

Muslim Celebrations & Type 1 Diabetes

Eid is the main festival celebrated by muslims around the world. The muslim calendar has 2 Eid celebrations:

Eid ul-Fitr

Eid-ul-fitr celebrates the end of the Islamic Holy month of Ramadan.

Eid ul-Adha

Eid ul Adha follows Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.



With both Eid ul-Fitr and Eid ul-Adha, the day consists of families and congregations coming together in the community. Most of the traditional foods eaten at these times can be enjoyed in moderation as part of a balanced diet. However, large amounts of fruit juices (above 125mls per day) and sugary drinks are best avoided.

This guide is to provide you with some tips and suggestions so that you can still enjoy yourself while also maintaining a healthy balance.

Fasting

Fasting during the month of ramadan is one of the five pillars of islam and is obligatory for all adult muslims. During ramadan, muslims do not eat and drink including water from dawn until sunset. The two main meals commonly eaten by muslims are known as iftar (after sunset) and suhoor (just before sunrise). Ramadan lasts for 29-30 days each year depending on the sighting of the moon.



Risks associated with Fasting

If you have type 1 diabetes, you are not required to fast, because of the risks to health. There are three main risks for people with type 1 diabetes.

Hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose)

Fasting increases the risk of low blood glucose levels and having hypoglycaemia, commonly referred to as a hypo.

Hyperglycaemia (high blood glucose)

Ramadan is not just about fasting and should be thought of as cycles of fasting and feasting. With the larger meals of suhoor and iftar, people with diabetes are at risk of high blood glucose levels, especially overnight.

Dehydration

The long hours of fasting also means long periods without water and puts people with diabetes at greater risk of dehydration. If your glucose levels are already high, you can feel very unwell without drinking water.

Fasting can cause Ketones

Long periods of time with little food or insulin can result in ketones in the blood. People with type 1 diabetes should monitor blood ketones if glucose readings are more than 14mmol/L.

Those with blood ketones greater than 0.6 mmol/L should:

Take a supplemental dose of rapid-acting insulin for correction of blood ketones.

Break their fast

Re-evaluate their ability to safely fast during Ramadan in the future.

Monitoring glucose values while fasting in Ramadan

Glucose sensor or blood glucose checking

Religious authorities agree that checking glucose is allowed even during fasting.

Checking glucose levels can prevent hypo episodes and keep you safe if you decide to fast.



An explanation of the symptoms of hypoglycaemia, hypoglycaemia awareness and advice on the management of hypoglycaemia can be found [here](#).

Top Tips for Festival Meals

Traditionally the fast is broken (Iftar) after sunset and begins with the eating of dates and drinking water.



Suhoor: the meal before dawn at the beginning of the fast.

Iftar: the meal at sunset to mark the end of the fast.

The dawn meal (Suhoor) should contain a balance of whole grain sources of starchy carbohydrates as well as some protein and fat to help slow the digestion and help the feeling of fullness last as long as possible into the day.



While the Iftar meal is a celebration time, aim to not overeat.



If you wish to fast, discuss a plan with your diabetes team.



Dates contain natural sugar and will need insulin.

Drink plenty of water and sugar-free drinks though out the evening. (non fasting hours) Avoid caffeinated drinks such as fizzy drinks, tea and coffee.



Keep sensible portions in mind and follow the same guidelines for healthy eating that you do the rest of the year with an emphasis on whole grains, lean sources of meat, fish and poultry, small amounts of heart-healthy fats and limit added sugars.

Healthy Suhoor options for Ramadan

Avocados with eggs (boiled, poached or omelet's) or salmon.

Plain Greek Yogurt with blueberries and cinnamon.

Ful Medames (a middle eastern breakfast dish made of lentils or fava



Whole wheat toast with peanut butter.

A small serving of sliced fruit.



Whole wheat roti/ chapati, flatbread or slice of bread and eggs with 1-2 teaspoon of oil.

Get involved in traditions and help in making the food/snacks. You can learn about food and cooking skills.



Try new healthy recipes for celebration foods, such as chicken or falafel wraps, cut up vegetables such as peppers, carrots or cucumber, and find other different ways to enjoy the day with your friends and family.

Tips For Being Active

Children and young people should aim to be active for at least 60 minutes every day, including during festival periods. This will also help to reduce glucose levels and help insulin to work better.

60 min+



Go for a morning walk or do a workout at home with weights or steps. Even doing chores is a good way to be active.



You could walk to and from the mosque with family members or friends.