

MEDICINES, COSMETICS AND PET FOOD

(A). MEDICINES

Please consult with your physician and Rabbi before eliminating or changing any prescription medication, since questions of age, physical health and special diet are involved in the final decision.

GENERAL SEPHARDIC POSITION: If medication is needed for a dangerously sick person then all medications are permitted. If not dangerously sick, the medications that contain only *Kitniot* are permitted. If the medications contain wheat, it might be permitted in specific circumstances. Since it is not in a form that is considered edible, and by eating it a person does not mean to give importance (*Ahsheveh*) to it as food, it is permitted. However, an adult should refrain from eating sweet tasting medicine, usually made for children, if it contains a grain mixture. All processed products including vitamins and medicines should be bought before Pesach. If your Rabbi or your custom does not agree with any of the items in this list then follow your Rabbi and custom.

Some General Guidelines for Medicinal Items:

Someone suffering from a potentially life threatening illness, may use any medication necessary and may even consume *Chametz* on Pesach. If possible, such *Chametz* should be owned by a non-Jew. Also, wherever possible, the *Chametz* should be consumed in an indirect and abnormal way, such as in a capsule, dissolved into a liquid, etc.

If someone is ill but his life is not endangered, he may not directly consume *Chametz* on Pesach. However, with some restrictions, he may take required medications – even those containing *Chametz* components.

Medication in pill (tablet) form that is swallowed (not chewable, liquid, or “sucking”) – even if it contains *Chametz* – is permitted without special Passover certification.

Chewable pills containing *Kitniot* (but not *Chametz*) are permitted without special Passover certification by one who is ill. A healthy person should consult a reliable list of approved medications.

- If the chewable tablets contain *Chametz* and no alternative is available, consult your rabbi.

Liquid medications containing *Chametz* should not be used. These often contain grain alcohol and problematic flavorings and require Passover supervision.

- If the only question is *Kitniot*, these are permitted without special certification.
- If no Passover equivalent is available, the doctor should be asked to prescribe medicine without alcohol or capsules.

Many kosher for Passover medicines (including liquids), can be ordered on line. For example, Adwe (OU and KAJ) sells Kosher for Passover medicines through www.koshervitamins.com. One can also call Adwe directly at 718-788-6838

Items such as vitamins that are not medically required should be substituted with Passover certified items. Please consult your rabbi for specific questions and issues regarding individual situations.

All Pre-natal vitamins that are taken as directed by a doctor, should be used without hesitation.

In other cases when your doctor prescribes a specific vitamin that must be taken on Passover, (even if it does not have Passover supervision) may fall into the category of a pill medication. Each situation must be individually reviewed with your doctor and your Orthodox Rabbi.

(B). TOILETRIES AND COSMETICS

GENERAL SEPHARDIC POSITION: Eye shadow, Mascara, Lipstick, Eyeliner, and Blush, Cleansers, Moisturizers, Lip liners, Nail Polish, Contact lens solutions and cleansers are all permitted. They are not edible, and if they contain any *Chametz*, it was batel from before Pesach. And it is therefore permitted (on Hol Hamoed). A woman is not allowed to use make up on Shabbat. It is called painting even though there are people that claim to make kosher cosmetics for Shabbat; most opinions hold that they are not permitted.

Non-Medicinal Items (Toiletries and Cosmetics):

All varieties of body soaps, shampoos and stick deodorants are permissible, regardless of ingredients.

All varieties of ointment, cream, nail polish, hand lotions, eye shadow, eye liner, mascara, blush, foot powder, face powder, ink and paint are permissible regardless of ingredients.

- Many of these items are problematic on *Yom Tov* (as opposed to *Chol HaMoed*). Consult your rabbi with individual questions.

Cologne, hair spray, shaving lotion and deodorant that have restorable denatured alcohol should not be used. This only applies when products are in a purely liquid state.

Lip products – such as petroleum jelly – are permitted without special certification.

- Many of these items are problematic on *Yom Tov* (as opposed to *Chol HaMoed*). Consult your rabbi with individual questions.

(C). PET FOOD

Many commercial pet foods contain actual Chametz (wheat, barley, starch, etc.) and may not be used on Pesach. Non-Chametz substitutes should be used.

GENERAL SEPHARDIC POSITION: Must be free of wheat gluten and is edible to humans. If it is impossible to find Kasher for Pesach, one must sell these and all the animals to a non-Jew for the duration of Pesach unconditionally. Then the non-Jew may feed the animals, at his discretion, whatever he wants.

There are two separate kashrut issues; one related specifically to Pesach, the other related to the rest of the year as well. The Torah forbids benefiting from mixtures of milk and meat. Because they contain both, many commonly available pet foods are forbidden throughout the year. Note that additives such as casein, lactose, and whey are dairy. Interestingly, fowl with dairy is permissible in pet food.

Because one may not benefit from it, Jews may not use or own pet food containing *Chametz* on Pesach. Almost all dry pet food lists wheat, barley, spelt, oats, or rye as a primary ingredient. Many additives, such as malt, certain yeasts, bran, and even vitamins are likely to be *Chametz*. Benefit from *Kitniot* is permitted on Pesach even for Ashkenazim. Therefore, rice and other *Kitniot* (such as corn or sunflower seeds), do not pose a problem in pet foods.

FISH: Fish food and Vacation blocks often have chometz. Goldfish and Tropical fish can have tubular worms, frozen brine shrimp, freeze dried worms (if they do not contain fillers).

Mixes sold in stores often contain chometz. It is advisable to mix regular and Pesach food together one to two weeks before Pesach before switching completely to Pesach food. The ratio of regular and Pesach food should be changed slowly to get the animal used to the new diet. Check with your veterinarian before changing diet.

BIRDS (PARROTS, PARAKEETS, COCKATIELS, MACAWS):

Millet, sorghum, wild bird food (check for chometz ingredients) as main diet.

- Peanuts, sunflower seeds, safflower seeds can be given.

- Larger birds such as parrots can eat pure alfalfa pellets (make sure it is pure alfalfa since it is common to add grains) or dry dog food (see above for list).
- Smaller birds can also have pure alfalfa pellets, crush before feeding.
- Can supplement with sliced grapes, cottage cheese, rice cakes (birds like these), small pieces of lean meat, matzah, berries, eggs, canned baby fruits. All large food should be shredded before serving. These items should be given sparingly.
- For minerals, can have oyster shells (calcium) or mineral block such as Kaytee Tropical Fruit Mineral Block Treat.
- The greater the variety, the better.

HAMSTERS, GUINEA PIGS, GERBILS & RABBITS:

- Best to feed pure alfalfa pellets. Make sure it is pure alfalfa since it is common to add grains. Dried alfalfa may also be given.
- Can supplement with mixture of cut-up fruits and vegetables - carrots, broccoli, grapes, apples, melon, kale, parsley, oranges, celery, dry corn, sunflower seeds, cabbage. Can also give some matzah. If not accustomed to these items, give sparingly.
- Guinea pigs especially will benefit from kale, parsley and oranges.
- Hamsters especially will benefit from apples.
- Guinea pigs need vitamin C added to diet.