The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Monday, Oct 3 2022 ■ ח' תשרי, תשפ"ג
סימן תרי"ז סעיף א'-ד'

Overview

Siman 617 Seif 1:

Pregnant and nursing women fast and complete the fast of Yom Kippur.

Siman 617 Seif 2:

If a pregnant woman smells food (and her face changes, even though she did not say that she needs food) **we whisper in her ear that it is Yom Kippur, if he mind settles as a result of this recollection, good, but if not she is fed until her mind settles.**

- It is known that if she does not eat the food that she craves, she and the fetus will be in danger. (M.B. 1)
- If her appearance does not change we do not feed her unless she claims that she needs to eat. (M.B. 2)
- We take a toothpick, insert it in the gravy and then place it in her mouth. If her mind does not settle we feed her gravy in small quantities, less than what is punishable on Yom Kippur. If her mind still does not settle we feed her some food in small quantities, less than what is punishable on Yom Kippur. This procedure is followed for women who are pregnant but someone ill is fed in accordance with the doctor's instructions. Similarly, if someone ill eats because he claims that he needs to eat we also feed him until he says that he had enough but even in this case we feed in small quantities at a time. (M.B. 4)
- It is unnecessary to consult with the doctors regarding the quantity that she needs. (M.B. 5)

Siman 617 Seif 3:

Any person who smells a food and as a result his appearance changes, is considered in danger if he does not eat and is fed that food.

- There is a disagreement whether he is fed if his appearance does not change. Chasam Sofer writes that although we would not feed him in this instance since the presumption is that he is well but he may feed himself whether on Yom Kippur or whether it relates to prohibited foods. (M.B. 6)
- We prioritize the food based on what violates the prohibition the least first and once his mind settles he may not eat the remainder of the day. (M.B. 7)

Siman 617 Seif 4:

A woman who is three days postpartum does not fast at all, if she is between three and seven days and claims that she needs food, we feed her and beyond seven days she is treated the same as any other person. These days are not counted based on 24 hour days, therefore, if for example, if a woman gave birth on the afternoon of the 7th of Tishrei we do not feed her on Yom Kippur if she does not claim that she needs to eat, even though three 24 hour days did not pass when Yom Kippur begins because once the 4th calendar day from her delivery begins it is considered after three days.

- A woman who is in labor already qualifies for this halacha. (M.B. 9)
- A woman within three days of delivering is fed even if she claims it is unnecessary but she is fed small quantities at a time. If she does not claim that eating is unnecessary she is fed in the normal manner but even in this case there are authorities who maintain that she is fed in small quantities. (M.B. 10)
- It is only when others assert that eating is unnecessary that she must claim that it is necessary but if no one contends that eating is unnecessary then we feed her even if she does not assert that eating is necessary. (M.B. 11)
- After seven days if she claims that she must eat due to her delivery we do not feed her but if she claims that she is ill, in general, she is treated the same as any other ill person. (M.B. 12)
- There are Poskim who maintain that we measure them in 24 hour days and authorities write that one who adopts a lenient approach concerning a person's health will not lose. (M.B. 13)

Halacha Highlight

A pregnant woman fasting on Yom Kippur

Shulchan Aruch Siman 617 Seif 1

עברות ומניקות מתענות ומשלימות ביום הכפורים

Pregnant and nursing women must complete the fast on Yom Kippur

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') rules that pregnant and nursing women must complete the fast on Yom Kippur. Even nowadays that women are very weak during pregnancy, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה יום כיפור פ"ו סע' א') ruled that they are obligated to fast, even if they are in their ninth month. Fasting for a healthy woman whose pregnancy does not have any complications or risks should not cause any health concerns for her or the fetus. Although there are exceptions to that rule, since they are so rare, one need not be halachically concerned with such occurrences and she must fast. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (הל' חג בחג פכ"ה הע' 5) also rules that healthy women without any complications or risks should fast on Yom Kippur and adds that she should make sure not to over exert herself. If fasting will cause her to feel weak she should stay in bed and should not even go to shul to daven. Rav Shmuel HaLevi Wosner takes this a step further and writes that her husband has an obligation to watch her that she should not exert herself and if this means that he must stay home from shul in order to watch the little children, he is obligated to do so (הל' חג בחג שם).

In the event that a woman is either not healthy or has risks or has experienced complications, she should eat and drink but should consult with her doctor whether consuming small quantities of food and beverages over a long period of time (פחות פחות מכשיעור) will be sufficient for her nutritional needs and will keep her sufficiently hydrated. Similarly, if a pregnant woman was fasting but vomited and as a result feels very weak, or if she is potentially dehydrated she may and should drink fluids and if necessary may even eat (חוט השני יום כיפור עמ' קס"ו). In all cases a woman should consult with her doctor and rov for practical guidance.