



مستشفى الملك فيصل التخصصي ومركز الأبحاث
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For Better Health Series (12) Fasting Safely with Diabetes

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There are many useful resources for diabetics who perform the worship of fasting, the most important of which is the recommendations of the Diabetes Group in Ramadan in cooperation with the International Diabetes Federation, but I liked to mention at the beginning of this holy month of the most important practical and essential points for a safe fast.

Is There A Risk on The Diabetic for Fasting?

While fasting is associated with important health benefits of immunity, weight reduction and overall health when performed appropriately, it might be associated with some of the real health risks for some of diabetics, what are they and how can they be prevented?

First: Hypoglycemia

Because of prolonged fasting, and it is usually limited to those who take insulin injections or medications that cause an increase in insulin secretion (the sulfanuria group and the glynidides group, especially the first commonly used ones such as glycazide, glycinlamide and flimbride under many commercial names) while metformine (glucophage) and other recent groups do not cause this except when added to the above.

Second: Severe Hyperglycemia

This usually happens after breaking the fasting because of excessive foods that raise sugar, especially juice and starches, as it can occur during the fasting period when the doses of medications or insulin are reduced too much and in this case it may be dangerous when it is associated with dehydration or acidity in the blood.

Third: Dehydration and Fluid Deficiency

Especially with severe hyperglycemia or when working in a hot atmosphere during fasting, or when taking diuretics and in the elderly. This may increase the incidence of dangerous blood thrombosis.

Who is not Recommended for Fasting:

The Islamic law prevented harm to others and to oneself. Jurisprudential medical opinions have agreed that fasting is not required for anyone who medically thinks he will be harmed, and from this group we have:

- Type one diabetics and those who take insulin in several daily doses, especially when the blood sugar is not well- controlled or with repeated hypoglycemia
- Those who were recently exposed to severe hyperglycemia or hypoglycemia or acidosis in the blood.
- People with chronic diseases associated with diabetes, such as kidney failure, arterial diseases, and the elderly.

Rules That Help You Fast Safely:

1. Start preparing for the month of fasting by regulating and controlling your blood sugar levels before a period of time.
2. Consult the attending physician to develop a treatment plan and ensure that fasting is safe for you.
3. During the month of Ramadan, monitor the rate of sugar accurately, especially in the first days, within the fasting period, for example, when getting up and before breaking the fast (to make sure there is no hypoglycemia), as well as after two hours after breaking the fast and before suhoor, and when symptoms of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia exist
4. Adhere to a good diet, avoid juice in all its forms, sweets, reduce starches, and eat legumes and whole grains along with proteins and unsaturated oils. When breaking the fast breakfast, you can take a simple amount of sugars, such as several dates, because sugar is at the lowest level. Limit yourself to two meals with a simple snack in between if you like and avoid continuous eating.
5. Discuss with your physician adjusting the doses if you are on insulin or pills that increase the rate of insulin and usually lower doses are given at suhoor and the higher dose is given at breaking the fast, but this can be adjusted after reviewing home blood sugar level analyzes in the first days of fasting.
6. Increase water intake during the period of breaking the fast
7. In the event of hypoglycemia with blood sugar less than 70, or symptoms of hypoglycemia with blood sugar less than 80, or severe hyperglycemia more than 300 during fasting, especially with symptoms of thirst and fatigue, discontinue fasting and promptly consult your physician.