

RAJAB – ACEDB declared Dia–Ramadan awareness month

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Rajab is the 7th lunar month in the Islamic calendar. It comes 2 months before the start of Ramadan. People were made aware about Ramadan by the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in the mosque on his 1st Friday khutba of Rajab. The Association of Clinical Endocrinologist and Diabetologist of Bangladesh (ACEDB) officially declared the month of Rajab as the Dia-Ramadan awareness month and 1st Friday of Rajab as the Dia-Ramadan awareness day with the objective of “Safe Ramadan fasting” for people with Diabetes. ACEDB inaugurated the day and month on 27th January 2023, the first Friday of Rajab in Dhaka club after Jumah prayer, in a prestigious gathering by the secretary of health, service division in presence of the Director of Non Communicable Disease Control (NCDC), Islamic scholars, high officials, teachers and chairmen of different Departments of the Medical University, doctors, postgraduate students, nurses, patients and dedicated members of ACEDB who came from different areas of the country. Distinguished guests highly appreciated ACEDB activities. Our DG health, in collaboration with NCDC and ACEDB, notified doctors to “prepare the patients for safe Ramadan fasting”. They also prepared government info for general people “Consult your doctor for safe Ramadan fasting” which was circulated on different mobile networks. This is a milestone in the history of the Dia-Ramadan awareness program in Bangladesh which we are conducting for the last 20 years. Probably this is the first time in the world.

Why do we need to start an awareness program 2-3 months before Ramadan? Because diabetes is very common in our population. According to IDF 2021, more than 13.1 million people are suffering from diabetes. More than 95% are type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM). Our uncontrolled DM is more than 80%. ABC goal is less than 2%. Our people with diabetes is neglected, less cared and associated with multiple chronic complications and high plasma glucose. The majority don't test blood glucose regularly.

Various epidemiological surveys including our nationwide survey in 2021 showed that more than 80% of T2DM patients fast even during the Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. But unfortunately, only 48% of patients visited for a pre-Ramadan checkup. Among the study subject, 36.9% believed

finger pricking would break the fast and 18% said they wouldn't break the fast despite hypoglycemia.¹ Various studies showed that hypoglycemia is more common in Ramadan fasting but pre-Ramadan education studies revealed less hypoglycemia in educated and motivated patients.² Well-prepared patients can avoid hyper/hypoglycemic risk during Ramadan. Repeated long-term awareness programs are essential to improve the situation.

ACEDB – the beloved association of Endocrinologists of Bangladesh, from its inception in May 2016, started the Dia-Ramadan awareness symposium among doctors. They are trying to aware people; educate health care professionals and incorporate Imams and Khatibs for this important medico-religious issue. Alhamdulillah, the situation is improving.

This year ACEDB extend this program all over the country, which we couldn't perform in the last 20 years. Now ACEDB is the pioneer organization in this field.

Programs of ACEDB 2023:

- a. Awareness:
 - i. Distributing posters and leaflets all over the country
 - ii. TV program
- b. Education
 - i. Patient education
 - ii. Junior doctors' education in the ACEDB office
- c. Discussion
 - i. Imam and Khatib of Dhaka city in the ACEDB office
 - ii. Discussion with media

ACEDB – the Voice of Endocrinologists of Bangladesh is a registered non-political, non-profitable, voluntary, and charitable scientific association for awareness, care, education, and research in the diabetes and endocrine field. ACEDB is trying to uphold professional dignity and integrity. Long live ACEDB. Welcome Ramadan.

References

1. Fariduddin M, Gaffar AJ, Selim S, Islam AA, Sultana N, Hasan AK, et al. Knowledge, attitude, and practices of Ramadan fasting in adult type 2 DM: A nationwide survey in Bangladesh in 2021. *J Assoc Clin Endocrinol Diabetol Bangladesh* 2022; 1 (2):50-54.
2. Fariduddin M, Islam AKMA, Gaffar MAJ, Khan MA, Alam MJ, Hasan M, et al. Effects of pre-Ramadan education on safe Ramadan fasting of people with type 2 diabetes. *J Assoc Clin Endocrinol Diabetol Bangladesh* 2022; 1 (1): 09-14.