7 vital fasting tips for people with diabetes

Expert advises on safe blood sugar monitoring

Gulf News · 23 Feb 2026 · 4 · BY ASHWANI KUMAR Chief Reporter

Fasting during Ramadan can be safe for many people living with diabetes but with careful planning, medical supervision and smart dietary choices.



Dr Ihab Eltayeb, Consultant Endocrinologist at Prime Hospital, Dubai, advises that personalised guidance is essential to prevent dangerous blood sugar fluctuations during the holy month."Fasting with diabetes requires planning, awareness and medical supervision," Dr Eltayeb told Gulf News.
"With proper precautions, balanced nutrition, medication adjustments and regular monitoring, many individuals with stable diabetes can observe Ramadan safely."
Here are seven essential tips:

- 1. Schedule a pre-Ramadan medical assessment: Patients should consult their physician before Ramadan. Reviewing blood sugar control, medications, insulin doses and overall health help determine whether fasting is safe.
- 2. Adjust medications under medical supervision: Insulin or oral medication timing may need modification to prevent hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) or hyperglycemia (high blood sugar). Changes should only be made under a doctor's guidance.
- 3. Know when not to fast: Individuals with poorly controlled diabetes, frequent hypoglycemia, advanced complications, pregnancy or severe illness may be advised against fasting.
- 4. Monitor blood sugar regularly: Checking glucose during fasting does not break the fast. Regular monitoring, especially mid-morning, midafternoon, and two hours after Iftar helps detect risky highs or lows early.
- 5. Recognise warning signs: Symptoms such as dizziness, sweating, confusion, excessive thirst, blurred vision, or palpitations may indicate blood sugar imbalance. If blood sugar drops below safe levels or rises excessively, the fast should be stopped immediately to prevent complications.
- 6. Balanced, low-glycemic foods: Complex carbohydrates such as whole grains and oats, along with lean proteins, healthy fats and fibre-rich foods, provide sustained energy and help prevent sudden sugar drops during the day. Avoid sugary and heavily processed food items to prevent sudden spikes and crashes.
- 7. End the fast wisely, stay hydrated: At Iftar, start with moderate portions including vegetables, lean protein and whole grains. Limit fried foods, sweets and sweetened drinks. Adequate hydration between Iftar and Suhoor is essential.

Dr Eltayeb noted that fasting decisions should always be personalised. "Patients are encouraged to seek personalised advice from their healthcare provider to ensure a safe and healthy Ramadan."