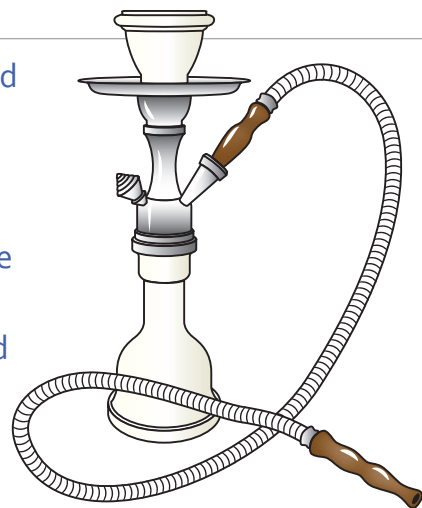


Hookah Pipes

The hookah pipe is a water pipe that originated in India and Persia over 500 years ago. Hookah is also known by many other names such as: hubble-bubble, narghile, shisha and goza. Although hookah pipes vary in size and shape, most have three pieces: a bowl, pipe and hose. Hookah pipes are often used in group settings, and the same mouthpiece may be shared among users. Specially formulated flavored tobacco is typically used in hookah pipes. There are also electronic hookahs that use nicotine liquid. Hookah pipe smoking is **not** safer than cigarette smoking.



High school and college aged students have shown growing interest in hookah. Forty percent of surveyed college students have reported ever having smoked the hookah in their lifetimes. Teens are eight times more likely to experiment with cigarettes if they have ever used a hookah pipe. Hookah pipe smokers may inhale as much smoke during one session as a cigarette smoker would inhale from 100 or more cigarettes.

Is hookah pipe smoking dangerous?

Hookah smoking is just as harmful, if not more harmful, than cigarette smoking. One session of hookah pipe smoking usually lasts about 45 minutes to an hour and exposes the user to more chemicals and carbon monoxide than cigarette smoking. Secondhand smoke from the hookah pipe is extremely dangerous because there are two sources of smoke: the tobacco itself, as well as the hot coals used to burn the tobacco.

What about electronic hookah?

New forms of electronic hookah smoking, including steam stones and hookah pens, have been introduced.

These products are battery powered and turn liquid containing nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals into a vapor, which is inhaled. Fruit and candy flavors increase the appeal of hookahs to young people.

What are the health risks of hookah smoking?

Hookah smokers are exposed to many toxic chemicals, some of which are known to cause cancer. Since hookah pipe smoking delivers the same amount of nicotine as cigarette smoking, just like cigarettes, exposure to nicotine from these pipes can lead to addiction resulting in regular tobacco use. Other health risks include:

- Increased risk for many cancers including oral cancer, lung cancer, stomach cancer, cancer of the esophagus
- Reduced lung function and decreased fertility for both men and women (ability to become pregnant)
- Increased risk of heart disease and stroke
- Sharing a hookah may increase the risk of transmitting tuberculosis and other illnesses, as well as viruses such as herpes or hepatitis, with the use of a contaminated shared pipe and mouthpiece.

Pregnant women should avoid all tobacco exposure including hookahs. Exposure to tobacco and nicotine in the womb and after birth increases the risk for many health problems in infants and children including stillbirth, prematurity, low birth weight, sudden infant death syndrome, wheezing and asthma, learning disabilities, and cancer.

Why is hookah use so popular?

A major reason why people smoke hookah is the belief that it is a healthier alternative to other forms of tobacco or nicotine use. College age students engage in hookah for the social aspects: time spent together with friends, fun associated with the activity and the pleasant atmosphere. Hookah smoking is not a safer alternative to cigarette smoke. Hookah use is harmful and should not be used.

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Rx Action Steps

- ✓ Stop using the hookah pipe.
- ✓ Do not substitute the hookah with cigarettes, cigars, or any other tobacco or nicotine product.
- ✓ Avoid exposure to second hand smoke from any source, including the hookah.
- ✓ If trying to stop makes you uncomfortable and you are having symptoms of nicotine withdrawal or cravings to smoke, talk to your healthcare provider for help in staying smoke-free. For more information on vaping, nicotine dependence and help in stopping smoking, see the ATS Patient Information Series at www.thoracic.org/patients.

Healthcare Provider's Contact Number:

Resources

American Thoracic Society

- <http://www.thoracic.org/patients/>

American Lung Association

- <https://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/facts-about-hookah.html>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention (2011). Hookahs.

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/tobacco_industry/hookahs/

U.S. Federal Drug Administration

- <https://www.fda.gov/tobaccoproducts/labeling/productingredientscomponents/ucm482575.htm>

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