



Halacha Highlight

Closing and opening disposable diapers

Shulchan Aruch Siman 340 Seif 7
אותם שמהדקים הבגדים

Those who tighten their garments

Shulchan Aruch writes that it is prohibited for people to tighten clothes around their arms by pulling tight a thread unless the holes are somewhat wide and are finished off with sewing at the circumference. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק כ"ח) explains that they used to insert a thread into the sleeve so that one could pull on the thread to tighten the sleeve around one's arm. When it is fashioned in the manner described by Shulchan Aruch, tightening the thread does not resemble sewing; rather it resembles inserting hooks into loops which is permitted (מ"ב סי"ק כ"ט). What is evident from Shulchan Aruch's comments is that sewing something that is not permanent is nevertheless, prohibited as an act of sewing. Seemingly, since Rema did not comment it would seem that he agrees. However, above (סי' ש"ז סעי' ג') Rema ruled that one should not separate shoes that were sewn together in the presence of an *am ha'aretz* which implies that *halachically* it is permitted but should be avoided in order to bypass confusing an *am ha'aretz*. If one can separate items that are temporarily sewn together, it must be that it is not really considered connected and thus it should be permitted to sew them temporarily together as well. Some *Poskim* explain that Rema maintains that temporary stitches are prohibited but separating temporary stitches is permitted (שו"ת מנחת יצחק ח"ח סי' ל"א וארחות

Overview

Siman 340 Seif 7:

Those who tighten their garment around their arm with a thread by pulling it tight, are prohibited from doing so on Shabbos unless the holes are wide and the threads are in the shape of a circle.

- ❖ They would insert a thread into the sleeve and when they wanted it tighter they would pull the thread. (M.B. 28)
- ❖ In such a circumstance it does not resemble sewing and instead it resembles placing a hook into a loop since it is designed to be tightened and loosened. If he does not tighten well and sometimes leaves it for an extended period of time so that he removes it while it is still attached, it is prohibited to tighten it on Shabbos. (M.B. 29)

שבת ח"א פ"א הע"י מ"ג בשם הגר"י אלשיב) Others maintain that Rema permits making and undoing temporary stitches and did not mention his lenient position in our context because he relied on his presentation of his opinion above (הגר"י אויערבך בש"כ פ"יו הע"י ר"ט).

This debate relates to the permissibility of using disposable diapers that are attached with glue tabs. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv maintains that it is considered temporary sewing and is prohibited (ארחות שבת ה"ל) whereas Rav Nissim Karelitz (חוט שני ח"א פ"ז סק"ב הע"י קל"ז) contends that since the tab is designed to be opened and closed numerous times without ruining the diaper it is comparable to a button that one could close and open numerous times on Shabbos. If the tabs close with Velcro all opinions agree that it is permitted (מ"ב מהד' דרשו מס' 69).