



Shisha Smoking

Background

Shisha smoking is a way of smoking tobacco through a bowl and hose or tube. It is also called hookah, waterpipe, or hubble bubble smoking. Sometimes the tobacco is mixed with fruit or molasses sugar.

Traditionally shisha smoking is used by people from the Middle Eastern or Asian community, however shisha smoking is becoming increasingly popular among all groups in cities around the UK.

A shisha bar in Glasgow became the first to be prosecuted in court for flouting Scotland's smoking ban (December 2012). This business and others in the city have already faced several fixed-penalty notices for breaching smoke-free legislation.

Is smoking shisha harmful?

Traditionally shisha tobacco contains cigarette tobacco, so like cigarettes it contains nicotine, tar, carbon monoxide and heavy metals, such as arsenic and lead. As a result, shisha smokers are at risk of the same kinds of diseases as cigarette smokers, such as heart disease, cancer, respiratory disease and problems during pregnancy.

People smoke shisha for much longer periods of time than they smoke a cigarette. It is difficult to say exactly how much smoke or toxic substances you're exposed to in a typical shisha session. In one puff of shisha you inhale the same amount of smoke as you'd get from smoking a whole cigarette. The average shisha-smoking session lasts an hour and research has shown that in this time you can inhale the same amount of smoke as from more than 100 cigarettes.

Many people mistakenly believe that shisha smoking is not addictive because the water used in the pipe can absorb nicotine. However, in reality, only some of the nicotine is absorbed by the water, so shisha smokers are still exposed to enough nicotine to cause an addiction.

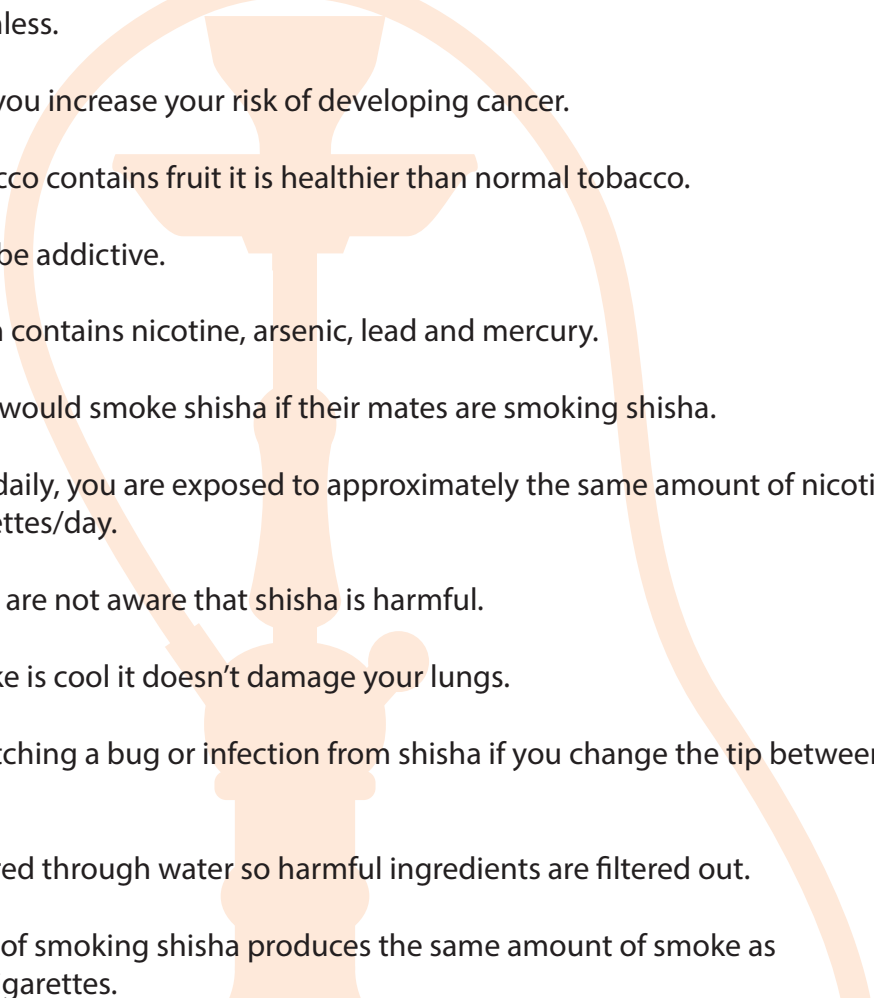
Creating Awareness

Smoking shisha is fast becoming a social norm in the UK. There is a need to carry out further research and educate people about the ill effects of smoking shisha. A variety of media should be used; especially in schools, colleges and universities. NHS Lanarkshire has produced this DVD resource to raise awareness of the ill effects of shisha smoking in Lanarkshire.



Shisha Quiz

Participants can answer: True, False or Not Sure

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1. Shisha is pretty harmless.
 2. If you smoke shisha you increase your risk of developing cancer.
 3. Because shisha tobacco contains fruit it is healthier than normal tobacco.
 4. Smoking shisha can be addictive.
 5. Shisha tobacco often contains nicotine, arsenic, lead and mercury.
 6. Many young people would smoke shisha if their mates are smoking shisha.
 7. If you smoke shisha daily, you are exposed to approximately the same amount of nicotine as smoking 10 cigarettes/day.
 8. Many adults/parents are not aware that shisha is harmful.
 9. Because shisha smoke is cool it doesn't damage your lungs.
 10. There is no risk of catching a bug or infection from shisha if you change the tip between people.
 11. Shisha smoke is filtered through water so harmful ingredients are filtered out.
 12. A 45-minute session of smoking shisha produces the same amount of smoke as approximately 100 cigarettes.

(Courtesy of NHS Brent)



Shisha Quiz Answers

1. Shisha is pretty harmless. **(Correct answer: false)**
2. If you smoke shisha you increase your risk of developing cancer. **(Correct answer: true)**
3. Because shisha tobacco contains fruit it is healthier than normal tobacco. **(Correct answer: false)**
4. Smoking shisha can be addictive. **(Correct answer: true)**
5. Shisha tobacco often contains nicotine, arsenic, lead and mercury. **(Correct answer: true)**
6. Many young people would smoke shisha if their mates are smoking shisha. **(Correct answer: true)**
7. If you smoke shisha daily, you are exposed to approximately the same amount of nicotine as smoking 10 cigarettes/day. **(Correct answer: true)**
8. Many adults/parents are not aware that shisha is harmful. **(Correct answer: true)**
9. Because shisha smoke is cool it doesn't damage your lungs. **(Correct answer: false – in fact, because it is cool, people are able to inhale more smoke into their lungs)**
10. There is no risk of catching a bug or infection from shisha if you change the tip between people. **(Correct answer: false)**
11. Shisha smoke is filtered through water so harmful ingredients are filtered out. **(Correct answer: false)**
12. A 45-minute session of smoking shisha produces the same amount of smoke as approximately 100 cigarettes. **(Correct answer: true)**

(Courtesy of NHS Brent)



Recommended Reading

World Health Organization:

Advisory note: Waterpipe Tobacco Smoking: 2nd edition 2015.

Health effects, research needs and recommended actions for regulators

www.who.int/tobacco/publications/prod_regulation/waterpipessecondedition/en

After 10 years of accumulating evidence for the increasing prevalence and untoward health effects of waterpipe tobacco smoking, the World Health Organization announces publication of the second edition of the WHO Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation scientific advisory note on waterpipe tobacco smoking. This advisory note addresses growing concern about the increasing prevalence and potential health effects of tobacco smoking with waterpipes, a practice that dates back at least four centuries in Africa and Asia. The note will provide a more thorough understanding of the health effects of waterpipe smoking.

Further information:

ASH Scotland

www.ashscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/supply-information-about-tobacco-and-health/briefings/shisha/

British Heart Foundation

www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/risk-factors/smoking/shisha

NHSL Stop Smoking Services

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm on 0300 303 0242 or text 81066.

Smokeline

Freephone 0800 84 84 84 (every day 8am to 10pm) for advice and support on stopping smoking.