

# Hookah Pipe (Water Pipe)

Water pipe smoking is a tradition found in many countries around the world. Hookah is the most common name used in North America. It is also known as narghile, argileh, shisha, hubble-bubble, and goza. Hookah smoking is rapidly gaining popularity especially among young adults and youth.

Tobacco shisha, also known as maassel, is used in hookah pipes and is a moist mixture of tobacco, preservatives and flavourings held together with molasses and honey.

Lit charcoal is placed on top of tinfoil to cause the shisha to smoke. When the user draws from the mouthpiece of the hookah hose, a vacuum is created, and the smoke is pulled down through the hollow body of the pipe and into the water bowl. The smoke then bubbles up through the water bowl before being inhaled by the user.

**The Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association does not condone or recommend the use of hookah pipes.**

## WHY PEOPLE SMOKE HOOKAH PIPES

Hookah pipes are popular because of the flavourings, exotic appeal and the social nature and culture of smoking a hookah pipe. Shisha has a high sugar content which, when mixed with flavourings, makes the smoke extremely aromatic. There is widespread misperception that smoking tobacco shisha or tobacco-free 'herbal' shisha in a water pipe is less harmful.

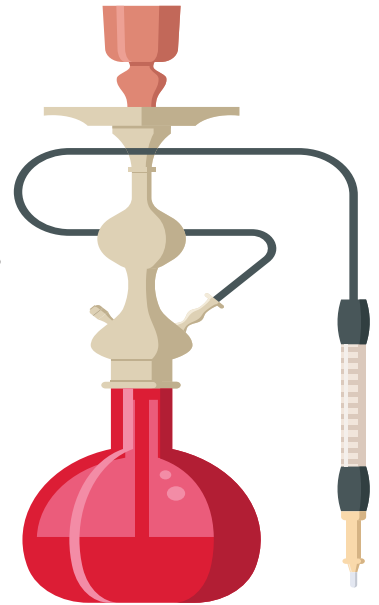
## RISK FACTORS

The tobacco used in hookah smoking contains nicotine, the same highly addictive drug found in cigarettes. In fact, according to the World Health Organization, one water pipe session which can last up to 80 minutes is the same as smoking 100 cigarettes. Hookah use has many of the same health risks as cigarette smoking including:

- increased risk of oral, lung, stomach and esophageal cancers
- gingivitis (gum disease) and periodontal diseases can lead to tooth loss

- increased accumulation of plaque and calculus that can cause tooth decay
- higher rates of respiratory illness
- low birth-weight babies
- increased risk of tooth decay a result of shisha's high sugar content

Regardless of whether tobacco shisha or 'herbal' shisha is being smoked, charcoal is needed as a heat source to create the smoke. Two well-known charcoal emissions are released – carbon monoxide and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, both major contributors to cardiovascular disease and lung cancer.



## TRANSMISSION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The sharing of mouthpieces and lack of disinfection between users pose risks for the transmission of communicable disease such as meningitis, tuberculosis, hepatitis, influenza, and herpes.

## SECOND-HAND SMOKE

Second-hand smoke produced by a hookah pipe should be of concern as it can pose health risks for nonsmokers. Hookah second-hand smoke contains both smoke and toxicants from the tobacco or herbal shisha, if present, as well as smoke from the heat source used in the hookah.

## ROLE OF THE DENTAL HYGIENIST

Dental hygienists work within a scope of practice to help control oral diseases associated with smoking and provide an oral assessment that will often detect oral cancer in the early stages. Dental hygienists also play an important role in counselling clients on the harmful effect of hookah smoking. They work with clients to develop a smoking cessation plan.

*As professional health-care providers, dental hygienists are primarily concerned with promoting good oral health. Dental hygiene is among the largest of the regulated healthcare professions in the province. In Ontario all dental hygienists are registered with the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, which regulates the profession to ensure the public receives safe and ongoing comprehensive oral care.*

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