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Ramadan fasting and biological biomarkers: The new opportunities of systems biology and omics sciences

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Ramadan fasting represents the fourth of the five pillars of the Islam creed ('aqidah). Even though patients are exempted from observing this religious duty, they may be eager to share this particular moment of the year with their family and peers, by attending the special prayers, social gatherings and other ceremonies. However, there are no guidelines or standardized protocols that can help physicians to properly address the issues and concerns of patients willing to fast in Ramadan and correctly advising them. Despite the extensive body of studies conducted on Ramadan fasting, so far only clinical parameters and analytical chemistry have been used and assessed. There is a dearth of systems biology- and omics-based studies, which investigate biological events from a global perspective, not focusing on single candidate clinical biomarkers but taking into account the entire overall perturbations, by means of high-throughput technologies. Systems biology and omics sciences could assess the metabolic effects of Ramadan fasting, confirming well-known and expected metabolic perturbations, and adding knowledge on both the short-term and long-term effects of Ramadan fasting. Systems biology and omics sciences could undoubtedly constitute a fundamental step further and a crucial advancement in the field of the relationship between religion and health. It can be anticipated that these highly advanced specialties provide a unique, unprecedented opportunity for studying the physiology and physiopathology of fasting, giving personalized counseling and advice to patients willing to fast during Ramadan.

Biography

Nicola Luigi Bragazzi was born on the 2nd of March in 1986 in Carrara (MS), Tuscany (Italy) and is currently a MD, a MSc, a PhD and a resident in Public Health. He got his MD (medical degree) on the 15th of July in 2011 with a final mark of 110/110 cum laude with a thesis on Personalized Nanomedicine ("Nanomolecular aspects of medicine, at the cutting-edge of the nanobiosciences in the field of health-care") and the joint Italo-Russian MSc (Master of Science) in nanobiotechnologies at Lomonosov Moscow State University (27th April 2012). He got his PhD in nanochemistry and nanobiotechnology at Marburg University, Germany with a final mark of "very good" and is currently a resident in Public Health at University of Genoa, Italy, 3rd year. He is author and/or co-author of several publications.

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