

PESACH GUIDE 2012

Halachic measurements by Rabbi Heinnaman Shlit'a

PASSOVER (PESACH) - HELP! Not the help we all scream about. This time it's not the cleaning, getting organized, trying to figure out where to start and where to end. This time it's diabetes! The challenge of diabetes seems ten-fold when it comes to Passover (Pesach). Our whole routine has changed! Four cups of wine at one meal! Hand matzo- what's that? How do we know how many carbohydrates are in one hand matzo? These are real concerns for people with diabetes and related health issues, which until now, had few answers. The Jewish Diabetes Association (JDA) has been answering these questions for thousands world wide for more than two decades and has now written this article.

So how does one manage on Passover (Pesach) without forfeiting the benefits of a healthy regimen and healthy lifestyle? Let us begin to address these issues.

This year the first Seder is on Friday night the 6th of April 2012—all unleavened bread (chametz) must be out of the house by Friday morning. This certainly does not leave many choices for carbs, since matzo may not be eaten until the Seder. So try to keep busy with light protein and lots of vegetables—remember that kugels need not be only potatoes---use your imagination and our cookbook. The following will help you prepare your matzo and wine. If you have everything ready you are less likely to run in to problems. Remember that failing to prepare is preparing to fail!

The Matzo:

The stipulations for minimum shiurim for matza, which follow, are based on the psak of Rav Moshe Heinemann shlit"a. NOTE: These calculations from the Star-K are based on the use of a Tzelem Pupa hand matzo. In the case of a medical condition, one may fulfill the mitzva of achilas matzo, including korach and afikoman with the following:

Hand matzo (round) 13.75 sq in. Use one-sixth (1/6) of a matzo 16 gr. Carbs
Machine matzo 10.75 sq in. Use one-quarter (1/4) of a matzo 8 gr. Carbs

FOR ACHILAS MATZO:

First blessing on Matzo at the Seder; some say one only has to eat 1 kezayis. Since this Mitzvah .

a d'oraysa, (torah commandment), There is a Chumrah (stringency), by some Rabbis, to eat 2 kezaisim. However, many feel that it is acceptable to have 2 kezaisim of the smallest shiur (minimum amount).

So, if one eats 1.5 oz. of matzo, he has eaten 2 kezaisim of the smallest shiur (minimum amount), or one kezayis of the bigger shiur (minimum amount).

FOR KORACH AND AFIKOMAN:

This is only M'deRabanon (Rabbinical decree), one can eat the smallest shiur (minimum amount), which is 0.62 oz. (thin matzo = 1/5, medium = 1/6, and thick = 1/7 of a Matzo).

CALCULATING THE AMOUNT OF CARBS:

Most machine matzo has the portion size and carbs listed on the box and are uniformed in size and shape. We suggest that one keep the amount that you intend to eat near your plate. In order to simplify the calculations, we recommend that you weigh the Matzo before the holiday in order to become accustomed to the weight and sizes. For those that prefer to do their own calculation matzo has an average carb factor of 0.75 (75% of its weight is carbohydrates). Whole wheat matzo has almost 12 grams of dietary fiber per 100 grams, bringing the total amount of carbs down almost 4 grams per piece. The more whole wheat products that one uses throughout the year, and especially during Passover (Pesach) when there are so many meals, are advantageous for most people

Hand matzos have been divided in to four categories: all weights & measurements are approximated and rounded to the nearest 10th:

| TYPE of MATZO | PCS/KILO | WEIGHT | CARBS | CALORIES |
|---------------|----------|--------|----------|----------|
| THIN | 20 | 53 gr. | 40.8 gr. | 160 |
| MEDIUM | 17 | 64 gr. | 48 gr. | 192 |
| THICK | 13 | 75 gr. | 60 gr. | 236 |
| MACHINE | 10 | 30 gr. | 25 gr. | 115 |

THE ARBA KOSOS (FOUR CUPS)

A. WINE/ CUP REQUIREMENTS: The cup must hold at least a reviis of wine (3.8 fl. oz., or 112 ml). MINIMUM SHIUR TO FULFILL ARBA KOSOS:

Individual Minimum Shiur

One with a medical condition at least 1.5 fl. Oz. (45 ml)

One in good health at least 1.9 fl. Oz. (56 ml)

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

The lowest percentage of alcohol that may be used for the four cups is 4%.

One should drink each of the four cups of wine within half a minute.

B. DILUTING WINE WITH GRAPE JUICE AND WATER Wine may be diluted in the following maximum ratios; these ratios allow the wine to retain enough of its properties to qualify it being used for the four cups:

| Wine | Grape Juice | Water |
|------|-------------|----------------------|
| 1/3 | 2/3 | — |
| 1/3 | 1/3 | 1/3 |
| 1/3 | — | 2/3 (see NOTE below) |

NOTE: The diluted beverage must contain at least 4% alcohol to fulfill the obligation of drinking wine on Pesach.⁵ If necessary, one may make a mixture of 2/3 water and 1/3 wine (66% water and 34% wine) as long as the diluted amount still contains 4% alcohol. Otherwise, there is a chance that it may no longer be considered wine.

The following chart illustrates how much wine to drink.

| Kos | Amt you drink | Amt of wine after dilution |
|-----|---------------|----------------------------|
|-----|---------------|----------------------------|

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|---------|---------|---------|
| 1st cup | 1.5 oz. | 0.6 oz. |
| 2nd cup | 1.5 oz. | 0.6 oz. |
| 3rd cup | 1.5 oz. | 0.6 oz. |
| 4th cup | 1.5 oz. | 0.6 oz. |
| TOTAL | 6.0 oz. | 2.4 oz. |

(Footnotes) 1 HaGaon HaRav R'N Karelitz Sh"lita rules that in the case of a sick person, one goes by the more lenient ruling of 4.6 oz. (135c.c.) even according to the Chazon Ish Zt"l ADDING WATER FOR WINE AND GRAPE JUICE: One can add water to dry wine, and it is still considered wine and is Kosher in upholding the Mitzvah (commandment). However, the taste of the wine must remain, and should not acquire the taste of a light drink. The acceptable combination is 60% water to 40% wine. There are some wines, due to a stronger taste that allow up to 75% water and 25% wine. However, a taste test should be done before the Yom Tov (holiday), to insure that this mixture does not lose the taste of the wine.

The ruling for grape juice is that one is not allowed to add water since this alters the taste. However, one is allowed to mix the grape juice with the wine/water combination which will bring down the amount of carbs in the grape juice and the amount of alcohol from the dry wine considerably.

If one follows these guidelines of mixing 75% (3 cups) water to 25% (1 cup) of wine correctly, one will consume only 2-3 oz. of wine throughout the entire Seder.

If the largest shiur is used, it will amount to 5-6 oz of wine. In order to be able to estimate the actual amount to drink at the Seder, measure the exact amount that you will be using, before Yom Tov. Choose the becher (Kiddush cup) that you will be using and pour the measured amount in to the becher of choice so that you can recognize how much you will be drinking.

TYPE OF WINE:

The best option would be a dry wine, which has almost no carbs. [Most dry wines contain approximately 4 grams of carbs per 8 oz. cup.] If the sour taste bothers you, try adding some artificial sweetener, such as saccharin tablets, which can be dissolved in water. Because the law does not require manufacturers to print nutrition facts on wine bottles, it is often hard to know exactly how many carbs a glass of wine contains.

If you are trying to find a wine that is very low in sugar, you can use a glucose meter before Yom Tov to test a sample. (We tested it with a Glucometer Ascentia XL, not all meters will give accurate results). Test a sample of the wine just as you would test a drop of blood on your meter. If the wine you are testing is a sweet wine, your meter will give you a HI reading. If it is a dry, low-carb wine, the meter will tell you that it is LO. Many of the dry wines will not give you a LO reading, but the numbers you will get are a very good reference. Diabetes Forecast stated that a cup of regular soda contains 4,500 mg/dl of sugar, which would give a very high reading. It pays to remember this, so that you keep the meter reading of a dry wine in proper perspective.) [By the way, this is a good way to test diet soda from fountains that could easily be interchanged with regular soda. To be certain that the soda you are drinking is really sugar free; check it out on your meter.] For those who are not accustomed to drinking high quality dry wine, it may take a while to acquire a taste for it.

Here are some examples of wines we tested for sugar content on a glucose meter:

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Chardonnay was 225. (meter reading)

Cabernet Sauvignon was 87

Sauvignon Blanc from Gamla was 27.

These are only examples. Remember to test the specific wines that you are planning to use. Less expensive wines are rarely sugar free. Checking on the meter seems to have proven this correct, as some inexpensive, supposedly dry wines, actually tested HI on a meter. An important point: Since alcohol may cause a drop in your Blood Sugar, discuss with your doctor whether or not to cover the carbs in wine with insulin. There is more of a chance that wine will cause a low BG on an empty stomach. If you use pure (unmixed) wine for the first cup, make sure to follow the above guidelines and not to overdue your alcohol intake.

Those with Type 2 diabetes: should discuss with their doctor and Rabbi if it is better to drink wine rather than grape juice. According to Halachah (Biblical law) wine is preferable, and the juice has high sugar content, however, many of the oral medications used for treating Type 2 diabetes, (non-insulin dependent) diabetes are not compatible with alcohol. Remember to show these options to your doctor. There is not much alcohol left. Many health care professional have been very pleased with these options since they allow for a normal quality of life.

Those with Gestational diabetes (diabetes in pregnancy) or T1 and pregnant should check with their health care professionals and Rabbi to determine which way to go. Again show them the charts in order to guide them in their decision.

GRAPE JUICE: According to most Rabbis it is preferable to use wine or a wine/grape juice combination for the 4 Cups. Keep in mind that as far as diabetes and carb counting is concerned, dry wine is certainly preferable. If you drink grape juice, please note: the carbohydrate content of the various grape juices differ. Those that we have researched range from 32-60 gr. of carbs per cup. Please make sure to check the label.

In order to cut down the amount of carbs one can use a combination of grape juice mixed with the diluted 60/40 wine. In order to prepare in advance, simply pour 1 cup of wine into an empty bottle, and add 3 cups of water. (The size of the cup does not matter. Just make sure that you use the same cup for the water and the wine). It is always advisable to prepare this bottle in advance and label it as your own "SPECIAL RESERVE".

SUMMARY PREPERATION LIST:

- o. Discuss with your Rabbi the shiurim of rov reviiis and mixing wine with water.
- o. Choose the wine of your choice and check the carb content (remember the meter test).
- o. Prepare the right size Cup.
- o. Train your eye to recognize the amount that you will be drinking during the Seder.

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- o. Mix the wine with water following the instructions of your Rabbi and doctor. Prepare a separate labeled bottle.
- o. Weigh Matzos in advance in order to be better prepared for deciding insulin doses.
- o. Make sure you have prepared in advance your choice of glucose for treating hypoglycemia.
- o. Review chart and details with your health care team.
- o. Prepare all medical supplies, medications and equipment for Yom Tov (Holid) and Shabbos in advance l'kovod yom tov (in honor of the holiday & Sabbath)

Sugar Substitutes:

Sugar Substitutes - Gefen - Kosher L'Passover (Pesach) Sweet'N Low (not Equal) Sweetie with Badatz supervision from Israel (liquid & Tablets). There may be others but must have specific Passover (Pesach) supervision. Powdered Equal, Splenda and Nutrasweet are NOT kosher for Passover (Pesach), and may not be used by Ashkenazim and not by Sefardim unless specifically noted.

It was once thought that products containing sugar, even in minute amounts, were totally off limits for people with diabetes or at risk for diabetes or other related health conditions. However, the American Diabetes Association opposes totally restricting sugar -- provided they consume it in the context of a healthy food choice. Therefore, foods with sugar listed as a lower ingredient on the label can be included in one's meal plan, as long as they are counted in the appropriate food group.

Sugar should be consumed in small amounts and in most recipes can be cut down significantly and/or combined with sweeteners. Today we are lucky to have a much larger variety of kosher for Passover (Pesach) products. The following are some products with the nutrition facts.

Common Cooking Ingredients:

| Food | Amount | Carb | Calories | Fat |
|------------------------------|---------|------|----------|-----|
| Choc. chopped 72% cocoa | 2 tbsp | 13.5 | 57 | 4.5 |
| Choc small squares 72% cocoa | 10 | 13 | 226 | 18 |
| Baking choc large squares | 2 | 10 | 79 | 4 |
| Choc chips packaged | 1 tbsp | 10 | 75 | 4 |
| Choc chips packaged | 1/2 cup | 80 | 600 | 32 |
| Cocoa | 1 tbsp. | 3 | 20 | 1 |
| Cocoa | 1 cup | 50 | 350 | 15 |

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|---------------|---------|-----|------|-----|
| Eggs | 1 Large | 0.7 | 70 | 7 |
| Honey | 1 tbsp. | 12 | 48 | 0 |
| Honey | 1/2 cup | 112 | 448 | 0 |
| Matzo Meal | 1 tbsp. | 5 | 8.5 | 0 |
| Matzo Meal | 1 cup. | 96 | 134 | 0 |
| Oil | 1 tbsp | 0 | 90 | 10 |
| Oil | 1 cup | 0 | 1440 | 160 |
| Potato Starch | 1 tbsp. | 8 | 36 | 0 |
| Potato Starch | 1 cup | 128 | 576 | 0 |
| Sugar | 1 tbsp. | 15 | 60 | 0 |
| Sugar | 1/4 cup | 60 | 240 | 0 |

PASSOVER (PESACH) COOKIES AND CAKES

This is just a partial list. Since most Passover (Pesach) products are similarly manufactured it is probably safe to assume that similar products will have more or less the same amount of carbohydrates. Since Passover (Pesach) products are made from, potato starch, sugar and/or matzo meal, they are all, basically, almost pure sugar. With enough preparation time one should have no problem making some snacks with fewer carbs. As always the best way to go is good old fashioned "home made".

| Product | Company | Serving size. | Carbs |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------|
| Brownie Cake | Hagadda | 38 gr. | 20 gr. |
| Chocolate Cake | Oberlander's | 42 gr. | 23 gr. |
| Rainbow Cake | Hagadda | 28 gr. | 11 gr. |
| Sponge Cake | Oberlander's | 42 gr. | 24 gr. |
| Apricot Sand Cookies | Hagadda | 28 gr. | 16 gr. |
| Leaf Cookies | Hagadda | 33 gr. | 14 gr. |
| Nut Cookies | Hagadda | 28 gr. | 11 gr. |
| Raspberry Sand Cookies | Hagadda | 28 gr. | 15 gr. |

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Chocolate Macaroons Hagadda 33 gr. 18 gr.

Finally, remember, Pesach does not have to mean matzo, potatoes, and eggs throughout Yom Tov. Instead of high-fat soups and potato kugel, you can substitute other vegetables and vegetable combinations. JDA has published a cookbook, EnLITened Kosher Cooking now also available in Hebrew BishuLITE (available at most bookstores or online at www.jewishdiabetes.org) with more than 140 recipes for Pesach along with year-round recipes that are easily adaptable.

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