

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
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127312 - Is Shisha Haram?

the question

Is shisha [water pipe, also known as hookah or hubble-bubble] haram? What if a person does not use any kind of tobacco; rather he uses rosewater? Is it still haram?

Summary of answer

Shisha, argileh and smoking are all evil actions and are haram because of the harm they cause to one's body and wealth. For more, see the detailed answer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is smoking haram in Islam?

There is no doubt that smoking is one of the worst poisons that many people are very keen to consume, not caring about the diseases that it causes, which lead to death in many cases. The World Health Organisation stated, in its 2008 report, that smoking tobacco kills 5.4 million people every year, i.e., approximately 14,000 people every day. Unless urgent measures are taken, tobacco will kill ten million people annually by the year 2020.

In the answers to questions no. [7432](#) and [10922](#) , we have explained that it is haram to cultivate, deal in and consume this evil plant.

Is shisha haram?

The tobacco – as well as jirak (something similar to tobacco) and mu’assal (mild, flavoured tobacco) – which are smoked in the shisha are no different from regular cigarette tobacco that is rolled up in papers; in fact it contains bad ingredients that are not found in cigarettes. It says on the website of the Bahrain Anti-Smoking Society:

Components of shisha

These components are no different from the components of cigarette tobacco and its smoke, as it contains no less than four thousand toxic substances, the most significant of which are: nicotine, carbon monoxide, tar, heavy metals, radioactive substances, carcinogens, agricultural chemicals, insecticides and many other toxic substances.

Some tobacco companies claim that all or most of the tar is removed from shisha tobacco. A number of flavouring substances, the components of which are not known, are also added to shisha tobacco, the extent of the harmful effects of which we do not know. What is said about smoking by means of the shisha or argileh with tobacco or jirak or mu’assal being free of danger is not true at all. A four-year study in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has proven that mu’assal is in fact pure tobacco with a large amount of dyes, colours and flavourings that have been mixed without any attention to health regulations, and it proved that it causes various kinds of disease and cancer.

Jirak contains 15% tobacco, mixed with honey, fruits and chemical additives that are cooked and fermented.”

Is argileh or shisha different from smoking?

Some naive people think that consuming this plant by means of the argileh or [shisha](#) is permissible

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(halal), because the smoke passes through the water of the argileh pipe. But this is far from correct. Experts say:

1. One session of smoking the argileh is equivalent to smoking at least ten cigarettes.
2. Partial burning of the mu'assal increases the toxic substances in the argileh.
3. Use of the argileh by a number of people increases the transmission of contagious diseases between them.
4. Water does not filter out the toxic carcinogenic substances contained in argileh tobacco.

On the website of the Bahrain Anti-Smoking Society it says:

“Many people believe that smoking shisha is less serious than smoking cigarettes, because of the prevalent belief that when the smoke passes through the water in the shisha pipe, it removes harmful substances from the smoke and thus reduces the harm that results from smoking shisha. The error of this notion has been proven by means of analysing the smoke that comes out of the mouth of the shisha smoker, which has been shown to contain the same harmful and carcinogenic substances that are present in cigarette smoke.

Side effects of smoking shisha

Studies have also proven that smoking shisha:

1. Causes addiction
2. Reduces lung function and causes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, which limits the person's ability to engage in any physical exertion.
3. It leads to cancer of the lung, mouth, oesophagus and stomach.

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4. It leads to a high concentration of carbon monoxide in the blood.
5. It leads to a decrease in fertility in both males and females.
6. It contributes to an increase in the spread of pulmonary tuberculosis in shisha users.
7. In women who smoke shisha during pregnancy, it leads to lower birth weight in the foetus; it also exposes the foetus to respiratory disease in the future or to sudden crib death after birth.
8. Offensive odours are spread when exhaling and on one's clothing. And it has other effects such as making the voice hoarse, causing reddening in the eyes, and leading to the appearance of wrinkles in the skin and face, especially at an early age.
9. This is in addition to the fact that smoking shisha is regarded as one of the primary contaminants of air in homes and near coffee shops where there are a large number of smokers."

Hence the prohibition of using tobacco by means of the argileh or shisha is definite.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraheem (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about the difference between smoking a regular, rolled-up cigarette and smoking jirak in the shisha and so on.

The Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) responded by stating that smoking is haram, then he said:

Once this is proven, it makes no difference whether it is smoked in a regular cigarette or by some other means, such as this foul shisha, and whether the [tobacco is smoked in a pure form](#) or mixed with other things like the jirak. It is still an evil mix. Names do not change facts; if something haram is mixed with something else, it is still haram. In the hadith it says: "At the end of time there will be people who drink alcohol and call it by some other name." Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Albani in al-Sahihah, 414." (Fatawa al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim (12/90)

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The scholars of the Standing Committee said:

Shisha, argileh and smoking are all evil actions and are haram, because of the harm they cause to one's body and wealth. Allah, may He be exalted, said, describing our Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): "he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibat (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabaith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods)" [al-A'raf 7:157].

It is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "There should be neither harm nor reciprocating harm." So it is not permissible to use these things or to sell them or to distribute them. (Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abd-Allah Al al-Shaykh; Shaykh 'Abd-Allah ibn Ghadyan; Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan; Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd from Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah, 26/351)

Is shisha haram without tobacco?

With regard to your question about using shisha without any tobacco and using only rosewater instead, this is something that we do not know of and we cannot imagine that it exists. What is the combustible substance? What are you going to inhale? The ruling on a thing is to be based on the way it is understood, so we hope that you will explain this matter.

And Allah knows best.