



## Halacha Highlight

### Reciting a beracha on food that is dangerous to one's health

Shulchan Aruch Siman 196 Seif 1  
אכל דבר אסור

#### One who eats food that is prohibited

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' א') teaches that one who eats a prohibited food, even if it is only Rabbinically prohibited, is not included in the zimun. Moreover, someone who eats a prohibited food does not recite a beracha before or after eating that food. Mishnah Berurah (סקי"ג) explains that since the food is prohibited and it is a sin to eat it, one blasphemes Hashem's Name by reciting a beracha. Based on this, Maharam Shick (שו"ת מהר"ם שיק או"ח סי' ר"ס) rules that one who eats food that is dangerous to his health may not recite a beracha since the eating of that food violates the command of וחי בהם.

However, it is not prohibited to eat every food that may be dangerous. In the case of a diabetic for whom eating cake is dangerous, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach maintains that he is obligated to recite a beracha before eating the cake but not afterwards. He explains that it is likely that the first crumb that he eats is not dangerous to his health, and one is required to recite a beracha rishona when eating even the smallest amount. In contrast, a beracha acharona is recited only if one ate at least an olive's volume of cake. Once one has consumed that amount of cake, it is likely that he has violated the prohibition of putting his life in danger and thus a beracha acharona is not warranted (חשוקי חמד ברכות ל"ו).

Rav Auerbach cites a similar idea in the name of Sefer Lev Chaim. He maintains that someone who eats bread without washing is not

## Overview

### Siman 196 Seif 1:

One who ate prohibited food, even if it is only Rabbinically prohibited may not join in a zimun and one does not recite a beracha before or after eating that food.

- ❖ This applies even to something that is not inherently prohibited and the person merely prohibited it upon himself. (M.B. 1)
- ❖ We also do not answer אמן to his beracha. (M.B. 2)
- ❖ One does not recite birkas hamazon even if he is full. Taz and other authorities maintain that if one ate prohibited food inadvertently he would recite a beracha acharona but may not be used to form a zimun. (M.B. 4)
- ❖ There is a dispute whether one recites a beracha if he stole grain and made it into bread. Magen Avrohom writes that one who is full should recite birkas hamazon since it involves an uncertainty regarding a Biblical commandment. (M.B. 4)

### Siman 196 Seif 2:

**If one ate a prohibited food out of danger he must recite a beracha** (See below siman 204).

- ❖ It is explained there in Rema seif 8 that if one is forced to eat a prohibited food he does not recite a beracha even though he was forced to eat out of danger. (M.B. 6)

considered to be in violation of a prohibition with that eating and one should even answer אמן to his beracha on bread. His reasoning is that it is only eating an olive's volume that requires washing and the first bite does not contain an olive's volume. Rav Auerbach questions this ruling since one is obligated to wash when he intends to eat an olive's volume of bread even though he does not initially eat an olive's volume (חידושים למס' ברכות מ"ה).