

Preparation of diabetics for Ramadan fasting

DR SHAHJADA SELIM

Fasting during Ramadan is a great worship. But it may be challenging for some people living with chronic medical conditions like diabetes. Although Islam accepts valid reason for not fasting, some people focus on fasting without prior preparation and consultation with doctors making the condition more challenging. However, with appropriate preparation and changing schedule for medication, many diabetics can perform fasting without any complication.

During assessment by doctors, the patients and family should receive the necessary education concerning self-care, including signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia (a condition when blood sugar falls below normal), blood glucose monitoring, meal planning,

physical activity, medication administration and management of acute complications. The effect of fasting during Ramadan on rates of hypoglycemia in patients with diabetes is not known with certainty.

Patients with type 1 diabetes (childhood diabetes treated with insulin) who have a history of recurrent hypoglycemia or who are poorly controlled are at very high risk for developing severe hypoglycemia.

On the other hand, an excessive reduction in the insulin dosage in these patients may place them at risk for hyperglycemia (high sugar in blood) and its complication e.g. diabetic ketoacidosis (when excess ketone body, a kind of acid accumulates in blood). Limitation of fluid or dehydration can make it more complicated.



Hypo- and hyperglycemia may also occur in patients with type 2 diabetes (adult onset diabetes) but generally less frequently and with less severe consequences compared with patients with type 1 diabetes. Very

elderly patients with type 2 diabetes may be at especially high risk.

It is strongly recommended that patients specially who are at risk should monitor their blood glucose levels during fasting and can

take insulin if blood sugar level shows high. Muslim scholars recommended that blood tests for glucose monitoring and taking insulin do not invalidate the fasting of Ramadan.

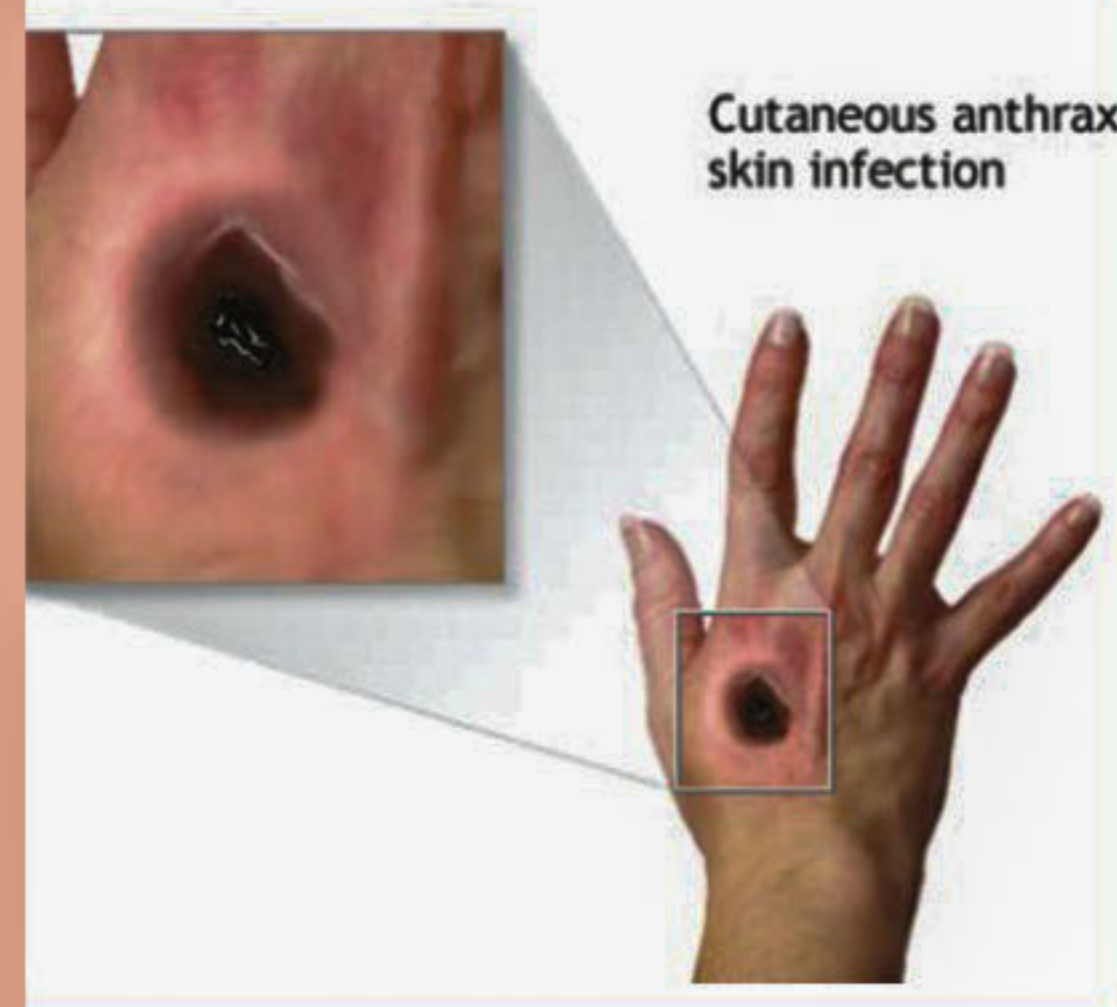
All patients should under-

stand that they must always and immediately end their fast if hypoglycemia occurs. Fasting should also be broken if blood glucose reaches 3.9 mmol/l in the first few hours after the start of the fasting.

A patient's decision to fast should be made after ample discussion with his/her physician concerning the risks involved. Patients who wish to fast should undergo pre-Ramadan assessment and receive appropriate education and instructions related to physical activity, meal planning, glucose monitoring, dosage, timing of medications. Close follow-up is essential to reduce the risk for development of complications.

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PREVENT ANTHRAX



Don't be panicked, stay cautioned

DR MD RAJIB HOSSAIN

Anthrax, a potential biological weapon has come-back again. Medical authorities of Government of Bangladesh yesterday confirmed clinically the presence of the disease in 38 persons at Shahjadpur upazila of Sirajgonj district. However, laboratory confirmation of the sample is expected to be ensured by this week, informed the Director, Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), Prof Mahmudur Rahman. He advised people not to be panicked, to report immediately and take immediate treatment if such condition arises further.

Civil surgeon of Sirajgonj Dr Nurul Islam said that a total 38 people has been treated for anthrax after seeing the signs and symptoms of it. They all have a common contact history with two sick cattle that might be infected with anthrax causing bacterium. Clinically they appeared to be anthrax. All 38 people are affected with cutaneous anthrax (anthrax manifesting in skin) which is rarely fatal if not treated. It is rarely transmissible from human to human.

Anthrax is caused by a spore forming bacterium called *Bacillus anthracis*. Humans can become infected with anthrax by handling products from infected animals usually cattle or by breathing in anthrax spores from infected animal products (like wool, for example). People also can become infected with gastrointestinal anthrax by eating undercooked meat from infected animals.

Cutaneous (on the skin) anthrax infection that possibly occurred in Sirajgonj was transmitted through skin contact with infected cattle. It is shown up as a boil-like skin lesion that eventually forms an ulcer with a black center called eschar. It begins as an irritating and itchy skin lesion or blister that is dark and usually concentrated as a black dot, somewhat resembling bread mold. It is a painless ulcer that generally forms within the site of spore penetration between 2 and 5 days after exposure.

Experts advised to take following precautions in order to prevent anthrax from spreading from animal to human.

- Avoid contact with sick animals.
- If any cattle become sick, report immediately to the local livestock office and seek treatment.
- Do not eat sick animal's meat as traditional cooking temperature cannot kill anthrax spore properly.
- If any sick animal die, there should be utmost precaution taken to bury it. It should not be left open in a place or drop into a river, lake or pond. In addition, traditional burying process cannot clear out the germ and may act as a source of transmission. It should be buried in very deep hole and sterilise the place with proper medicine.
- If you notice any blister after handling sick animals, report immediately to the local health complex. Treatment is highly effective in case of cutaneous anthrax. The government healthcare facility providers ensured the reserve of medicine for treatment.
- If any area has been reported to have anthrax infection, immediately check every animal's vaccination status and give anthrax vaccine if not given recently.
- Properly sterilise the slaughtering place with commonly used oxidising agents such as peroxides, ethylene oxide, chlorine dioxide and liquid bleach products containing sodium hypochlorite.

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HEALTH TIPS

Who needs early screening for colorectal cancer

The general rule is that most people do not need to be screened for colorectal cancer until the age of 50. But for some who meet certain criteria, earlier screening is recommended.

The American Academy of Family Physicians suggests you may be a candidate for earlier colorectal cancer screening if:

- You have a previous history of polyps or colorectal cancer.
- Other people in your family have had colorectal cancer or polyps.
- You have had Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis diagnosed by a doctor.
- You have an inherited colon cancer syndrome.
- Your diet largely consists of foods that are high in fat and low in fiber.



Soothing itchy skin

Itchy skin can be a major annoyance, whether it stems from an allergy, an irritant or plain old dry skin. Here are the expert's suggestions for managing itchy skin:

- Do not scratch; trim your fingernails short to avoid the temptation and help prevent infection.
- Sleep in lightweight, loose and cool pajamas.
- Soak in a lukewarm bath, and follow up with a rich moisturiser.
- Place a cold compress on itchy skin.
- Avoid exposing skin to too much heat and humidity, such as a lengthy hot shower.
- Consult a skin specialist for medication.

Prevent teeth from dental carries

Dental caries is the destruction of teeth by bacteria. It causes decay and cavities, and affect all ages especially children and young adults.

Dental caries/tooth decay requires the simultaneous presence of three factors to develop: Plaque bacteria, sugar or carbohydrate food and a vulnerable tooth surface.

Early caries may not have any symptoms. Later, when the decay has eaten through the enamel, the teeth may be sensitive to sweet foods or to hot and cold foods and drinks. There may be other complications like discomfort or pain, fractured tooth, inability to bite down on tooth.

Treatment can help prevent tooth damage from leading to cavities. Treatment may involve: Fillings, Crowns, Root canals.

Preventing dental caries can be relatively easy by eliminating the causes of tooth decay by reducing the amount of plaque and bacteria in the mouth, and strengthening the teeth's defenses. The following tips might help your teeth from decaying.

- Reduce the number of times each day that you eat carbohydrates or drink sugary drinks. Eat a well-balanced diet that limits sugary foods.
- Fluoride is the best resource available for strengthening and protecting teeth from decay and healing early acid damage by replacing the lost minerals.

Brushing with a fluoride toothpaste is the most easy way of delivering fluoride to the teeth.

Brush regularly at least twice a day after meal and floss daily to remove plaque from between teeth and below the gum-line.

Prescription mouthwashes can help prevent

decay by reducing the number of bacteria in the mouth. Chewing sugarless gums can also help preventing cavities.

In children, new molars can be protected from dental caries by dental sealants as soon as they emerge. Sealants can help adults too, but they are only effective against tooth decay on the biting surfaces of molars and premolars.

Have dental checkups and professional teeth cleaning at regular interval. A dentist will detect minor problems before becoming major ones.

The write-up is compiled by Dr Kazi Md Niazur Rahman, Dental Surgeon working at Dhaka Dental College and Hospital. E-mail: dr_niaz@yahoo.com



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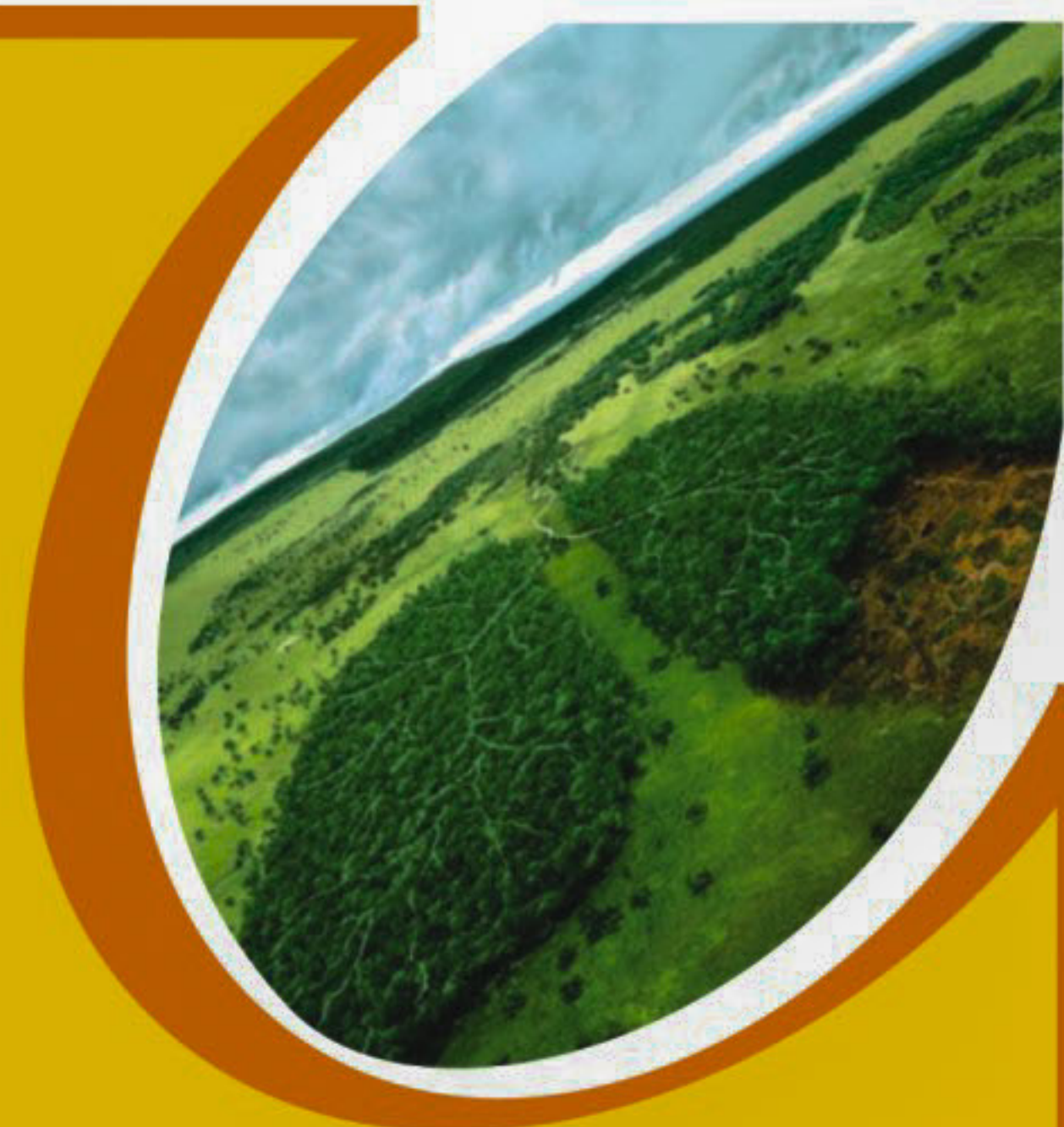
Keep away from dust & smoke

Avoid smoking

Use mask during cleaning your home

Maintain a hygienic life

Consult your Doctor



Courtesy...

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