



# 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.<sup>1</sup>

**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.**<sup>2</sup>

**Myth:** Hookah tobacco has no nicotine.

**Reality: Nicotine is a naturally occurring chemical in tobacco.**<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the tobacco smoked in a hookah pipe has nicotine.<sup>2,4</sup>

**Myth:** Hookah is natural.

**Reality: Currently, there is no way of knowing what chemicals are added to the tobacco that is sold.**<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

**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.<sup>7</sup>

**Quit tobacco today, visit [www.kickitca.org](http://www.kickitca.org) for free help.**

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