

“Hare Krishna” - Vaishnava Hinduism

1. Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hare Krishna tradition has ancient origins from the sub-continent of India. In the 16th century the movement grew as the message spread that people could gain a personal relationship with Lord Krishna through collectively chanting his name. In 1965 Swami Prabhupada travelled from India to America and founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, also known as the 'Hare Krishna Movement'.
2. Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (in the UK, occasionally elderly people may speak an Indian language).
3. Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherents believe in a cycle of reincarnation which is determined by “karma”, the law of the consequences of past actions. The human form is seen as a special gift allowing one to escape the cycle of birth and death by worshiping God, especially by practising forms of yoga and the recitation of God's holy names. Of the numerous scriptures the Baghavad Gita and Srimad Bhagvatam are prominent. The faith is monotheistic. The movement's leaders are gurus in a successive lineage who pass on teachings unchanged to disciples.
4. Birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life is understood to start at conception and the body is described as a temple belonging to the Lord. Therefore devotees are usually against abortion. They may like to chant when a baby is born. A small dot may be placed behind the baby's ear. The family may undertake a naming ceremony in an emergency, calling on friends and family to attend.



5. Prayer & Customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are no set times for prayer however many prefer to pray in the morning. ▪ Devotees will chant the Hare Krishna mantra which is composed of three Sanskrit names: “Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare”. ▪ They may appreciate a quiet place to meditate in and, if possible, somewhere to burn incense sticks.
6. Diet & Fasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Devotees are usually lacto-vegetarians. Meat, fish and eggs are always unacceptable, and mushrooms, garlic and onions are also avoided by some. ▪ Alcohol and recreation drugs are never consumed. Caffeine is generally avoided. ▪ Prayer is offered before eating and food prepared by other devotees may be appreciated. ▪ Fasting sometimes happens one day each week, and can vary from avoiding some foods to all food.
7. Clothing & Washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cleanliness is important and patients may want to brush their teeth, wash in running water and pray before eating in the morning. ▪ Most devotees dress just like anyone else. Women may wear brightly coloured saris. Monks may dress in white or saffron robes and shave their head except for a topknot. ▪ Modesty is important and women, in particular, may prefer to be seen by someone of the same gender. ▪ Devotees wear neck beads and nurses which have spiritual significance and may not want removed.
8. Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are no objections to receiving blood products or usually to medical advice. ▪ Traditional medicines may be used alongside hospital treatment. ▪ Medicines not derived from animal products are preferred but most will accept alternatives especially in life threatening situations.



9. Care of the Dying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Devotees want to prepare themselves for death so it is necessary to explain their situation to them. ▪ They may wish for pain relief to be reduced so that they can think clearly, believing that their state of mind affects their rebirth. ▪ Their state of mind may also be aided by religious artefacts, listening to Scriptures being read and by chanting, possibly with musical instruments. ▪ Many may come to visit them on their final journey.
10. Death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is no general guidance concerning post mortems or organ donations which are matters for individual preference. ▪ It is important that the family is consulted to see if they wish to carry out last rites themselves or with a Hindu priest. ▪ Also, in discussion with the family, it would be important to ensure that objects of religious significance such as neck beads, the Janoi (a holy thread placed over the shoulder and going across the torso), or that bodily marks of Tilak made with paste, are not removed unless necessary.
11. Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The chaplaincy department has a local contact number for obtaining further advice and support.

