Hookah Myths & Realities

Myth: The water cleans the smoke.
Reality: After the smoke passes through the water in a hookah pipe, the smoke still contains high levels of toxins including carbon monoxide, heavy metals, nicotine, and other cancer-causing chemicals.¹

Myth: Hookah is safer than cigarettes.
Reality: Hookah smoking can be just as dangerous as smoking cigarettes. A 20–80 minute hookah session is the same as smoking 100 or more cigarettes.²

Myth: Hookah tobacco has no nicotine.
Reality: Nicotine is a naturally occurring chemical in tobacco.³ Therefore, the tobacco smoked in a hookah pipe has nicotine.²,⁴

Myth: Hookah is natural.
Reality: Currently, there is no way of knowing what chemicals are added to the tobacco that is sold.⁵ Regardless, a single session of smoking hookah delivers 1.7 times the nicotine, 8.4 times the carbon monoxide, and 36 times the tar of a single cigarette.⁶

Myth: People who smoke hookah aren’t smokers.
Reality: You don’t have to be a cigarette user to be a “smoker.” If you smoke tobacco, you are a smoker. And, if you currently smoke hookah but not cigarettes, you are two times more likely to become a cigarette smoker than someone who does not smoke hookah.⁷

Quit tobacco today, visit www.kickitca.org for help.


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