

# Ramadan

## MUBARAK

2024

RAMADAN  
EDITION



Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and holds great significance for Muslims around the world. It is considered the holiest month in Islam, during which Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. The fast is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is observed to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran.

Spiritual Reflection and Growth  
Cleansing of the Soul  
Increased Empathy and Compassion

# How to have a healthy Ramadan when you have a heart condition

## I have a heart condition is it safe to fast during Ramadan?

Many people with a heart or circulatory condition can fast safely from dawn until sunset during the month of Ramadan.

But if your heart condition worsens, making you unwell, because of fasting, you are not required to fast. This also applies if you have a serious heart condition, if you had recently a heart attack, stroke, or a heart procedure like stenting or bypass surgery, which puts you at higher risk of having more heart problems if you do not eat and drink normally.

If you have a heart condition, make sure you discuss your plans to fast with your doctor or nurse before going ahead.

You may also want to try fasting for a few days before the month of Ramadan to see how well you cope. You can also try fasting for a shorter period in Ramadan to see how your body copes and have breaks if you need them, such as fasting on every other day or a few days in a row.

You can make up any missed days later in the year and may wish to do this during the winter months when the length of fasts is the shortest.

If you cannot fast at all due to poor health or are unable to make up the fasting days you miss, consider speaking to your local Imam or scholar about the fidya, a charitable donation made in place of your fasting.



## Can I change the time I take my medicines when I'm fasting?

If you have a heart or circulatory condition you are likely to have been prescribed regular medicines to help you stay healthy.

Because fasting involves not eating or drinking from dawn to sunset, it may interfere with your normal medication routine.

Pharmacists can be a valuable source of information about medicines, so seek out their advice before changing your routine.

For some medicines it is safe to change the time you take them. For example, if you take a medicine once a day in the morning, you may be able to switch to taking it in the evening when you are eating and drinking.

If a medicine needs to be taken on an empty stomach, you could take it just before opening your fast.

However, some medicines for conditions such as heart failure, diabetes, high blood pressure and arrhythmias need to be taken regularly. Not taking them at the right time could make your symptoms severe.

If you experience any of the below symptoms, it could be a sign you need to return to your normal medication routine and you should seek medical attention immediately:

- fluid building up in the ankles
- breathlessness and fatigue
- passing more urine than normal
- dizziness or fainting spells
- rapid heartbeat or pounding in the chest
- chest pain or pressure.





## Can I exercise when I'm fasting?

It's a good idea to keep active during Ramadan, but you may need to adapt the activity you do to make it more gentle than usual, depending on your energy levels.

Try to find a time of day that works best for you to exercise. For instance, you could fit it into your Ramadan activities by walking to the mosque, or doing some stretching when you get up at dawn.

The motions involved in salah (Islamic prayer) can also be good for your heart, as any physical movement helps the heart stay healthy.

Exercise can also boost your mental wellbeing and help you feel less tired. Being spiritually engaged during Ramadan may boost your feeling of wellbeing too.

If you recently had a serious event such as a heart attack, or a heart procedure, then you will likely be taking part in cardiac rehabilitation classes (either online or in person). If this is the case, it may not be safe for you to fast during this period.

This is because you are at higher risk of becoming dehydrated due to lack of water. Or you may have low blood sugar levels as a result of eating less or not having the right levels of medicines in your body.

Talk to your cardiac rehab specialist about the best approach for you.

## How can I stop smoking?



Like eating and drinking, smoking and vaping are not allowed when you are fasting during Ramadan.

Smoking is very harmful for your heart. So, if you smoke or use tobacco products, try using Ramadan to quit for good.

Your local service may be in a GP surgery, pharmacy, high-street shop, or mobile bus clinic, depending on where you live.

You can speak to an advisor who can give you tips and prescribe patches, chewing gum, nasal sprays or medicines to help you cope with nicotine cravings. You can do this any time before, during or after Ramadan.

Many Muslim scholars are also of the opinion that nicotine patches which go on your skin do not break the fast. If you are unsure, you can use any of these products outside fasting hours.



## What should I eat and drink during Ramadan?



It's important to continue to eat healthily during Ramadan.

At suhoor (pre-dawn meal), make sure you have a meal which is filling and gives you plenty of slowly released energy. Include wholegrain starchy carbohydrates such as oats, bulghur wheat, wholegrain bread or brown rice, fruits and vegetables, and some protein.

Traditionally, many Muslims open their fast by eating dates with water, which will provide fibre and energy from the natural sugars they contain.

Make your evening meal filling by including slowly digested carbohydrates. And include plenty of fruit and vegetables, and some lean or low-fat protein sources. Bake or grill your food instead of frying it.

Try to avoid overeating by eating slowly and paying attention to your feelings of fullness. Keep an eye on your portion size and limit fatty and sugary foods, so you do not gain weight unintentionally during Ramadan.

Drink plenty of sugar-free drinks like water, fresh juice or sugar-free squash at iftar and suhoor to make sure you do not become dehydrated.

If it's particularly hot, or you have an active job that causes you a lot of sweating, you may be at higher risk of getting dehydrated, so keep these things in mind.

Also try to avoid salty foods which can make you thirsty and cause raised blood pressure levels.

If you have been told to restrict your fluids as part of treatment for your heart condition, ask your medical team for advice on what you should do during Ramadan.

Drinking enough water and including fruit, vegetables and high fibre diet will also help to keep your digestion healthy.



Attending 69th International Congress of Aviation and Apace Medicine Conference in Abu Dhabi.  
Dr. M. Arshad Khan | Dr. Adil Usman Khan



Our senior medical team had a productive visit to Etihad Airways Medical Centre in Abu Dhabi as part of the International Congress on Aviation Medicine to exchange knowledge in healthcare excellence and apply it at our practices to provide world class healthcare to our valuable patients.



Dr. Arshad Health Associates hosted a Health Fair at  
Prime Pakistan head office - Karachi





## Dr Arshad Health Associates organized a Health Awareness Session at United Energy Pakistan office in Karachi.



## Dr Arshad Health Associates host a Health Awareness Session at Shell Pakistan office in Karachi.





# RAMADAN AND DIABETES

If you've got diabetes you need to be ready for Ramadan. Fasting when you have diabetes, especially for such long periods, can be dangerous and cause problems for your health.

If you want to fast during Ramadan, make sure you speak to your doctor so they can help you decide if it is safe for you and readjust your medicine dose for Ramadan.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO MY BODY WHEN I FAST?

When we fast for about eight hours after our last meal, our bodies start to use energy stores to keep our blood glucose level normal. For most people, this is not harmful.

If you have diabetes, especially if you take oral hypoglycemic drugs or insulin you are at risk of developing hypoglycemia which is when your blood sugar levels are too low. With long fasts, the risks of hypoglycemia and dehydration are high. Another problem that can occur is the risk of high glucose levels following the larger meals that we eat before and after fasting at Suhoor (Sehri) and Iftar. Hypoglycemia, high glucose levels and dehydration can be dangerous for people with diabetes.



## I HAVE DIABETES – CAN I FAST?

We know that choosing to fast is a very personal decision. For some people with diabetes, fasting can be dangerous or cause problems to your health. People with certain health conditions like diabetes are exempt from fasting, especially if they use insulin or certain other medications. This goes for anyone who has poor control of their diabetes or complications caused by diabetes like diabetic foot, kidney disease or eye problems.

**If you do want to fast, speak to your doctor, diabetes nurse or diabetes doctor before Ramadan starts.**

People can also be exempt from fasting if they are

- children (under the age of puberty)
- elder
- suffering from chronic medical illness
- have learning difficulties
- travelling
- pregnant, post partum and breastfeeding

## IF YOU CAN'T FAST

If you are not able to fast you can complete your duties by offering charity providing meals to the poor or keep fast at a later date, perhaps during the winter season.. Speak to your local Imam for more information about this.

## TEST YOUR BLOODS DURING THE FAST

It is really important to regularly monitor your blood glucose levels during your fast so to prevent risk of hypoglycaemia. This will not break your fast.

## DO I NEED TO WAKE UP FOR SUHOOR (SEHRI)?

Long hours without eating increase the risk of hypoglycemia. It will be easier to balance your blood glucose levels through the fast if you eat a meal at Suhoor, just before sunrise rather than at midnight.

## WHAT TYPES OF FOOD SHOULD I EAT AT SUHOOR (SEHRI)?

At Suhoor you should eat starchy carbohydrates which release energy slowly, such as multigrain bread, oat-based cereals, basmati rice together with beans, pulses, lentils, fruit and vegetables. Other foods which will keep your blood glucose levels stable through out the fast include pitta bread, chapattis and semolina. As with all meals, eat sensibly, donot over eat and remember to drink plenty of water.

## WHAT TYPES OF FOOD SHOULD I EAT AT IFTAR?

Remember to eat sensibly and healthy through out the year and also in Ramadan. Eating too much fried fatty and starchy food will make you put on weight and raise your blood sugar levels which will be difficult to control. Try to eat moderate portion sizes. Remember that Ramadan is also about self control and discipline. If you have diabetes you can seek a dietitian who will be able to give you more advice about healthy eating.



## WHAT TYPES OF DRINKS CAN I HAVE?

Long hours of fasting and uncontrolled blood sugar levels can put you at risk for dehydration, which can be fatal. Drink plenty of sugar-free fluids, particularly water at Suhoor and after Iftar.

## CAN I PRAY TARAWEEH?

Taraweeh can be a tiring activity and you can become dehydrated or develop hypoglycemia.

To avoid problems during Taraweeh, make sure you:

- Eat starchy foods with Iftar as they are digested slowly drink plenty of water following Iftar.
- Take a bottle of water and sweets with you to Taraweeh.

## KEEPING SAFE

- Always carry sweets with you.
- Always wear diabetes identification, such as a medical bracelet.
- Monitor your blood glucose levels regularly to monitor. This will not break your fast.
- Test your blood glucose level if you feel unwell during the fast.
- If your blood sugar level is high or low, you must treat accordingly.
- If your blood glucose is less than 4.0mmol/l (72mg/dl), end the fast immediately and treat the low blood sugar levels.
- If your blood glucose level is below 4.0mmol/l (72mg/dl) at the start of the fast and you are on insulin or oral hypoglycemic drugs, donot fast and treat accordingly.
- If your blood glucose level is higher than 16.7mmol/l (300mg/dl), end the fast immediately.
- If you become dehydrated, end the fast immediately and drink water or sugar free drinks.
- If you start to feel unwell, disoriented, confuse or dizzy, stop fasting and drink water or other sugar free drinks.
- You should never stop your insulin, but you must speak to your doctor for dose readjustment.
- If any of the above symptoms develop consult personel physician before fasting again.

## WHAT IS DIABETES?

- Diabetes is a health condition where the amount of glucose in your blood gets high.
- This happens if your pancreas doesnot make enough insulin to help the glucose enter your body cells. Or insulin becomes less sensitive to function properly.
- Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose to enter the body cells, where it is used as fuel for energy so we can work, play and generally live our lives. It is vital for life.
- Glucose comes from digesting carbohydrate and it's also produced by the liver.
- If you have diabetes, your body cannot make proper use of this fuel so it builds up in the blood which can be dangerous.

## THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES OF DIABETES



### TYPE 1

- Type 1 is when the body is unable to produce any insulin which is required for break down of carbohydrates in our food.
- Scientists are researching for exact causes it, but it is multifactorial with a strong genetic component. You cannot prevent type 1 diabetes.
- It is usually diagnosed in early childhood, although can occur in adults as well.
- Approximately eight per cent of people with diabetes have type 1.

### TYPE 2

- Type 2 develops when the body cannot make enough insulin, or when the insulin become less sensstive to function.
- Your family history, age and ethnic background increase your risk of developing it, and you are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes if you are obese.
- It starts gradually usually later in life and the symptoms may not be so obvious it might take years before you learn that you have developed it.
- If undiagnosed can result in life threatening conditions.
- Approximately 90% of people with diabetes have type 2.

## Our Services

- Outpatient Clinic - General & Specialists
- Clinical Laboratory
- COVID PCR Laboratory
- Travel Clinic
- Vaccination
- Physiotherapy
- Pharmacy
- Hospitalization - Arranging & Monitoring
- Corporate Medical Services
- Occupational Health Services
- Immigration/Visa Medicals
- DNA Sampling
- Age determination Tests
- Ambulance Services - Air & Medevacs
- Medical Coverage for events
- First Aid Training / First Aid Boxes
- Health Audits
- Medical Services Consultancies
- Doctor / Paramedic Escort
- Remote Site / Field Medical Services
- Repatriation of Mortal Remains
- Oil & Gas UK approved Facility in Pakistan
- 24 Hours Call Services

## Our Clinical Facilities

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