

Must the Cannula or its Tape be Removed for Ablution?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

Question

What do the scholars of Islam say regarding the following matter: if a person needs to have a drip or injection frequently, the doctor leaves a cannula attached and secured with tape, not removing it. When performing wuḍū' for prayer, the water does not flow over the skin underneath the tape. The question is: In this situation, is it necessary to remove the cannula for wuḍū'? Or will wuḍū' be valid by merely flowing water over the tape?

Answer

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

In the situation mentioned, for the patient who needs frequent drips or injections, it is not necessary to remove the cannula or its tape for wuḍū'. Rather, wuḍū' will be valid by merely flowing water over the tape. The reason for this is that removing the tape may cause the needle inside the vein to move. According to information received from doctors, if an inexperienced person removes the tape, there is a risk of swelling or infection. Furthermore, the cannula becomes unusable, and a new one has to be inserted in a different location. Removing and reinserting the cannula repeatedly can also cause pain.

Therefore, due to this difficulty and hardship (ḥaraj), the patient is granted the concession to flow water over the tape during wuḍū', and making water flow underneath the tape is excused. This is similar to the case of a wound where, if flowing water or performing mash (wiping) is harmful, one is ordered to wrap a bandage or cloth over it and flow water over the covering. However, it must be remembered that the tape should only be applied to the extent of necessity; if it is excessive, the area covered by the excess part must be washed.

وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَكْبَرُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ knows best.)

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