I thank God for giving me the knowledge and then the privilege of taking care of the health of my fellow human beings. Health is not the absence of disease. It is a state of total well-being, physical, mental and spiritual. Mankind was created "in the best of molds," but does not keep up with the "maintenance manual" of this most incredible machine. We damage our systems with excesses of salt, sugar, fat and calories and develop high blood pressure, diabetes, coronary artery disease and obesity. We suffer from stress and damage to our lungs with cigarettes and our liver with alcohol.

The Quran, which calls itself "a cure for mankind" is not a textbook of medicine. However, in it are guiding principles which, if understood and applied correctly, will lead to a healthful lifestyle to help us maintain a healthy body. Muslim physicians of today, as in the past, have a mission to translate the medical knowledge in the Quran into practical application.

We must tell others why the Quran prohibits alcohol, intoxicants and pork. We must leam the medical benefits of fasting during Ramadan. We should also find out from the Quran how we can cope with modern stress. Finally, we should define Islamic medical ethics and determine how they apply to the decision-making process in the case of terminally ill patients organ transplantations, infertility and AIDS patients. All these are discussed in a brief book and some suggestions for health maintenance are given with the belief that a healthy individual is a must for a healthy nation.

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