

Hookah: The Facts

What is it?

- A device, also referred to as a water pipe, used to smoke tobacco, which is often flavored
- Hookahs are usually made of glass and have at least one, if not multiple, hoses with an attached mouthpiece



Why do people use it?

- Flavored tobacco can be very appealing, especially to young people. Flavors can range from apple and strawberry daiquiri to tutti fruity and cappuccino.
- Because the smoke is filtered through water, hookah is often perceived as being less harmful than traditional smoking.
- Hookah Bars are on the rise as popular social settings. Customers share a hookah session, which typically lasts 45 minutes to an hour.

The Bottom Line

Using tobacco of any type and in any format is harmful.

There is no safe way to use tobacco.

MYTH VS. FACT

Myth: Smoking tobacco using a hookah is safe.

Fact: Smoking tobacco in any way is dangerous. When hookah was first used in the 1500s, it was perceived as being safe. Current research shows that this simply isn't true. Smoking hookah puts the user and those in the area at risk for inhaling numerous toxic chemicals.

Myth: You cannot become addicted to tobacco using a hookah.

Fact: While the water reduces the concentration of nicotine, the user is still exposed, and therefore put at risk for becoming addicted if used regularly.

What are the health effects?

- Smoke from hookah contains many of the same cancer-causing chemicals as cigarette smoke.
- Amount of smoke inhaled in a 1 hour hookah session is similar to that of smoking 100-200 cigarettes.
- Smoking hookah regularly can result in heart disease, lung cancer, and other illnesses traditionally caused by cigarette smoking.
- While there is a reduced concentration of nicotine in hookah smoke, regular users can become addicted.
- Shared mouth pieces can spread communicable diseases like a common cold or even hepatitis.

