medicine. The ideal body model proposed in this study is adaptive and personalized, based on an individual's physiological characteristics and metabolic tendencies. For those with warm body types a greater intake of cucumbers is recommended. Conversely, for individuals with cool body types, a higher consumption of dates is advisable. This approach is further illustrated in the suggested dietary model in the following table.

Body Profile Objective Recommended Combination 7 dates + 3 cucumbersUnderweight / Poor To boost energy and appetite stimulate appetite Warm body / Prone to 5 dates + 5 cucumbers To balance body sweating temperature 9 dates + 2 cucumbers Cold body / Fatigue / Pale To increase internal body skin heat Maintaining ideal body 7 dates + 7 cucumberso stabilize weight and weight improve digestion

Table 5: Recommended Daily Dietary Combinations

This finding indicates that the ideal body care model based on the Sunnah does not merely prioritize caloric intake, but rather emphasizes the balance of food functions in relation to the body including the hot-cold elements, moist-dry properties of foods and their suitability to individual conditions. The model underscores the importance of understanding the wisdom behind the Prophet Muhammad's dietary practices not only in a literal sense, but through an integrative perspective that encompasses physiological, psychological and spiritual dimensions. (Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, 2015).

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the dietary combination of fresh dates and cucumbers, as practiced by Siti 'Aishah in attaining an ideal body form is not merely a culinary habit but is grounded in both scientific and spiritual principles for holistic bodily health. Through the application of the hot-cold temperamental balance concept, this model offers an alternative paradigm that harmonizes the physical, metabolic and psycho-spiritual elements of the human body. The findings reveal that although the combination of dates and cucumbers does not provide sufficient caloric intake as a primary energy source, it plays a crucial role as a complementary nutritional agent and regulator of the body's homeostatic system. This approach is adaptive and personalized in which dietary intake is adjusted according to individual physiological characteristics further affirming the uniqueness of the Prophet's Sunnah as a comprehensive lifestyle system. The implications of this study are significant for the development of a nutrition model rooted in Islamic values that is scientific, practical and aligned with the needs of modern lifestyles. It proves that the wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad's dietary practices can be systematically studied and applied through the support of modern nutritional data, effectively bridging the gap between traditional heritage and contemporary scientific approaches. This model also contributes to strengthening an integrative Islamic health paradigm and paves the way for future research both clinical and interdisciplinary within the frameworks of theology, public health and nutritional sciences.

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