



University of California, San Francisco
Northwestern University
New York University

MASALA PULSE

The Official Newsletter of the MASALA Study
<http://www.masalastudy.org>

Welcome to the MASALA Study!

Dear Participant:

Welcome to the MASALA Pulse Newsletter- we are so glad you have joined our landmark MASALA study!

We are happy that the MASALA study is now expanding to include 1,150 new Bangladeshi and Pakistani men and women in the study. More than 400 people have already joined the study and we need 750 more. **Please tell your friends in New York or Chicago that they can join MASALA if they are between ages 40-84 years and have no heart problems.**



Namratha Kandula, Nadia Islam, and Alka Kanaya



MASALA is a long-term study. We want to understand why South Asians develop heart disease. In the future, we hope to offer more advanced tests to know your risk of heart disease. Until then, our staff be calling you each year to ask about your health. Please take 10 minutes to speak with our staff member to answer a few questions about how your health has been since we last saw you. **If you develop any new health conditions (like a heart attack or stroke), please call our staff to let us know.** We will ask you to give us permission to obtain your medical records to better understand what happened.

Thank you for participating in MASALA! Your time and energy for this study will help us understand how to improve the health of South Asians.

Warm wishes,
Alka Kanaya, Namratha Kandula, and Nadia Islam
MASALA Study Investigators

Healthy Recipe for Pakora

Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups gram flour
- 75 grams spinach
- 1.5 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cumin powder/seeds
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 0.5 tsp turmeric
- 0.5 tsp baking soda
- 250 grams potatoes
- 120 grams eggplant
- 2 medium onions
- 1 small handful Fresh coriander

Instructions:

1. Whisk together all the ingredients for the batter with enough water to make a thick but fluid batter, making sure there are no lumps. Be vigorous with the whisking. Set aside
2. Chop the eggplant, potato and onions roughly into cubes or half-moons. Chop the coriander and spinach finely
3. Add the chopped vegetables to the batter
4. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
5. Spoon dessert sized spoon dollops onto the baking tray. Compress down slightly if you want them to be more like patties.
6. Bake in a preheated oven (between 400-465 °F) for about 25 minutes. All ovens are not the same, so use the temperature that works best for your oven. Basically, you want them baking hot in order to cook through and crisp a little on the edges (but not to burn).



Enjoy with chutney right away as a starter or a snack! They work nicely cold the next day in a lunch box. Alternatively, reheat under a grill (broiler) for a few minutes.

Recipe inspired by KindEarth and Fatima Cooks

Healthy Tips For Ramadan/Intermittent Fasting

DO this:

- Drink plenty of water between Iftar and Sehr.
- Increase water intake by eating hydrating foods such as soups, juices, and low-fat dairy products, such as low fat lassi (yoghurt-based drink).
- Consume cucumber and tomato-based salads during Iftar for hydration.
- Enjoy grilled or baked lean meat, skinless chicken, and fish, to get a good portion of healthy protein.
- Enjoy your meal and avoid overeating by eating slowly.
- Incorporate healthy unsaturated fats like avocado, unsalted nuts, salmon, olives, and olive oil.
- For Sehri, choose whole grains, which provide the body with energy and fiber.

Try to:

- Avoid caffeinated drinks such as coffee, tea and cola. They make you urinate more and can lead to dehydration.
- Avoid fried foods and processed foods high in fat or sugar.
- Avoid overeating at Sehri or Iftar.
- Avoid overeating at the post-Iftar meal.

Participant Spotlight

Rofique Ahmed
 Imam, Assafa Islamic Center, Inc.
 President, United Imam and Ulama Council of USA Inc.
 Date of Interview: December 12, 2022



1) Can you tell us why you decided to enroll in the MASALA study?

Health is a gift from the Almighty Allah. I found an opportunity to check the condition of my health free of cost through this MASALA program. I did not have to pay anything from my pocket, but I got to see the condition of my health [through a free blood report]. Also, our people are not very careful about health. This is why we see many people with diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke and heart attack. All of these health issues are happening because we are not being cautious. If people take small cautionary steps, it might be possible to avoid these [issues].

2) How was your experience at Bellevue Hospital during your clinical research study visit?

MASALA team and nurses were very helpful, friendly, and caring. It was similar to my regular blood work with [my] doctor. I had to come empty stomach. Then, the nurses drew [my] blood and measured blood pressure. Everything went very well. They also asked questions about my health and food.

3) What impact do you think the MASALA study will have on the South Asian community?

After [participating in] this program, I have seen that it has had good impact in the community. No such programs existed before [the MASALA study]. But now, through this program, people are becoming more careful about their health. People from the community are informing each other about the benefits of this program. They are inviting others to join. I think this is an advancement for the community.

4) Did the study have any impact on your health outlook or health behaviors (e.g. diet, exercise)?

I learned a lot about my health. Now, I am more careful about my health habits, including diet and exercise. I have made changes to my eating habits. It was very helpful. I have also referred a lot of people to join this program to take advantage of its benefits.

5) Why should community members enroll in the MASALA study?

Most of our people are not careful about their health until becoming very sick. An opportunity [to check on your health status], which this program provides, is not always available. Also, a lot of people have educational and English barriers. It is not possible for them to search online to find [health] programs. [MASALA study staff] speak our language and come [directly] to us to share about the program. This is very helpful. For this reason—people are (and will) continue to join this program. It is good for the community.

UCSF, Northwestern University, and New York University
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- **Please call us if you have a major change in your health status.** If you were recently in the hospital, if you underwent a serious outpatient medical test, or have any new diagnoses.
- **Please call us if you have a new address, phone number, or email address.**
- **Please take part in our phone interviews.** If we leave a message for you, please call us back. We need to update your information each year.
- We sometimes send you forms asking you to give MASALA permission to collect your medical records from hospitals and doctors' offices. **Please return these forms quickly**, so we can get the records.

To contact the MASALA Team:
Northwestern Clinic: (773) 548-2723
New York University Clinic: (646) 877-4306

[For study news, events, and publications:](#)



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Check out our study website: www.masalastudy.org

MASALA Study Teams



NYU: Front Row: Willy Nandi, MD Taher, Mursheda Ahmed, Sabiha Sultana
Back Row: Shahmir Ali, Mamnunul Haq, Haroon Zafar, Saikat Talukder, Nadia Islam, Naheed Ahmed, Gurvinder Singh, Maha Tariq



Northwestern: Prachi Patel, Afshan Rahman, Namratha Kandula, MD, Waqas Khan, B'joe Mammoottil (Not pictured: Meredith Rathert)