

Managing Diabetes During Ramadan

Provider Tip Sheet



Background

Fasting during Ramadan is one of the five pillars for those who practice the Islamic faith. The other pillars include professing one's faith, praying five times a day, making charitable donations, and making a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Ramadan is a lunar month and is considered the most sacred month of the year amongst Muslims. During this month, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, abstaining from food, drink, and oral medications. The only meals and drinks consumed are at pre-dawn (called Suhoor) and sunset (called Iftar).

Fasting is obligatory for all Muslims. However, there are exemptions. The exemptions include for:

- The Elderly
- The mentally or developmentally disabled
- The acutely or chronically ill
- Menstruating women
- The pregnant and breastfeeding
- Children (under the age of puberty)
- Those who are traveling

Tips for Providers

- Encourage a medical assessment 1-2 months before Ramadan.
- Respect the individual's decision whether or not to fast.
- Discuss medication adjustments to lower the risk of fluctuations in blood sugar.
- Educate on the signs and symptoms of hypo and hyperglycemia, blood sugar monitoring, and exercise.
- Educate on how to treat hypoglycemic events.
- Discuss a Ramadan-focused nutrition plan.

<https://www.daralliance.org/daralliance/en/dr/risk.html>

Provider Resources

Recommendations for the management of diabetes during Ramadan: update 2020, applying the principles of the ADA/EASD consensus.

<https://drc.bmj.com/content/8/1/e001248>

International Diabetes Federation. Diabetes and Ramadan.

<https://idf.org/our-activities/education/diabetes-and-ramadan.html>

Ramadan: An Overview for Primary Care Providers, Considerations when caring for Muslim patients who fast for Ramadan.

https://med.virginia.edu/family-medicine/wp-content/uploads/sites/285/2019/06/Heck_Ramadan_Final.pdf