

# **Chapter 10**

## **DIABETES MELLITUS, FREE RADICALS AND OXIDATIVE STRESS**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Diabetes, a chronic metabolic disorder, is an important health problem increasingly continues worldwide. It is characterized by absolute or relative deficiencies in insulin secretion. Various complications including both macro and micro-vascular dysfunctions develop as a result of metabolic disorders in diabetes. Oxidative stress is closely related to numerous diseases, including any imbalance between reactive oxygen species and antioxidant defense capacity of the body, aging and cancer, cardiovascular diseases, without excepting diabetes and diabetic complications. Although the exact contribution is not entirely clear, oxidative stress is known to increase in the case of diabetes. The results of clinical and animal studies point out a large number of interrelated mechanisms which increase the production of reactive oxygen and nitrogen species or reduce the antioxidant defense mechanisms in diabetic patients. These changes, which are the result of diabetic complications, can bring about a biomolecular level of destruction in cell organelles and membranes.

### **FREE RADICALS**

Free radicals are atoms and molecules bearing an unpaired electron in the outer orbital. Since these molecules are unstable; Cellular proteins are highly reactive radicals that can stimulate harmful oxidation reactions in cellular proteins, lipids or DNA, distorting cellular functions and causing oxidative stress (Cooper, 2002; Clarkson&Thompson2000). Free radicals are formed during metabolic cases in the organism; they are formed in the mitochondrial respiratory chain in the cell or due to various external factors such as radiation, drugs and harmful chemicals just like formed especially by phagocytes outside the cell. A very important part of these radicals is caused by oxygen and nitrogen (Tamer& Al, 2012; Gürdöl&Ademoğlu, 2010). The resulting free radicals are eliminated

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