

THE BAIS HAVAAD

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## NOT SO FAST: DO PREGNANT, LABORING, OR POSTPARTUM WOMEN EAT ON YOM KIPPUR?

By the poskim of the Bais HaVaad Medical Halacha Center

### PREGNANCY AND LABOR

These guidelines are for women with no health issues and no history of adverse health effects from fasting. A woman with such issues, or a woman expecting multiples, must consult a Rav.

- A pregnant woman should properly hydrate in the period before the fast, preferably for three days.
- While *tefilah* is always important, and on Yom Kippur all the more so, fasting on Yom Kippur is a greater obligation than davening. If she feels weak, she may even daven *Shemoneh Esrei* and say *Viduy* lying down.

- If a woman feels faint or dizzy or has four contractions in under an hour, she should drink one fluid ounce, wait four minutes, drink another ounce, and continue this cycle for 20 minutes.
- If the symptoms persist, she should drink normally—without regard to quantity—until they subside.
- If the contractions don't stop, she should go to the hospital. On the way to the hospital she may eat as much as she feels is necessary to have strength for the delivery.
- Once active labor begins, she may eat and drink with no limitations.

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Excerpted and adapted from a shiur by  
Rav Ari Stauber

### PARSHAS HA'AZINU

#### BRANCH MANAGER

When shopping for the Four Species, many people seek the perfect lulav, esrog, and *hadasim* but are not aware of the required and the preferred characteristics of the *aravah*:

1. The leaves must be long and narrow.
2. The stem should be red. Although our *aravos* usually contain green stems, the Bais Yosef and Rama explain that they eventually turn red if left on the tree long enough, so they are the correct species. Nevertheless, R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach sought *aravos* that had begun to turn red.
3. The edges of the leaves may not be serrated.
4. The Torah describes the species as *arvei nachal* (willows of the river). Rashi and Tosafos say that only a tree situated near water is valid, but the Rosh says that the tree must be of the sort that grows near water, regardless of whether this particular specimen did. The Shulchan Aruch follows the

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Q&A from the  
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### Off Guard

**Q** I was employed during the summer as a lifeguard to supervise a camp's swimming pool. One of my fellow lifeguards was instructed to close the pool at the end of the week, but he misunderstood the directive and shut off the filter. When the mistake was discovered at the beginning of the next week, the pool was filled with algae and not usable. No one knew how long it would take to remedy the problem, so all the lifeguards were told to stand by and be ready to return to work when the phone rang. We were summoned after three days. Must the camp pay me for this period?

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- After *tzeis hakochavim* at the conclusion of the fast, before davening Ma'ariv, she may say "*Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol*" (without Hashem's name) and drink liberal quantities of water. (It is permitted to drink water before *havdalah*.)
- A Rav and a doctor should be consulted if anything occurs that seems out of the ordinary.

These guidelines apply through week 36. During weeks 37 and 38, consult your doctor and then your Rav. After 38 weeks, there is no increased danger in childbirth, so one should fast normally.

## POSTPARTUM

- If a woman gave birth by the end of 2 Tishrei (the second day of Rosh Hashanah): Fast normally. If there are nursing difficulties, consult a Rav.
- If she gave birth on 3 Tishrei: Until the hour that the birth occurred, eat and drink "*shiurim*" (see below). From the hour that she gave birth, fast normally. For example, if the birth occurred at noon on the third of Tishrei, she may eat and drink *shiurim* on Yom Kippur until noon and fast normally thereafter.
- If she gave birth from 4 Tishrei until 6 Tishrei: Eat and drink *shiurim*.
- If she gave birth on 7 Tishrei: Until the hour that the birth occurred, she may eat and drink normally. For example, if she gave birth at 10 AM, she may eat and drink normally until ten o'clock on Yom Kippur morning. After that hour, she should eat and drink *shiurim*.
- If she gave birth on 8 or 9 Tishrei: Eat and drink normally.

If there are any complications after birth, such as anemia, fainting, or heavy bleeding, or if the woman underwent a particularly long or complicated caesarean, a doctor and a Rav should be consulted.

## IF ONE MUST DRINK ON YOM KIPPUR: HOW TO DRINK "SHIURIM"

*This is not a medical document and should not be used as a substitute for consultation with a doctor and/or a Rav with expertise in these matters. In any questionable situation, one must consult a doctor and a Rav.*

Eating\* and drinking *shiurim* (maximum quantities) requires careful attention. Those who are required to drink on Yom Kippur should consult a doctor as to how much liquid they need to consume, taking into consideration how much they will drink before and immediately after the fast. Generally, drinking one liter is sufficient.

- It is advisable to drink liquids that contain calories, such as soft drinks or milk.
- The liquid should be divided into portions of one fluid ounce each.
- One should prepare an appropriate-size cup before Yom Kippur.
- One should wait nine minutes between portions. If this does not provide a sufficient fluid intake, one may wait four minutes between portions.
- It is advisable to prepare all required fluids in advance and drink the prepared cups over the course of the day. For example, if the required amount is one liter, have a liter of the desired drink ready.

\*Those who must **eat** *shiurim* should call the Bais HaVaad Medical Halacha Hotline (732.276.2183) or consult a Rav for guidance.

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According to the Shulchan Aruch (C.M. 333), if an employer is unable to utilize the services of an employee due to circumstances beyond the employer's control (*oness*), the employer is not required to pay for the labor. Thus, in this case, although it was not your fault that the pool was unusable and no lifeguarding was needed, the employer is still exempt from paying you for lifeguarding. However, the camp is indeed obligated to compensate you for the time you had to be on call and unavailable to do other work, as in the case in the Shulchan Aruch, where workers were instructed to go to a site to transport packages but upon arrival found no packages. In that case, the workers are paid a lower rate for the time they spent traveling, though they performed no labor. Here, too, being on call is easier than actual lifeguarding, so a lower rate of pay would be appropriate, to be determined based on how much more difficult it is to supervise a pool than to be on call.



Rosh, and this is the common *minhag*, though some *Acharonim*

(Bikurei Yakov, Chayei Adam) are strict.

5. If most of the leaves fell off, the *aravah* is invalid. Some say that one should preferably

not use *aravos* if some of the leaves—possibly even a single leaf (Bikurei Yaakov)—within the top three *tefachim* have fallen off, though others disagree (see Mishnah Berurah).

6. A dried-out *aravah* is invalid (Shulchan Aruch), while a withered one is kosher, though it is best to use fresh ones (Rama). Some hold that brown *aravos* are also

kosher, though it is best not to use them.

7. Most *poskim* hold that an *aravah* can be missing its *lavluv* (a small leaf at the top), provided it fell off when the *aravah* was still on the tree. Nevertheless, many *poskim* recommend purchasing an *aravah* with a *lavluv* if possible.



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