

# Fact Sheet #10: Young Adults and Hookah (Waterpipe)

Around the world, as many as 100 million people use waterpipes daily.<sup>1</sup> However, there are no estimates as to how many of these people are young adults.

## What Is Happening?

### The history of hookah and what is happening around the world

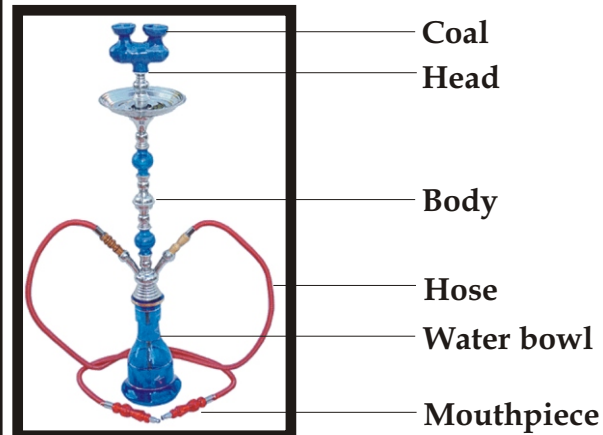
- Waterpipe use had been on the decline as recently as 1980, but is currently considered fashionable by many young people in the Middle East. This trend has carried to urban centers in America and California.<sup>1</sup>
- Names for the waterpipe vary by region<sup>1</sup>:
  - Shisha, boory, goza - Egypt, Saudi Arabia
  - Narghile, nargile, arghile - Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria
  - Hookah - Africa and Indian subcontinent
  - Hubble bubble - Multiple regions
- Maassel, which is sweetened and flavored, is the most common type of tobacco used in waterpipes.<sup>1</sup> Some of the most popular flavors are mint, apple, and molasses.<sup>2</sup> Maassel is thought to play a large role in the spread of waterpipe use after its introduction in the 1990's, not only because of the flavoring of tobacco, but because it simplified the process of waterpipe preparation by removing the need to moisten, shape, and dry tobacco before its use.<sup>1</sup>
- Twenty-seven states are known to have hookah bars or lounges. These bars tend to proliferate around colleges and in college communities.<sup>2</sup>
- There are no scientific studies addressing waterpipe use in the United States, but information coming from the Middle East illustrates its popularity in that area. For example, in Aleppo, Syria one study recorded half of university students as ever having used a waterpipe, and another study in Israel noted 22% of those ages 12-18 used a waterpipe at least every weekend.<sup>1</sup>
- The same study based in Aleppo, Syria found that university students who used a waterpipe viewed the act favorably, citing its positive aspects as its traditional, familiar, social, and attractive look.<sup>1</sup>
- Finally, anecdotal reports indicate that waterpipe users perceive the act of smoking tobacco through a waterpipe to be less harmful than the act of smoking cigarettes. This notion may fuel waterpipe use because of the popularity of "reduced risk" products in America.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maziak W, Ward KD, Afifi Soweid RA, Eissenberg T. *Tobacco smoking using a waterpipe: a re-emerging strain in a global epidemic*. Tobacco Control. Vol 13 No 4. December 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Kiser, Dian. Networking Forum Teleconference. 24 January 2005.

<sup>3</sup> BREATH and TALC. "Does Indoor Smoking in Hookah Bars or Cafes Violate the Smoke-free Workplace Act?" Fact Sheet. 13 September 2004.

## How does a hookah work?



**Figure 1.** "Primary waterpipe components. Tobacco is placed in the head and is often covered with perforated aluminum foil; burning charcoal is placed on top of the foil. Water half fills the bowl, submerging a tube through which smoke enters, but not the hose-connected tube through which the smoke leaves. Thus, an inhalation at one end of the hose produces a vacuum in the air filled space of the water bowl, causing smoke to pass through the water (producing bubbles and the onomatopoeic moniker "hubble bubble"), into the hose-connected tube, and to the smoker. Disposable plastic mouthpieces can be added, to limit the spread of disease. The size of the waterpipe, number of hoses, and other features can vary widely."<sup>1</sup>

- Tobacco smoking using a waterpipe: a re-emerging strain in a global epidemic. Tobacco Control. Vol 13 No 4. Page 328. December 2004.

## Using a Waterpipe Indoors

The California Smoke-free Workplace Act (Labor Code 6404.5) prohibits smoking tobacco indoors in a place of employment. Hookah bars/lounges can only be exempt from the Labor Code if the following conditions are met<sup>3</sup>:

1. **The bar/lounge is owner-operated.** The establishment cannot have anyone besides the owner work there and receive compensation.
2. **The bar/lounge is a retail tobacco store or private smokers' lounge.** The main purpose of the establishment has to be selling tobacco. For example, any business that sells alcohol must have an ABC license, and therefore its main purpose cannot be the sale of tobacco products.
3. **The bar/lounge is a small business with 5 or fewer employees.** The establishment must also exclude minors, but not in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act.

For more information, please go to:

[http://www.breath-ala.org/html/work\\_index.html](http://www.breath-ala.org/html/work_index.html)

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