

Hookah vs cigarettes essay sample

[Health & Medicine](#), [Addiction](#)



There are numerous Arab families that have hookahs in their homes; they constantly use them as an amusement or a pastime in front of the television or as a way to relax. Nowadays, there are many legal products that anybody can buy that are very harmful and addictive for the human body. It is important for people to have a better knowledge of these substances in order to decrease the use of these substances. This is a relevant subject because a lot of people get sick and die from tobacco use. There are many debates going today about the dangers of hookah smoking and cigarettes. Thus, the question asked is: is hookah smoking more dangerous than cigarettes and do they have the exact same ingredients in them? Cigarette smoking is more common around the world compared to hookah smoking. Most people know that smoking cigarettes is harmful. A product that is very similar to cigarettes is hookah. Because hookah is not as popular as cigarettes, most people are not aware of the harm of hookah smoking. Both cigarettes and hookah smokers inhale tobacco smoke; the difference is the way it is inhaled. Smoking tobacco leads to tar covering the lungs that eventually causes many different kinds of cancer and heart diseases (“Harmful Health Effects”).

It is important to know more about this subject because people still smoke after being made aware of the consequences. Hookah is usually used collectively with a group of friends. It is often smoked in a unique way; smokers sit down or lean back on their chairs, couches, or even floors to make themselves comfortable. There is a special type of tobacco used in hookahs made of molasses, fruit, and other flavor extracts. The smokers have a large variety of flavors that they can choose from so that the smoke

inhaled has a sweet taste of the flavor of their personal choice. Hookah smoking is designed to be smoked in a peaceful way (“The Hazards of Hookah”). A hookah smoking session can last for hours, in other words, hookah smokers inhale a lot more smoke than cigarette smokers. This goes back to the proposed question; is hookah smoking more dangerous than cigarettes and do they have the exact same ingredients in them? The difference between hookah addicts and cigarette addicts is because cigarettes are easy to carry around, a cigarette smoker will carry around a packet of cigarettes everywhere and whenever he feels like smoking, he can just light up a cigarette.

People smoke it constantly during the day. Hookahs are not easily transportable, this means that the smokers are in less contact with their hookahs. The only time hookah users can smoke it is at home or in a hookah bar; hookah users have to wait until they go home to smoke it. The addiction comes from the nicotine, it makes the smokers want more everyday. There is an average of 35 million smokers who try to quit every year and the sad part is that 85 percent of them last less than a week without nicotine in their bodies. If the smokers are used to smoking hookah at home with their friends everyday, they will feel as if they are missing something the day they do not smoke it. Addicted tobacco smokers have nicotine act out in their brains in a bad way. When a tobacco user tries to stop, the need of nicotine leads to many symptoms including bad temper, hunger, sadness, nervousness, and sleeping problems. These symptoms start only hours after the last cigarette smoked. This causes the smokers to instantly have the desire to smoke (USA. gov). These symptoms also exist for the hookah smokers when they

are in need. The difference is that the hookah smokers last more before they need to smoke hookah. Both hookahs and cigarettes are addictive.

Hookah, also known as hubble-bubble has many other nicknames: shisha, boory, goza, nargile and argihile. Waterpipe smoking is an old technique that derives from Asia. Hookah is becoming more and more popular in Europe and North America. There are many worries about its health effects and there are also concerns about its probable causes of addiction. Estimations say that every day, there are about 100 million people smoking hookahs. Ten years ago, young people rarely smoked hookah, this changed radically in the past few years. Data collected from The Global Youth Tobacco Survey shows that out of the 90, 000 teenagers between 13 and 15 asked in the Eastern Mediterranean region, 10% of the girls and 16% of the boys smoke tobacco from hookahs. In the United States, 27% of adolescents between 14 and 18 years old have used hookah at least once in their lives. An undergraduate survey from Virginia Commonwealth University discovered that just under half of the students have smoked hookah and that 20% of the students asked are active consumers of hookah. Hookah smoking is frequently seen to be safer and less addictive than smoking cigarettes because people assume that the smoke inhaled is filtered when it passes through the water.

The World Health Organization does not agree with this idea (“ The Hazards of Hookah”). These statistics are very high and it shows that most people do not know the harmful effects of hookah. Researchers from the American University of Beirut found that hookah smokers breathe in 10 times more

smoke than cigarette smokers. They also found that each mouthful of smoke has about 10 times more smoke than that acquired from a whole cigarette (“The Hazards of Hookah”). After evaluating those smoking patterns, members from the World Health Organization concluded that in a normal hookah-smoking period, a hookah smoker inhales the same amount of smoke as in 100 cigarettes (O’Connor). Data confirms that hookah smoke is found to be less harmful than cigarette smoke.

The nicotine and other dangerous substances found in tobacco smoke are less exposed in hookah smoke than cigarette smoke. However, hookah smokers are being exposed to a lot more smoke, which means that they are contracting elevated amounts of toxins and carcinogens. This gives a higher chance of initial diseases, and cancers. Even though the water filters a little amount of the smoke inhaled, scientists believe that they are still being exposed to a sufficient amount of nicotine to start addiction (“The Hazards of Hookah”). Because hookah smokers inhale more smoke than cigarettes smokers, hookahs are perceived to be more harmful than cigarettes. (“The Hazards of Hookah”)

Researchers examined nicotine and carbon monoxide from a group of cigarette and hookah smokers. They found an average of 78 ng/ml (nanograms/ milliliter) in hookah smokers versus an average of 87 ng/ml for the ones who use cigarettes from saliva samples. Nevertheless the researchers found that the carbon monoxide in the hookah users were two times higher than in the cigarette users. As for tar, researchers found 36 times more tar in hookah smokers than in cigarette smokers (“The Hazards

of Hookah"). A study from UK Pubmed Central measured carbon monoxide in the smoke for both cigarettes and hookahs. The result showed: 0.38 +/- 0.07 (% by volume) in large unfiltered hookahs; 1.40 +/- 0.43 in small-unfiltered hookahs; 0.34 +/- 0.06 in large filtered hookah; 1.36 +/- 0.35 in small filtered hookahs and finally the average cigarette smoke has 0.41 +/- 0.08 % by volume of carbon monoxide.

The study states that large amounts of carbon monoxide are found in the small-unfiltered hookahs while there is no significant change between the filtered and unfiltered hookahs. Hookahs are found to contain more carbon monoxide than cigarettes (KM, GQ, and M). The Hindustan Times says that the amount of nicotine found in 50 cigarettes is equivalent to 30 minutes of hookah. It also says that the tobacco used in hookahs contain 0.05% nicotine and tar. Other sources believe that it is actually much more than that. The one thing that every source agrees on is the damage that smoking tobacco causes. It causes numerous disorders in the body. Hookah smoking produces a wrong feeling of security in people. Many smokers are not aware of the dangers caused by hookah and also believe that using a filter in hookahs is safe. This is not true because it does not remove bad ingredients (Khan).

The use of hookah today is getting more and more popular; they have become fashionable and are frequently consumed in Arab society. Today, many restaurants and cafes offer them. In Kuwait, a national survey showed that 57% of men and 69% of women had already smoked hookah. In Egypt, 22% of the men are current users of hookah. Most users started smoking

hookah by the age of 19. On the other hand, the latest data in the Eastern Mediterranean Region show an enormous number of adolescents smoke hookah on a daily basis. In Syria, statistics show that half of university students have tried hookah and about a quarter of male students commonly use it. In the Eastern Mediterranean Region countries, about 18% of adolescents use tobacco most probable from hookahs. In Israel, 22% of children aged 12 to 18 use waterpipes on a weekly basis. (Eissenberg et al.). (Eissenberg et al.).

Hookah, or shisha as called in other countries, smoking is often considered to be a fun and lighter version of smoking compared to cigarette smoking. A system that uses wood or coal to burn flavored tobacco is used in the U. S. While burning, smoke passes through the tobacco mixture then it cools as it bubbles through the water before being passed through the mouthpiece. Hookah was first discovered and smoked in India in the year 1616 and was supposed to “purify” tobacco smoking. In the 1990s, the hookah regained its popularity when the flavored tobacco was first introduced in the Middle East. The Portuguese had a hookah made uniquely for the Indian Emperor. He was told not to smoke anything but the hookah because they thought the smoke was safe to inhale. (Lee). A lot of people say that smoking hookah is harmless compared to smoking cigarettes, but these beliefs remain unproved.

The number of young consumers of hookah increase every year because people believe these ideas. The government and the laws are not always heavily enforced in prohibiting minors under 18 years old from buying or

smoking hookah just like cigarettes (Lee). The French anti-tobacco agency stated that in a hookah smoking session, smokers inhale the carbon monoxide equivalent between 15 to 50 cigarettes. As for the tar inhaled in a session of hookah, it is equivalent to smoking about 30 to 100 cigarettes (“Shisha Smoking Is More”). 11 percent of high school students from Florida said that they have already tried smoking hookah at least once. Young people do not smoke it because they have a disregard of their health but a lot of people make the mistake of thinking that the water gets out all the toxic elements produced in smoke. The real truth is that the water’s job is to cool the smoke so that it creates a “smoother” sensation (Lee). Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, and India, all of which have a tradition of hookah and use it frequently have completed different studies about this use.

These studies showed that daily use of the hookah smoking that consists of an average of 20g of tobacco per pipe at least once a day, created a nicotine rate of about 10 cigarettes a day. People who smoke the hookah not as often as other people do have a nicotine level of approximately 2 cigarettes per day. It’s known in the whole world that inhaling any type of smoke will cause very harmful lung diseases (Lee). Smoking Hookah is not safer than smoking cigarettes in any way. The tobacco is not different and is not less toxic in a hookah pipe than it is in a cigarette and the water in the hookah does not get rid of all the toxins that are in the tobacco smoke. Hookah users or smokers have a tendency to inhale much more smoke than cigarette smokers do. The more smoke inhaled, the higher the level of nicotine, carbon monoxide and many other toxic chemicals smokers will have (Hurt). The World Health Organization have found that a normal cigarette smoker smokes 8 to 12

puffs which is approximately 0.5 to 0.6 liters of smoke over 5 to 7 minutes. A hookah smoker on the other hand may take up to 200 puffs in one night and each puff is approximately about one liter of smoke which means that every hookah smoking session could be equal to smoking 40 to 400 cigarettes.

There is much evidence that show the different dangers and harmful consequences of smoking Hookah. It contains a lot of toxic elements counting carbon monoxide and other chemicals that cause cancer. People have to know and take in consideration that fact, hookah smokers inhale more smoke which means more carbon monoxide than a normal cigarette smoker and that just like cigarette smokers, hookah users are exposed to many dangerous heart diseases and cancers (Hurt). Carbon monoxide is a gas without color and odor. It is a very dangerous gas for the body; it can cause ruthless damages to the body especially the brain. Data suggests that a hookah holds triple the amount of carbon monoxide compared to cigarettes (Anitei). Hookah smoking can possibly lead to a tobacco addiction because the same amount of nicotine inhaled by a hookah smoker is also inhaled by a cigarette smoker. Pregnant women who smoke hookah may cause a problem to the child. The pipes that the bars and coffee shops use may not be cleaned the right way, and this can spread contagious diseases. Just like cigarettes, the hookah affects even the people sitting around the smoke.

This smoke can cause to serious health problems even though people did not have any contact with it (Hurt). Waterpipe smoking delivers a large amount

of the addictive drug nicotine and is as dangerous as cigarette smoke. Because of the way it is smoked; the puffing, the inhalation and length of the smoking sessions, hookah smokers absorb higher concentrations of the poisons found in cigarette smoke. If a smoker spends a whole hour smoking hookah, this means he will inhale approximately 100 to 200 times the quantity inhaled from a normal cigarette. When a hookah is shared with another person, this sharing can be dangerous by transmitting different types of dangerous and contagious diseases (“Chronic Disease Prevention”). Smoking hookah has many different and dangerous risks that similar to the risks of smoking a normal cigarette, sometimes even more dangerous. These dangerous risks include oral cancer, lung cancer, stomach cancer, and other types of cancers. When heating the tobacco in the hookah, it increases the risks by producing high levels of chemicals that cause cancer. Passing through water does not make the smoke produced by the hookah any less toxic than normal cigarette smoke.

Numerous toxic materials that can cause heart diseases and other serious illnesses are found in hookah tobacco (“Chronic Disease Prevention”). Babies who are born to a mother who has smoked waterpipes some time during her pregnancy can have some serious health problems. One of the problems the baby may have is having a very low weight compared to the weight of the other babies of normal and healthy parents. Another problem that may occur is that these children may have some serious respiratory problems (“Chronic Disease Prevention”). Some hookah users believe that it is not dangerous. However, many different studies that have been done around the world say that hookah users are inhaling larger amounts of toxins

and carcinogens that might be a factor leading to dangerous and deadly diseases. It is true that some of the nicotine in the hookah is filtered when it passes from the water, but there is still enough nicotine in hookah smoke for the user to be addicted.

Dr. Michael Miller, the editor in chief of the Harvard Mental Health Letter, proposes that while waiting for more information about the research that is being done on how to stop hookah, people should be more attentive and careful about the many dangers that hookah causes. In conclusion, hookah smoking and cigarette smoking are both harmful to the human body. The only difference between the two products is the way that they are smoked. When smoking hookah, far more smoke is inhaled compared to smoking cigarettes. When examining the two products' smoke closely, professionals found that they are almost identical in every way except for the nicotine. Cigarette smoke has more nicotine than hookah smoke. But even though, hookah smoking provides enough nicotine for the smokers to get addicted. Even though the substances in the cigarettes are a bit more harmful, hookah smoking in general is found to be more dangerous than cigarette smoking. Researchers found that a whole cigarette is approximately equal to 0.5 liters of smoke.

This is nothing compared to hookah smoking which the smoke inhaled in one puff is equivalent to 1 liter of smoke; this means that it is approximately equal to 2 cigarettes! Not a lot of people are aware of this information. Most people believe that the water filters all the bad elements about hookah but in reality, it only filters an insignificant part of the bad elements. Both

cigarettes and hookah cause great harm to the human body, but the frequent use of the hookah, can impair human health much faster and due to the large amounts of smoke inhaled in hookah smoking, hookahs are in fact more dangerous than cigarettes. The good smell of hookah pulls the wool over the smokers' eyes. The fact that it does not taste bad also blinds the smokers and the good feeling makes them want more of it.

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