

Niddah



Niddah

A woman is Niddah from the onset of a discharge of uterine blood until after she immerses in a Mikvah.

(A minimum of 12 days)

Note: Niddah is a state of ritual impurity which is spiritual and not related to being “clean or unclean”.





Harchakos

- The laws of Harchakos are kept from the moment a woman becomes Niddah, until the full protocol of Mikvah immersion is followed.
- These laws are also kept whenever a woman is in doubt of her status, until a Rav confirms she is not Niddah.
- **Harchakos are kept no matter what caused the Niddah status.**



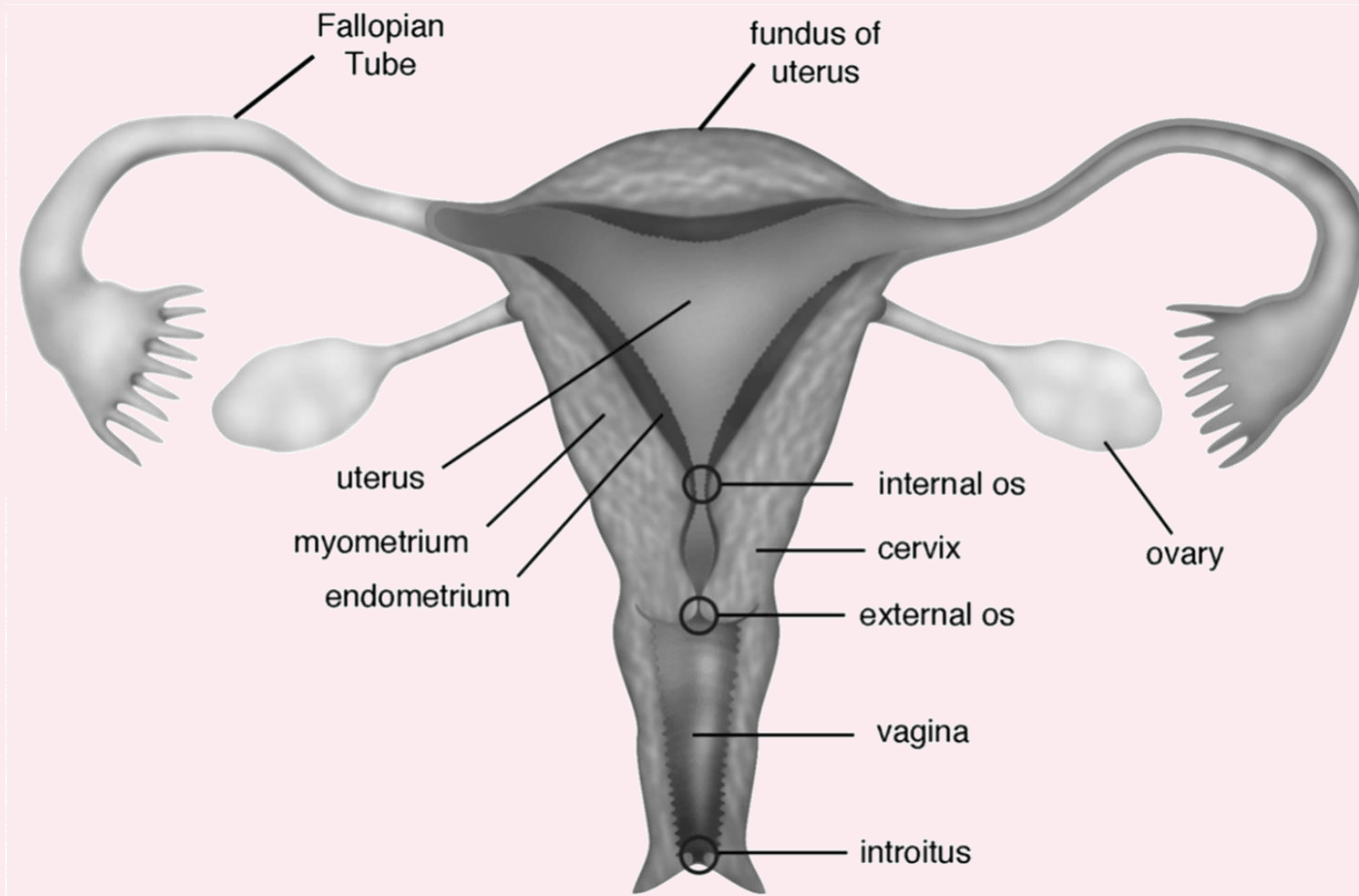
What is Niddah?

 A woman becomes Niddah, if even one drop of blood leaves the uterus.

- Whether it is moist or dry.
- Whether it is from menstruation or uterine bleeding from other ways which will be explained further.
- Note: Blood that was determined by a Rav to be vaginal blood is not Niddah blood.

This applies at any stage of life, even 'Mesulekes Damim'
(pregnant, nursing, post menopausal).







*How does a woman
become Middah?*



How a woman becomes niddah

1. REIYAH

Menstruation, (also called “veses”).



2. HARGASHA

A distinct sensation that indicates the opening of the uterus, or a flow from the uterus at the start of the period.

3. MAREH

ANY size of red or black on a bedikah cloth



4. KINUACH

External wiping of the vulva



How a woman becomes niddah

5. KESEM

External, unexpected staining



**6. PESICHAS
HARECHEM**

Opening of the womb

**This includes: Gynecological Exams & Procedures
Childbirth/Miscarriage**

7. TRAUMA

Staining after a trauma



1. Reiyah

Menstruation



Reiyah

🔴 A woman becomes Niddah when she sees menstruation begins

This is the most common and expected way a woman will become Niddah during her reproductive years.

TIP: It is a good idea to send your husband a text when you get your period, so there will be no error when you mark your calendar.





2. *Hargasha*



Bleeding with "Hargasha"

A woman becomes Niddah, if she experiences the sensation of opening of her uterus to expel blood.

- If she feels a flow of liquid within the vagina, it may cause Niddah.
- **Note:** Many Rabbanim Pasken that nowadays women do not experience this distinct sensation anymore, without bleeding.
- If a woman is in doubt whether she has this sensation, or she has a feeling of flow deep within the vagina, she should consult a Rav.



Checking yourself after Hargasha

This is only necessary if your Rav paskens to check yourself when feeling a discharge.

- Check yourself as soon as possible.
- Discharge of a Niddah color (red or black) is Niddah.
- Discharge of an Okay color (clear, white, pale yellow, blue or green) is Tahor.
- Discharge of a Questionable color requires determination of a Rav.
- Consult Rav immediately if absolutely nothing is found.
(The exception is if she is Mesulekes Damim, then she can assume she is Tehorah).



Creating a Chazaka

This is only necessary if your Rav paskens to check yourself when feeling a discharge.

In order to avoid constantly checking yourself, you can create a Chazaka.

- To create a Chazaka: Check yourself after **3 consecutive times** that you feel a discharge. Check yourself as soon as possible after each discharge.
- If you checked and found only non-problematic discharges, then you no longer need to check every time you feel a discharge.
- Consult with your Rav if any further checking is required after the Chazaka has been created.

3



3. Mareh

Blood found on a Bedikah cloth



Blood found on a Bedikah cloth

A woman becomes Niddah, from blood found on a Bedikah cloth.

- ANY size blood, or questionable color, on a Bedikah cloth, visible to the eye, is relevant and cannot be ignored.
- A Rav must be consulted for all questionable colors.



Blood found on a Bedikah cloth

- If you suspect that the blood came from a different source, consult a Rav. Sometimes a Rav may suggest seeing a Bodekes* to ascertain the source of the blood. A Rav will give a Psak (Halachic determination) based on the findings of the Bodekes. A Bodekes is not permitted to *Pasken*.
- **Note:** Every time you find an impure Bedikah, ask your Rav how this will affect your calendar.



* A woman who has received specialized Halachic training and certification to examine a woman internally.

Colors

OKAY COLORS:

White & Clear
Green or blue
Pale yellow

QUESTIONABLE COLORS:

Pink
Rust
Brown
Grey
Orange
Mustard
Honey Yellow
& more

NIDDAH COLORS:

BLACK
RED



4. *Kinuwach*

External wiping



Kinuach-External Wiping

- Kinuach may be judged as a Bedikah (according to Chabad).
Consult a Rav.
- There is NEVER a halachic requirement to check toilet tissue after use, or to look into the toilet bowl after use.
- Every effort should be made to avoid looking, as this only raises halachic questions.



Kinuwach-External Wiping

If you did see some Niddah color,
Don't flush away the tissue:

- **DON'T wipe again and check**
- **DON'T do a Bedikah**

Either of these may make the issue worse! Instead, save the tissue and consult with a Rav. (He will ask you about some details such as: if you have a UTI, ate red beets, had pain, the position you were in, etc.)





5. *Kesem*

External , unexpected
staining



What is a Kesem?

A KESEM is a STAIN of a Niddah color or a questionable color found, unexpectedly, without any feeling of a flow.

- A Bedikah is NEVER considered a stain (Kesem).
- If Niddah status is determined, all Halachos of Niddah apply. The process to becoming Tehorah is exactly the same.



Kesem - Stain

- **DON'T look for stains!**

We want to avoid problems.

If you see a stain,

- **DON'T do a Bedikah!**
(unless the Rav tells you)



3

A stain may cause Niddah status
If **ALL 3 Conditions** are present:*

1. The stain is the **SIZE** of a **GRIS** v'od (dime or larger).
2. The stain was found on a **WHITE SURFACE**.
3. The stain was found on a surface that is
MEKABEL TUMAH (receives impurity).

*The 3 conditions of a stain, do NOT apply to anything found on a BEDIKAH cloth, or after KINUACH (wiping). See more exceptions in the following slides.

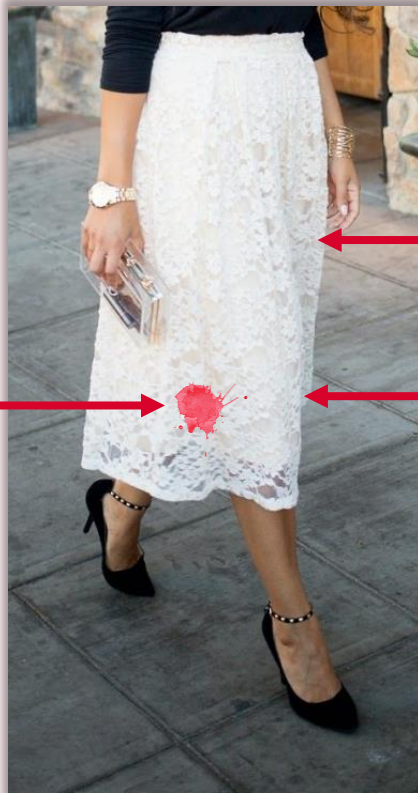
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A stain may cause Niddah status
If **ALL 3 Conditions** are present:

1. SIZE - GRIS



*Image not actual size



2. WHITE SURFACE

3. MEKABEL TUMAH
SURFACE

Note:

Even if ALL 3 conditions are present:

If the stain can be attributed to a
different external cause,

it may not cause the Niddah state.

Ask a Rav.

Inform the Rav if the garment was not checked prior to wearing.



Condition 1: SIZE-GRIS



*Image not actual size

In order for a stain to cause the Niddah state, it needs to be at least the **SIZE** of a **GRIS** –the size of a dime or larger* (Gris v'od)

Some scenarios may require you to consult a Rav. For example:

- Stains seldom appear in neat circles; easy to determine size.
- Stains are often a combination of several colors.
- Only a Rav can determine both size and amount of problematic colors when stains are shaped unevenly, or there are multiple stains, next layer of clothing, etc. Always consult a Rav if uncertain.

Stain Exceptions-Condition 1

Stains found *even smaller than the size of a Gris* that may be problematic.

Consult a Rav for:

- **ANY size BLACK** stain.
(If uncertain of source, consult a Rav).
- **ANY size** stain found on the **BODY**,
(below the waist, or on hands after touching private areas).
- **ANY size** stain found on a **BEDIKAH** cloth
or after something was inserted into the vagina.



Condition 2: WHITE Surface

In order for a stain to cause the Niddah state, it needs to be found on a **WHITE** surface.

- Halacha recognizes two categories for this: **White** and **Every other color** of the spectrum.
- Every colored surface (besides white), has the same leniency. *This leniency does not apply to Bedikos or Kinuach (wiping).*



Tip: For this reason it is advisable for women to always wear colored garments and use colored linens/towels with no white in the pattern when Tehorah!

Note:



- Many Rabbanim suggest to avoid wearing DARK colored undergarments/pads any time a woman is uncertain of when her period/bleeding may begin. It is also suggested for medical reasons, particularly during pregnancy, breastfeeding, years of peri-menopause. This way a woman can see if something is happening and check with her Doctor and Rav regarding both medical and halachic ramifications.
- Consult your Rav regarding wearing black (or very dark colored undergarments/pads when Tehorah. There are different halachic opinions.

Condition 3: Mekabel Tumah Surface

In order for a stain to cause the Niddah state, it needs to be found on a surface that is **MEKABEL TUMAH** (receives impurity).

- Clothing, linens, towels etc. are Mekabel Tumah.
- Many other surfaces are a question, for example: floor, tiles, bathtub, toilet seat, toilet bowl, pads, pantyliners etc. Consult a Rav.



Stain Exceptions

Stains found on a colored garment/surface that may be problematic.

Consult a Rav if:

- Stain was found at the time of an expected period.
- Stain was accompanied by Hargasha.
- Stain went through the first layer of clothing or pantyliner.
- Stain was found after repeated incidents of staining.
- Stain was found with unusual wetness.
- Stain is a thick clump that is not absorbed into the fabric.
- Stain was found after an emotional or physical trauma.



Stain Exceptions

Consult a Rav for:

Stains found on ANY surface, ANY size, after something was inserted into the vagina. (3 conditions of a stain do NOT apply)

- Example: Blood on vaginal applicators, diaphragm, swab culture, syringe, Doctor gloves after an internal medical exam.
- Check with the Rav, prior to use, if you ever are required to check these items after use. If not, avoid checking them at all to avoid issues.
- Consult a Rav for blood following relations and blood found in urine.





6. *Pesichas Harechem*

Opening of the womb

OB-GYN Exams/Procedures

Birth/miscarriage

See section on childbirth

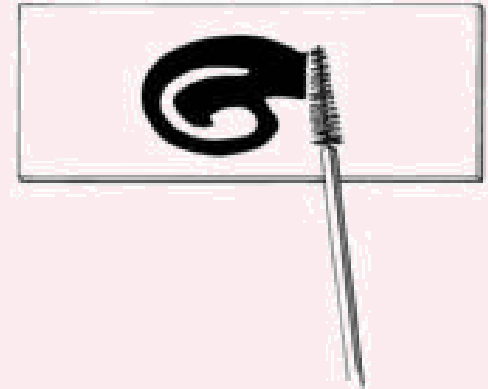


Ob-Gyn Exams/Procedures



- It is a good idea to consult your Rav PRIOR to booking any gynecological exam/procedure.
- **TIP:** If possible, the best time to schedule a gynecological check up is at the end of your period, *before* you perform your Hefsek taharah. But this is not always possible.
- Don't do a bedikah *after* a medical exam (to check for blood), unless your Rav specifically tells you to do one.

Ob-Gyn Exams/Procedures



- **SPECULUM:** The use of a speculum is not problematic.
- **PAP SMEAR:** Generally, a **routine** Pap smear is not problematic. If only the **OUTER** cervix was touched with the swab, this is not Niddah.
- **Note:** A follow up Pap smear, (if the first was questionable), may be more invasive. Consult your Rav before hand.
- **TIP:** Avoid doing a Pap smear on the same day that you are **required** to do a Bedikah to avoid causing problems. (ex: during 7 white days or a calendar Onah).
- If you do need to schedule a Pap smear at a time when you are **required** to do a Bedikah, Consult your Rav regarding the Bedikah.

Ob-Gyn Exams/Procedures



- **Consult your Rav if any instrument is inserted into the CERVIX.**

A Rav will need to know name of procedure and all details. You may not rely only on a Doctor's word, especially if he is not Torah observant and unfamiliar with all the details of Halacha. If he is a Torah observant doctor, consult the Rav on whether or not you may rely on the doctor's word.

- **IUD:** There are differences of opinion regarding insertion and removal of an IUD. Consult your Rav.
- **PILLS:** When on any birth control or hormones that affect the cycle, ask your Rav how it will affect your calendar.

Ob-Gyn Exams/Procedures



YICHUD:

- Some feel more comfortable with a female OB-GYN. If the Doctor is male, be aware of Yichud laws.
- This may apply if you see a doctor after hours or when his staff is not present. Also if your husband is not with you or in the waiting room.



7. Trauma



Trauma

Trauma is another way a woman can become Niddah. Therefore, if a woman experiences a trauma, either physical or emotional, and finds a stain, a Rav must be consulted.

A woman's word counts!

A woman should never declare herself Niddah when in doubt.

- If you have a Shaila and are uncertain of your status, you should say you are uncertain.
- You should never say you are Niddah, either in anger or in jest.
- A Rav must be consulted as to your status, if you ever declare yourself to be Niddah, whether accidentally or on purpose.

**A woman is the one who declares she is Niddah
and she is also the one who declares when she is Tehorah.**





The Role of a Raw



Perspective - Role of a Rav/Asking a Question

Taharas Hamishpacha is at the level of Pikuach Nefesh and is a high priority to every Rav. It impacts the entire future of Klal Yisroel.

- The Rav will do everything in his power to assist you to become Tehorah.
- The goal of every Rav is to allow a couple to be together b'taharah.
- The Rav is the professional who helps us just like a Doctor or OB-Gyn. Although some things are private and sensitive, we realize this is his job and that he does this all the time.



PRIORITY

Role of a Rav/Asking a Question



- **It is ideal to develop a relationship with a Rav whom you trust,** just as you would rather have a Doctor whom you come to know instead of going to a stranger. While it may initially be more comfortable to ask questions anonymously, it is better to build a personal relationship.
- You or your husband, may ask the Rav your questions, either by phone, or by text or by email. It is best to verify with your Rav how he prefers to be contacted.
- Questionable stains/bedikos, need to be seen by the Rav in person, so he can give a determination on whether Niddah or not.
- There is nothing that is too private or personal to discuss with the Rav, just as there is nothing too personal to discuss with your Doctor.

Role of a Rav/Asking a Question



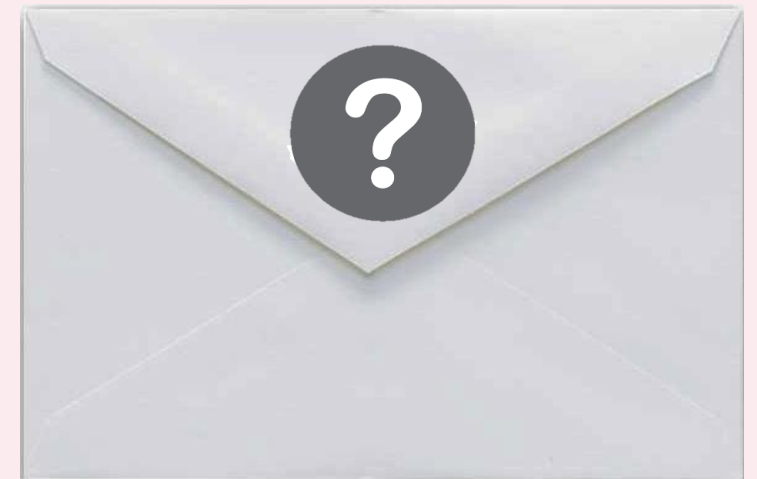
- A woman has a halachic obligation to become Tehorah as soon as halachically possible. Ask shailos as soon as possible!
- It is praiseworthy and a sign of Yiras Shamayim, to ask questions. It is never a breach of Tznius.
- Discover the best way and times to communicate with a Rav effectively.
- Don't be your own Rav! Instead of paskening (determining) on your own, make sure to ask a Rav. Remember, he is the Professional!
Just as we do not prescribe our own medical treatment and medication, so too, we are never permitted to determine our own Halachic rulings.

Questions for a Rav

It is important to write all details of your shaila clearly:

- What happened? When it happened?
- At what point of your cycle?
- Was this from the Hefsek Taharah?
- The Moch Dochuk?
- Bedikos of 7 White Days?
- What day of 7 White Days? Morning or afternoon?
- Did this question result from a BEDIKAH or STAIN on garment/linens etc?
- Write your contact number clearly and legibly so the Rav can contact you.
- Write if you need a response by a specific time.

Never throw away a Shaila, assuming your period may begin.



Other possible factors to discuss with a Rav

Make sure to advise the Rav of all details and give accurate information.

Example:

- Was a child in your bed?
- Can the blood be from a bite, a wound or waxing?
- Can the stain be old, the garment unwashed or not pre-checked?
- Do you have Hemorrhoids? Vaginal scratch? UTI?
- Did you use colors, dyes or paints?
- Did the stain change color over time?

Note: Include any particular circumstances.

Example: Expecting a period, newlywed, pregnant, nursing.



The Rav and the Psak (Halachic Answer)

- A Rav is guided by Hashem's wisdom to give you the correct answer.
- It is never a good idea to take matters into our own hands. We can never decide to be strict or lenient on our own.
- If you ask a Rav a question, accept his answer.
- Don't decline his leniency and be more strict. It is preferable to be Tehorah.
- Don't "shop around" for another answer! However, if you need clarification, never feel ashamed to call and ask for clarity. Perhaps you missed an important factor when asking.
- What the Rav says, overrides anything you may have read, learned or heard.
- Each story has its unique circumstances. You may only apply it to another time if the Rav specifies.
- "*Torah Lo Bashamayim Hee*" - the Rav's Heter creates the kosher reality.



The Rav and the Psak (Halachic Answer)

Your answer is only for YOU and not applicable to anyone else!

- Every psak din (halachic determination) given to YOU by a Rav is customized to both your situation and your needs, similar to a personal prescription. A personal psak given to you may not be shared with anyone privately, or publicly or on social media.
- Don't assume the psak a Rav has given to anyone else applies to you, even if the circumstances are identical.



The Rav and the Psak (Halachic Answer)

- If you submit a question to a Rav and do not hear back from the Rav, Never assume everything is fine, it is imperative to get an actual answer.
- If you were not clear, or did not recall, the Rav's response/instructions, never be ashamed to call back and ask him to repeat/review, to ensure all is done correctly.
- If you feel you need a leniency at any time, explain this to the Rav *before* he gives his psak.
- If you feel the need to consult a second Rav, be sure to include all the information that transpired beforehand, including the fact that you asked a previous Rav and what that Rav said.

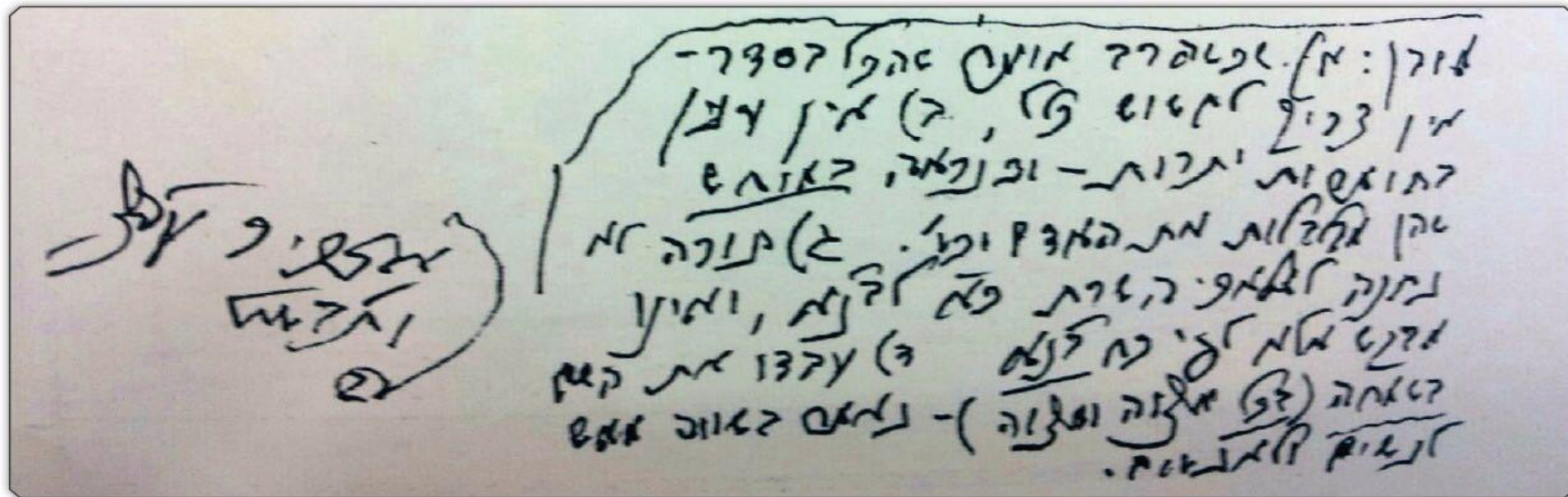


Letter from Rebbe - not to be more machmir

מענה לאשה שרצתה בגלל מקרה מסויים להחמיר על עצמה בעניני טהרת המשפחה:

מובן: א) שכשהרב אומר שהכל בסדר - אין צריך לחשוש כלל. ב) אין ענין בחומרות יתרות -
וכנראה במוחש שהן מבלבלות את האדם וכו'. ג) תורה לא נתנה למלאכי השרת כ"א לבנ"א [=כי
אם לבני אדם], ואינו מבקש אלא לפי כח בנ"א [=בני אדם] ד) עבדו את השם בשמחה (בכל
מצוה ומצוה) - נאמר בשוה ממש לנשים ולאנשים.

(2) אזכיר עה"צ ותבש"ט





Health



Health Considerations

- **Frequent staining, or irregular cycles, can be symptoms of health issues. Consult your Doctor and Rav.**
- A Bodekes can perform an internal exam to determine the source of any unexplained staining/bleeding. She then informs the Rav of her findings so he can give a Psak Din. (A Bodekes is not permitted to Pasken.)
- There are many situations that can occur and it is important to look into any unexplained issues.
- Some examples may include: skin similar to Eczema or canker sores, a viral or bacterial infection, ectropian, sensitivity to an I.U.D, or more serious problems/conditions.



Health Considerations

- If bleeding lingers too long and delays the Hefsek Taharah, and you have verified that medically, all is ok, it is sometimes helpful to seek alternative resources.

Resources:

- Check out tahareinu.com
- Zahlers Nutrition
- Homeopathy





Minhagim Customs



Customs of Women in Niddah



- In general, if a woman is menstruating, she should avoid going to a cemetery unless it will cause her distress not to go. Ask your Rav regarding going to Kivrei tzadikim.
- When a woman is menstruating she should not gaze at an open Torah scroll, for example: during Hagba in Shul.
- While it is permitted for a woman to kiss the cover of a closed Sefer Torah, many women prefer to avoid direct contact.