JEWISH FESTIVALS: MEDICINES

INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH FESTIVALS: MEDICINES

Introduction to Jewish Festivals: Medicines

***Jewish Festivals*: Medicines: When To Take**

Medicine generally may not be used on the d'oraita *Jewish festival* days.

***Jewish Festivals*: Medicine for Chronic Diseases**

You may take medicine on *Jewish festivals* (whether *d'oraita* or *d'rabanan)* for:

- Chronic diseases, such as Parkinson's disease, or
- Any disease that affects your entire body.

***Jewish Festivals*: Medicine for Non-Chronic Diseases**

You may take medicine on *Jewish festivals* for non-chronic illnesses, if skipping one day will prevent cure. You may not take medicine for non-chronic illnesses if skipping a day will just delay your being cured (unless the disease affects your entire body--in which case, you may take the medicine).

***Jewish Festivals*: Medicines: When To Take: D'Oraita Festival Days**

Here are the *d'oraita Jewish festivals*:

- First day of *Sukkot*, Passover, and *Shavuot*
- Seventh day of Passover
- *Shmini Atzeret* (8th day of *Sukkot*)
- *Yom Kippur*
- Both days of *Rosh Hashana* (even though the second day is *d'rabanan*).

On these days, as well as on *d'rabanan Jewish festivals*, you:

- MUST take medicine whenever there is any question of a life-threatening disease or condition.
- MAY take medicine for a condition that affects the entire body (illness, weakness, etc.). Consult a *rabbi* if possible.

  EXCEPTION You may not smear substances on skin UNLESS the illness is life-threatening, in which case even smearing is permitted.
- MAY use some medicines if only part of your body is affected by a non-life-threatening disease--consult a *rabbi*.

***Jewish Festivals*: Medicines: When To Take: D'Rabanan Festival Days**

You make take medicines for any reason on *d'rabanan Jewish festivals*--even medicines not allowed on the first day of *Jewish festivals*--except:

- Medicines that you smear on skin.
- If the *Jewish festival* falls on *Shabbat* (which can only be second day of *Shavuot*).

  NOTE The *d'rabanan Jewish festivals* are the second day of *Jewish festivals* except *Rosh Hashana* (actually, the second day of *Rosh Hashana* IS *d'rabanan* but has the status of *d'oraita*), plus the last day of Passover and *Simchat Torah* outside of *Eretz Yisrael*.

***Jewish Festivals*: Squeezing, Dabbing, Smearing**

As on *Shabbat*, you may squeeze a tube of cream on *Jewish festivals*, but you might not be able to use the

cream on the *Jewish festival* for other reasons—consult a *rabbi*.

NOTE Smearing creams or ointments is permitted only in life-threatening situations. Otherwise, you may not smear cream on skin on a *Jewish festival* (or *Shabbat*) even using a *shinu'i* such as using the back of your hand or a toe.
Dabbing is permitted, but only when you are permitted to use medicine.

EXAMPLE
You may use cream on a *Jewish festival* (and *Shabbat*) by dabbing (you may ONLY dab--you may not SMEAR cream) for a bee sting if it will affect the entire body. You may not use cream for a mosquito bite, since it is only a local irritation.

JEWISH FESTIVALS: PAINKILLERS

Jewish Festivals: When You May Take a Painkiller

You may take a painkiller on the first day of *Jewish festivals* if the pain:

- Affects your entire body, or
- Keeps you awake.

NOTE This also becomes the criterion for whether to take the pain killer during the daytime: if the pain you feel during the day would keep you awake if you were trying to sleep.

NOTE You may take painkillers without any restrictions on the second *Jewish festival* day (except *Rosh Hashana*).

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