



RAMADAN AND DIABETES

Ramadan is a time of year that many Muslims look forward to and benefit from. But fasting when living with diabetes and other chronic conditions means you need to think about your health and prepare in advance. If you want to fast, speak to your healthcare team well before Ramadan starts to ensure you can do so safely.

Fasting during Ramadan

As stated in the Qur'an, Muslims are obliged to fast during the month of Ramadan from dawn to dusk. But as the Qur'an also states that you must not act in ways that harm your body, people living with diabetes and other health conditions can be exempt due to increased health risks of fasting.

The decision to fast during Ramadan is your own, but you should seek advice about measures you can take to look after your health.



Fasting safely

Talk to your healthcare team if you plan on fasting. Fasting affects your body in different ways, and your medication might need to be adjusted. If you test your blood sugars, it's important to increase blood sugar monitoring during this time. Testing your blood sugar will not break your fast.

If you take insulin or medications that increase the risk of hypos, make sure you are aware of the signs and symptoms. If you do get symptoms of a hypo, you must break your fast immediately and treat the hypo as you usually would. If your blood sugars are above your target range, break your fast with some water and treat as you normally would. If necessary, speak to your healthcare team.

Food and drink

At Suhoor, the predawn meal, it is best to choose high fibre, slow-release carbohydrates such as:

- wholegrain bread
- oats and wholegrains
- brown or wild rice.

It's still important to follow a healthy, balanced diet and be mindful of your portion sizes during Ramadan.

When breaking your fast at Iftar, enjoy a celebration meal but keep fried, oily and sugary foods to a minimum

Drink sugar-free and decaffeinated fluids before and after fasting. If you become dehydrated, end your fast immediately and drink some water.



The Diabetes UK Helpline

Our dedicated diabetes helpline is for all people with diabetes, their family or friends, and people who are worried they might be at risk.

Call **0345 123 2399**, Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm

Email **helpline@diabetes.org.uk**

Or visit **diabetes.org.uk/helpline**

Working with

DiABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.



BRITISH ISLAMIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

This information has been produced alongside the British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA).

If you can't fast

You may be able to fast on some days during Ramadan, or later in the year if your healthcare team thinks this is a suitable option.

If you cannot fast at all due to your diabetes or other health conditions, then you can fulfil your obligation by paying daily fidyah. This way, you can still participate in Ramadan activities by feeding those experiencing poverty, as well as participating in other acts of worship such as giving charity and praying.

Speak to your local Imam, scholar or trusted religious authority for more advice on alternatives to fasting.

Information in other languages

If you would like diabetes-related information in other languages, visit **diabetes.org.uk/languages**