



Diabetes Awareness Month

MedNet Diabetes Awareness Newsletter

March Edition

Diabetes Awareness: Managing Blood Sugar Mindfully During Ramadan

Diabetes remains one of the most common chronic health conditions worldwide. According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), over 530 million adults globally live with diabetes, and nearly 1 in 2 adults with diabetes remain undiagnosed. Early awareness and lifestyle intervention play a critical role in prevention and long-term management.

March, which coincides with Diabetes Awareness, provides an important opportunity to highlight key risk factors, lifestyle choices, and common misconceptions—especially as it aligns with the holy month of Ramadan, a time marked by fasting, reflection, and community.

For many individuals, Ramadan brings significant changes in eating patterns, hydration, sleep, and physical activity. While fasting carries deep spiritual meaning, prolonged fasting hours may increase the risk of:



Hypoglycemia
(low blood sugar)



Hypoglycemia
(high blood sugar)



Dehydration



Blood sugar fluctuations

This makes awareness and informed decision-making essential—particularly for those living with diabetes or at high risk of developing it.

Prediabetes: A Silent but Reversible Condition

Prediabetes occurs when blood glucose levels are elevated but not yet in the diabetic range. Research shows that up to %70 of people with untreated prediabetes may eventually develop type 2 diabetes. However, early lifestyle changes can reduce this risk by up to %58, according to large clinical prevention trials.

Common risk factors include:

- Family history of diabetes
- Overweight or obesity (particularly abdominal fat)
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Unhealthy dietary patterns
- High blood pressure or abnormal cholesterol levels
- History of gestational diabetes

Because symptoms are often mild or absent, regular screening is especially important—particularly before Ramadan if you are planning to fast.



Blood Sugar–Friendly Meal Planning During Ramadan

Stable blood sugar levels depend heavily on balanced nutrition, especially when fasting for extended hours.

Suhoor (Pre–Dawn Meal) Recommendations



Choose low-glycemic, complex carbohydrates (whole grains, oats, lentils)



Include lean protein (eggs, yogurt, beans) to slow glucose absorption



Add healthy fats (nuts, olive oil) for sustained satiety



Stay well hydrated



Avoid excessive salty or processed foods that increase thirst

Iftar (Breaking the Fast) Recommendations



Break the fast gradually (e.g., water and 1–2 dates in moderation)



Avoid overeating after prolonged fasting



Limit sugary beverages and fried foods



Prioritize vegetables, lean proteins, fiber-rich foods, and whole grains



Skipping Suhoor is strongly discouraged for individuals with diabetes, as it increases the risk of low blood sugar during fasting hours.



Portion control and mindful eating are essential, as post-Iftar overeating can lead to significant glucose elevation.

Physical Activity and Insulin Sensitivity

Regular movement improves insulin sensitivity and helps maintain glucose stability. Even moderate activity can significantly improve metabolic health.

During Ramadan:

- Engage in light to moderate activities such as walking
- Consider exercising 1–2 hours after Iftar
- Avoid intense workouts during prolonged fasting hours
- Stop exercising immediately if experiencing dizziness, weakness, or sweating

Consistency matters more than intensity.

When Should Fasting Be Avoided?

Medical guidelines generally advise that individuals at high risk—such as those with:

- Type 1 diabetes
- Poorly controlled type 2 diabetes
- Frequent hypoglycemia
- Advanced kidney disease
- Pregnancy with diabetes

should consult their physician before fasting. In some cases, fasting may not be medically advisable.

Islamic teachings prioritize health and safety, and exemptions exist for individuals with medical conditions.



Myths and Facts About Diabetes During Ramadan

Myths

- ✗ People with diabetes can never fast.
- ✗ Blood sugar testing breaks the fast.
- ✗ Eating sweets only at Iftar prevents complications.

Facts

- ✓ Some individuals with stable, well-controlled type 2 diabetes may fast safely with medical supervision.
- ✓ Blood glucose monitoring does not invalidate fasting and is essential for safety.
- ✓ Large amounts of sugar even once daily can cause significant glucose spikes.

Key Safety Tips During Ramadan



Monitor blood glucose regularly



Break the fast immediately if blood sugar falls below 70 mg/dL (3.9 mmol/L)



Break the fast if blood sugar exceeds 300 mg/dL (16.7 mmol/L)



Stay hydrated during non-fasting hours



Consult your healthcare provider before Ramadan to adjust medications if necessary

Early planning reduces health risks significantly.

Supporting Health Through Awareness

At MedNet, we believe that education and prevention are fundamental to long-term health. Through our Diabetes Awareness initiatives, we aim to empower members with reliable, evidence-based guidance, especially during meaningful periods such as Ramadan.

If you have concerns about blood sugar management or diabetes risk, consulting a healthcare professional before fasting is strongly encouraged.

A healthy Ramadan begins with awareness, balance, and care. Wishing you a month filled with reflection, well-being, and peace.

Diabetes Awareness Month reminds us that small, informed choices can make a meaningful difference. Through education, early detection, and proactive care, we can support better outcomes and healthier futures. Together, we can build stronger, more resilient communities.

MedNet Team

Disclaimer:

This material is issued by the MedNet entities situated in the MENA region, which are a group of licensed Third-Party Administrators (TPAs) operating in accordance with the laws and regulations of the jurisdictions where they are incorporated. These entities are:

- MedNet Global Healthcare Solutions L.L.C, incorporated in the United Arab Emirates ('UAE') under Commercial License number CN- 2149549 and regulated by the Dubai Health Authority, Department of Health and the Central Bank of the UAE
- MedNet SPC, incorporated in the Sultanate of Oman under Commercial License number 1383865 and regulated by the Financial Services Authority
- MedNet Egypt L.L.C, incorporated in Egypt, Commercial License 82495
- MedNet Bahrain W.L.L, incorporated in the Kingdom of Bahrain under Commercial License number 1- 57403 and regulated by the Central Bank of Bahrain
- MedNet Jordan W.L.L, incorporated in Jordan under Commercial License number 200025636 and regulated by the Central Bank of Jordan

The above MedNet entities are TPAs and do not underwrite or issue insurance policies, and do not assume insurance risk. All services are rendered in accordance with agreements between MedNet and insurers, employers, or plan sponsors.

This material is intended for general informational purposes only and does not constitute insurance advice, policy guarantees, or a binding offer/contract. All insurance products and services referenced are subject to the terms, conditions, and exclusions of the respective insurance policies issued by the licensed insurance company, and may vary by jurisdiction.

This material is not intended for distribution in jurisdictions where such distribution would be contrary to local laws or regulations. Unauthorized reproduction or sharing of this content is prohibited without prior written consent from MedNet. All content is current as of the date of publication and subject to change without notice. While we strive for accuracy, no warranties or representations are made regarding the completeness, reliability, or accuracy of the information provided.

For details specific to your insurance coverage or claims, please consult directly with your insurer or broker, or contact us for clarification within the scope of our licensed administrative role.