107785 - Can Hepatitis B Patients Get Married?

the question

What is the Islamic ruling on marrying someone who has hepatitis B, knowing that this disease is transmitted sexually and through the blood, and may also be transmitted via saliva (although there is no medical consensus on the latter)?

The question here is about a man who has the virus but his liver is healthy, i.e., he is a carrier of the virus only, which means that the virus is hidden in some tissues such as the liver and it is not multiplying, but the possibility that it may revive and become active remains constant. The woman whom he wants to marry has been vaccinated against this disease previously, and the doctor says that there is no danger to her from the virus in this case, and Allah knows best. If marriage is not forbidden in this case, we hope that you can advise the sick person as to how he should speak about this disease when he proposes marriage; for example, when exactly should he tell the woman and what should he say?.

Summary of answer

The one who is a carrier of hepatitis B or has the disease may get married to a healthy woman or a woman who is infected with this disease, if she accepts that after he tells her about his situation. It is not permissible for him to get married unless he tells her about his sickness, because concealing that is deceit which is prohibited. If he conceals it, then his wife finds out about that, she has the right to annul the marriage.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Marriage and Hepatitis B: Islamic Perspective on Health Conditions

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The Importance of Full Disclosure in Marriage Proposals

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Understanding Hepatitis B: Medical Considerations

It is well known medically that most people who get hepatitis B can resist it and expel it from the body, but there is a proportion of people, between five and 10%, whose bodies cannot get rid of it, so they become carriers of the disease, and in a small number the disease may develop into cirrhosis of the liver, cancer of the liver, liver failure or death. In addition to that, in 10% of those infected, the disease may become chronic and the person becomes a carrier of the virus and is able to spread the sickness to others.

The carrier of the virus usually does not have any signs or symptoms of sickness, as his liver enzymes appear normal, but he remains infected for a number of years or maybe for the rest of his life, and he is able to transmit the virus to others. Most carriers of the virus do not suffer from any real problems with hepatitis B. Although they have good health, a few of them may be more susceptible than others to chronic liver infection, cirrhosis and tumours of the liver. The tumours usually grow in people who have developed cirrhosis of the liver.

Preventative Measures for Hepatitis B Carriers in Marriage

In order to prevent spread of this virus via carriers of the virus, it is essential to do the following:

- He should not engage in sexual activity unless the other party has immunity or has had the

necessary vaccinations against this virus; otherwise he must wear a condom.

- He should not donate blood or plasma or any part of his body to others, or share razor blades, toothbrushes or nail clippers.
- He should not swim in swimming pools if he has any wounds on his skin.
- His family members should be tested and vaccinations should be given to those who are not carriers of the virus and who do not have any immunity. (End quote from the article *Amrad Al-Kabid wa Zira`at Al-Kabid*, by Dr. Ibrahim ibn Hamad At-Tarif)

How to Approach Marriage Proposals with Hepatitis B

As to how to tell the woman he wants to propose to do about that, he should explain the facts to her at the time of proposal, and tell her that he is healthy and well, but tests have shown the presence of this virus, and the doctor has told him that she will not be harmed because she has been vaccinated against it. If she agrees to marry him, then all well and good, and if she refuses and prefers to be safe and not take the risk, then she may do that.

For more details, please see the following answers: 377914, 111980, 267083, 69742, 104675.

And Allah knows best.