

Introducing the Practical Guideline for Diabetes and Ramadan, Developed by International Diabetes Federation in Collaboration with Diabetes and Ramadan International Alliance, 2016

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Ramadan is a holy month for Muslims and all healthy adult Muslims have to fast during Ramadan as a religious rule. The majority of Muslims choose to fast for the spiritual and holy experience, despite disease or unhealthy situations such as Diabetes which is described as “one of the largest global health emergencies of the 21st century”, based on The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) documents. About 95% of patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) fast for at least 15 days and about 65% of them fast every day during Ramadan. (1,2) There is a fact that the decision by an individual with diabetes to fast during Ramadan must be respected. However, strict medical supervision and focused education on how to control their glycemic levels is essential. Implementation of guidance relies on the education of all those involved: religious leaders, patients, the community and especially Health Care Professionals (HCPs). (3) Guidance given by each of them alone is not sufficient.

Considering the fact that many Muslims with diabetes prefer to fast in spite of inhibitory advises

and to answer several conflicts and controversies regarding diabetes and Ramadan, IDF in collaboration with Diabetes and Ramadan (DAR) International Alliance decided to develop a comprehensive guideline to be used by health care professionals. This guideline was then developed on April 2016 by 12 main authors and 20 co-authors from all around the world, and published by International Diabetes Federation. The purpose of *IDF-DAR Practical Guideline* (4) -which is introduced in this letter-, is to ensure the optimal care of diabetic patients who want to fast and to suggest practical recommendations in terms of different diabetes related aspects such as complications, nutritional sufficiency as well as optimal blood sugar control.

The guideline is provided in nine chapters: 1) Introduction to the IDF-DAR Practical Guidelines, 2) Epidemiology of Diabetes and Ramadan Fasting, 3) Physiology of Ramadan Fasting, 4) Risk Stratification of Individuals with Diabetes before Ramadan, 5) Diabetes and Ramadan: A Medico-religious Perspective, 6) Pre-Ramadan Education, 7) Ramadan Nutrition Plan (RNP) for Patients with

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Diabetes, 8) Management of Diabetes during Ramadan and 9) Identifying and Overcoming Barriers to Guideline Implementation. This guideline tries to answer three main questions: 1) Is fasting during Ramadan associated with a significant risk? 2) What are the criteria that predispose patients with diabetes to increased risk

during fasting? 3) What is the most appropriate oral anti-diabetic drug(s) or type and regimen of insulin for patients with type 2 diabetes who fast?

IDF-DAR Practical Guideline is now available at: <http://www.idf.org/sites/default/files/IDF-DAR-Practical-Guidelines-Final-Low.pdf>

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