

## Hookah Fact Sheet

(Names: Hookah, Waterpipe, Narghile, Narghila, Shisha, Sheesha, and Hubbly-bubbly)

### What is a Hookah?



A hookah is a device used to smoke flavored tobacco. The hookah device consists of four parts:

- A base, or smoke chamber, which is partially filled with water
- A bowl, which contains tobacco and the heating source
- A pipe that connects the bowl to the base and dips into the water in the base
- A hose, a second tube in the pipe that does not dip into the water but opens into air in the base and allows users to inhale the hookah smoke

### History

- Hookah use is an ancient form of tobacco use. The device has been used for centuries in the Middle East and Asia to smoke tobacco. Hookahs can also be used to smoke other substances such as marijuana.

### Facts and Risks Associated With Hookah Use

- Hookah users are exposed to nicotine, the substance in tobacco that causes *addictive* behavior. (World Health Organization)
- Smoking a hookah for an hour exposes the user to 100 to 200 times the volume of smoke inhaled from one cigarette. (World Health Organization)
- Recent studies have found that hookah smokers actually inhale more nicotine than do cigarette smokers because of the massive volume of smoke they inhale. (An Emerging Deadly Trend – Waterpipe Tobacco Use)
- Smoking from a hookah is just as dangerous as smoking a cigarette. Despite the evidence, hookah smokers generally believe that it is less harmful than cigarette smoke. (Mayo Clinic)
- Even after passing through the water, the tobacco smoke produced still contains high levels of toxic compounds, including carbon monoxide, heavy metals and cancer-causing chemicals (carcinogens). (Mayo Clinic)
- Hookah tobacco use carries many of the same risks as cigarette smoking, including: being linked to lung cancer, other lung diseases, respiratory disease, heart disease, clogged arteries, and oral and bladder cancer. (An Emerging Deadly Trend – Waterpipe Tobacco Use)
- Hookah tobacco smoking is also linked to other unique risks not associated with cigarette smoking. For example, infectious diseases including tuberculosis (which can infect the lungs or other parts of the body), aspergillus (a fungus that can cause serious lung infections), and helicobacter (which can cause stomach ulcers) may be spread by pipe sharing or the uncontrolled, manual preparation of the tobacco used. ([www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org))
- Secondhand smoke from waterpipes is a mixture of tobacco smoke in addition to smoke from the fuel and therefore poses a serious risk for non-smokers. (Journal of Tobacco Control)
- In a recent study, teens were eight times more likely to experiment with cigarettes if they'd ever used a hookah. (An Emerging Deadly Trend – Waterpipe Tobacco Use)
- Hookah users ingest about 100 times more lead from hookah smoke than from a cigarette. (City of Berkeley Tobacco Prevention Program)
- Hookah smoke is capable of causing breakage of chromosomes, and damaging DNA, thereby causing mutations or cancer. (City of Berkeley Tobacco Prevention Program)

## Chemicals Found in Hookah Smoke vs. Cigarette Smoke

| Chemical                   | Yield from 1g hookah tobacco | Yield from cigarette smoke, 1g tobacco | Multiple of average cigarette smoke value |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| "Tar" mg                   | 802                          | Range: 1-27<br>Average: 11.2           | 100-fold                                  |
| Nicotine, mg               | 2.96                         | Range: 0.1-2<br>Average: 0.77          | 4-fold                                    |
| Carbon Monoxide, CO mg     | 143                          | Range: 1-22<br>Average: 12.6           | 11-fold                                   |
| Chrysene (tumor initiator) | 0.112                        | 0.004-0.041                            | 5-fold                                    |

Journal of Food and Toxicology, 2005

### Misconceptions:

- It is a *myth* that the water in the hookah removes toxins from tobacco. The reality is smoking from a hookah is worse than a cigarette because charcoal is used to burn the tobacco in a hookah. With a hookah you are smoking tobacco and carbon monoxide from the charcoal. (World Health Organization)
- It is a *myth* that hookah smoking is safer than smoking cigarettes because the hookah smoke is filtered through water before it is inhaled. (Journal of Pediatrics)

### Trends

- Currently, hookah bars and cafes are popping up across the United States — fueled by the growing popularity of hookah smoking among teens and young adults.
- Hookah bars are growing in popularity in the U.S. especially among 18-to 24-year-olds, becoming the first new tobacco use trend of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Hookah's have an appeal similar to the sweeter, candy-flavored cigarettes and tobacco products that the tobacco industry has begun to market to young adults. Youth appear to be more attracted to these flavors than adults.
- Hookahs are marketed as being a safe alternative to cigarettes.

### State Regulations and Policy

- According to Michigan Law (Act 31 of 1915), the selling, giving or furnishing of tobacco products to minors illegal. It is also illegal to purchase, possess, or use tobacco products by minors in a public place.

### What Can Parents and the Community Do?

- Disapprove of tobacco use. Studies have shown that adult, especially parent, disapproval of tobacco use has a positive affect on kids not using tobacco.
- Talk about the risks of tobacco use, especially hookahs since there is lots of misinformation.
- Know if your kids' friends use tobacco. Talk about ways to refuse tobacco.

### Resources:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/hookah/AN01265>

<http://www.cancer.org>

[http://www.lungusa2.org/embargo/slati/Trendalert\\_Waterpipes.pdf](http://www.lungusa2.org/embargo/slati/Trendalert_Waterpipes.pdf)

<http://www.arabacc.org/>



Home-made Hookah.