



Get the Facts on Hookah...Is smoking Hookah safer than cigarettes?

It's a myth that hookah smoking is safer than cigarette smoking. The tobacco is no less toxic and as a matter of fact is consumed in greater quantity through hookah smoking.

Hookah, also called narghile, shisha, and goza, is a water pipe.

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

When a smoker inhales through the tube, a pressure difference forces air past the heating source and heats the tobacco, which gives off smoke. The smoke is pulled away from the tobacco and passes through the water and into the smoke chamber — from which it is inhaled by the smoker.

Although many believe that the water in the hookah filters out all the "bad stuff" in the tobacco smoke, this isn't true. According to a World Health Organization advisory, a typical one-hour session of hookah smoking exposes the user to **100 to 200 times** the volume of smoke inhaled from a single cigarette. Even after passing through water, tobacco smoke still contains high levels of toxic compounds, including carbon monoxide, heavy metals and cancer-causing chemicals (carcinogens). Hookah smoking also delivers significant levels of nicotine — the addictive substance in tobacco.

The trend of hookah smoking has doctors and public health experts concerned because — despite claims to the contrary by many users — smoking from a hookah is just as dangerous as smoking cigarettes. — Mayo Clinic, February 2008