



**General Authority For Health Services
for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi**

**Al-Rahba Hospital
Department of Pharmacy**



Favism (G6PDH Deficiency)

Favism is a hereditary abnormality in the activity of an erythrocyte (red blood cell) enzyme. This enzyme, glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G-6-PD), is essential for assuring a normal life span for red blood cells, and for oxidizing processes. This enzyme deficiency may provoke the sudden destruction of red blood cells and lead to hemolytic anemia with jaundice following the intake of fava beans and various drugs .

Prevalence

The deficit is most prevalent in Africa (affecting up to 20% of the population), but is common also around the Mediterranean (4% - 30%) and Southeast Asia.

Diagnosis

You can determine whether you are G-6-PD deficient by a simple blood test.

Symptoms

- Sudden rise of body temperature .
- Yellow coloring of skin and mucous membrane.
- Dark yellow-orange urine.
- Pallor, fatigue, general deterioration of physical conditions.
- Heavy, fast breathing.
- Weak, rapid pulse.

Risks

With G-6-PD deficiency you can have a perfectly normal life, provided you avoid the drugs and foodstuffs included in our [To Avoid list](#). It is therefore of great importance to learn whether you or your baby suffer from the deficiency, so that you can watch your diet and drug intake, and warn your physician or pediatrician.

What to do in case of hemolytic crisis

1. Upon detecting the symptoms listed above, you should either call your physician or pediatrician, or go directly to the nearest hospital.
2. Avoid the intake of any drugs.
3. You would most probably be requested to list all foodstuffs and drugs taken in the preceding 48 hours, so try to recall and list them.

Tips for parents

Any boy/girl suffering from Favism should be informed of his deficiency so he can help himself avoid the intake of the forbidden foodstuff in various situations where he is not under your supervision (such as school). You should also inform school supervisors and, where applicable, also the school caterers who provide school lunch. Best is to carry with you the [To Avoid list](#) and show it to all those who may treat your boy.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can it be cured?

Since it is inherited, there is no cure. The best therapy is simply to avoid the prohibited drugs and foodstuffs.

In case of a hemolytic crisis, the most effective therapy is blood transfusion

In areas where G-6-PD deficiency is common, care must be taken to avoid giving G-6-PD deficient blood to the patient.

How do I get G6PD Deficiency?

G6PD Deficiency is an inherited condition; therefore, you can not get it from being in contact with someone who has G6PD Deficiency.

What precautions can I take to ensure my health living with G6PD Deficiency?

Do not take any of the medications listed in this brochure (or medications similar to them) without consulting a physician. Also avoid fava beans (and the plant).

What are the symptoms of hemolytic anemia?

You will begin to feel tired, short of breath, have an irregular heart beat, and may have dark orange urine.

Can I donate blood if I have G6PD Deficiency?

No! Currently the Red Cross does not accept G6PD deficient blood.

How can I test the level of my enzyme deficiency?

It is a simple blood test. Inquire with your physician.

Drugs and Foodstuff To Avoid

Food

Any food containing Fava Beans.

Vitamins

Vitamin K.

Analgesics / Antipyretics

Acetanilide, Acetophenetidin, Amidopyrine, Antipyrine, Aspirin, Phenacetin, Probenicid, Pyramidone.

Antimalarials

Chloroquine, Hydroxychloroquine, Mepacrine, Pamaquine, Pentaquine, Primaquine, Quinine.

Cytotoxic / Antibacterial

Chloramphenicol, Co-trimoxazole, Furazolidone, Furmethonol, Nalidixic acid, Neosarsphenamine, Nitrofurantoin, Nitrofurazone, Cephalosporins, Penicillins, Quinolones.

Sulfonamides / Sulfones

Dapsone, Sulfacetamide, Sulfamethoxypyrimidine, Sulfanilamide, Sulfapyridine, Sulfasalazine, Sulfisoxazole, or other Sulfa containing drugs.

Cardiovascular Drugs

Procainamide, Quinidine

Anti-Emetic / Neuroleptic Drugs

Phenothiazine derivatives.

Anti-Histaminic Drugs

Antazoline.

Anti-Hypertensive Drugs

ALL Dopaminergic Drugs
Methyldopa.

Anti-Tuberculosis Drugs

P.A.S. (Para-aminosalicylic acid)

Miscellaneous

Alpha-methyldopa, Ascorbic acid, Dimercaprol (BAL), Hydralazine, Mestranol, Methylene blue, Naphthalene, Niridazole, Phenylhydrazine, Toluidine blue, Urate oxidase, Pyridium.

Prepared & Approved by: Patient & Family Education Committee

Reference available upon request

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