



Dispelling the myths about Shisha (water pipe or hooka)



Myth # Shisha is just fruit and herbal ingredients

It involves smoking **tobacco** through a water pipe. The tobacco is mixed with molasses or other sweeteners plus herbs and fruit such as apples or cherries which mask the tobacco. This moist mixture is then burned with charcoal and the smoke bubbles through the water in the bowl of the pipe via a long hose.

Myth # Water filters out harmful chemicals

Smoking tobacco through bubbling water does not clean the smoke or filter out poisons. However because the smoke is cooled, smokers may breathe it deeper into their lungs. Shisha smoke contains over 4000 chemicals, 70 of which are known carcinogens (cancer-causing substances). These include tar, benzene, asbestos, carbon-tetrachloride (dry-cleaning fluid) and formaldehyde (embalming fluid).

Shisha smoking is associated with the same life-threatening conditions as cigarettes, including mouth and lung cancer; heart disease and strokes; and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Myth # Smoking shisha is healthier than smoking cigarettes.

According to the British Heart Foundation the average shisha-smoking session lasts an hour and research has shown that in this time you can inhale the same amount of smoke as from more than 100 cigarettes.

Shisha smoking is often done at parties or with friends where the mouthpiece is passed around the table. Sharing a mouthpiece can spread diseases such as oral herpes (cold sores), TB, hepatitis, flu, coughs and colds and tummy bugs.

Myth # Shisha smoking is not addictive

Although some of the nicotine is absorbed by the water, shisha smokers are still exposed to enough nicotine to cause an addiction.

The law and Shisha-smoking in a public place

Shisha smoking is covered by the Smokefree legislation. Since 2007 it is illegal to smoke in enclosed public spaces or workplaces. Smoking shelters must be exposed to the air by at least 50% to comply. The law was designed to protect people from exposure to second-hand smoke in enclosed and substantially enclosed public places and workplaces. Breathing in second-hand smoke (passive smoking) is particularly dangerous for pregnant women, babies and children and those with heart or lung problems such as asthma.

Research suggests that shisha smoke is a major cause of indoor air pollution due to the large volumes of carbon monoxide produced.

Want to quit

You are four times more likely to quit smoking using an NHS Stop Smoking Service than trying to stop on your own.

If you live in Nottingham City contact New Leaf Stop Smoking Service

call 0800 561 2121

text **new** to 80800

visit www.newleafstopsmoking.co.uk

The team can provide support along your way to becoming a non-smoker. They also provide stop smoking products to help with cravings and other withdrawal symptoms.

For other areas [NHS Stop Smoking Service](http://www.nhs.uk/stop-smoking)