

Tobacco Fact Sheet

Hookah



Keep Tobacco Sacred • Honor Your Health • Honor Your Nation

Numbers at a Glance

36 times

*More tar in hookah smoke
than cigarette smoke*

15 times

*More carbon monoxide than
cigarettes.*

100 to 200 times

*More smoke exposure than
smoking cigarettes.*

45—60 minute

*Hookah session can expose a
smoker to approximately the
same amount of tar and nico-
tine as one pack of cigarettes.*



What is Hookah?

Similar to cigarettes, hookah smoking delivers the addictive drug nicotine and it is at least as toxic as cigarette smoking. While many hookah smokers may consider this practice less harmful than smoking cigarettes, hookah smoking carries many of the same health risks as cigarettes.

A Hookah is a water pipe used to smoke tobacco through cooled water. The tobacco is heated in the bowl at the top of the hookah and the smoke is filtered through the water in the base of the hookah.

Alternate names for hookahs include: water pipe, goza, hubble-bubble, borry, arhile, and narghile.

Compared to a single cigarette, hookah smoke is known to contain higher levels of arsenic, lead, and nickel, 36 times more tar, and 15 times more carbon monoxide than cigarettes. This is because smoking a hookah requires taking longer and harder drags, increasing the levels of inhaled nicotine and carcinogens in the lungs. The longer a hookah session, the more nicotine and toxins one takes in.

A 45 to 60 minute hookah session can expose the smoker to approximately the same amount of tar and nicotine as one pack of cigarettes. Although



Picture of a Hookah pipe

you may be hanging out in a hookah bar, but not smoking, you are still exposed to secondhand smoke. If you do choose to use, remember that sharing mouthpieces without washing them can increase the risk of spreading colds, flu, and infections, even oral herpes.

Using a hookah to smoke tobacco poses serious health risks to smokers and others exposed to the smoke from the hookah.

Source: www.cdc.gov

How does hookah work?

Each hookah session typically lasts more than 40 minutes, and consists of 50 – 200 puffs which range from 0.15 – 0.50 liter per puff. Studies show that there are high levels of nicotine in hookah, and that this can lead to addiction, however despite the supposedly high nicotine content, the usage of hookah does not eliminate a smokers desire to smoke. Other research shows that a single

45-minute session of hookah tobacco smoking delivers slightly less tar and carbon monoxide (around 3-6%) than a full pack of cigarettes. Studies show that there are high levels of nicotine in hookah, and that this can lead to addiction, however despite the supposedly high nicotine content, the usage of hookah does not eliminate a smokers desire to smoke.



Is hookah safer than conventional cigarettes?

While research about hookah smoking is still emerging, evidence shows that it poses many dangers:

- Hookah smoke contains high levels of toxic compounds, including tar, carbon monoxide, heavy metals and cancer-causing chemicals (carcinogens). In fact, hookah smokers are exposed to more carbon monoxide and smoke than are cigarette smokers.
- As with cigarette smoking, hookah smoking is linked to lung and oral cancers, heart disease, and other serious illnesses.
- Hookah smoking delivers about the same amount of nicotine as cigarette smoking, possibly leading to tobacco dependence.
- Hookah smoke poses dangers associated with secondhand smoke.
- Hookah smoking by pregnant women can result in low birth weight babies.
- Hookah pipes used in hookah bars and cafes may not be cleaned properly, risking the spread of infectious diseases.

Want to quit hookah?

The South Dakota QuitLine is a great resource when you are trying to quit tobacco products. If you are ready to quit, thinking about quitting, or know someone who wants to quit, they are ready to help. The South Dakota QuitLine offers services designed to help you kick the habit for good. Their website, www.sdquitline.com, has been designed as a resource to help you quit and stay quit. All you have to do is call the QuitLine, or you can “click” on the link on their website and they will call you. It’s that easy and it’s free!

