114129 - Ruling on using foods which contain pork-derived substances and how to deal with them

the question

I would like to ask you bout the products that we buy not knowing what it contains, which may contain something haram. I have read on the Internet that the products that contain one of the following substances are haram:

E100 , E110 , E120 , E140 , E141 , E153 , E210 , E213 , E214 , E216 , E234 , E252 , E270 , E280 , E325 , E326 , E327 , E334 , E335 , E336 , E337 , E422 , E430 , E431 , E432 , E433 , E434 , E435 , E436 , E440 , E470 , E471 , E472 , E473 , E474 , E475 , E476 , E477 , E478 , E481 , E482 , E483 , E492 , E493 , E494 , E495 , E542 , E570 , E570 , E572 , E631 , E635 , E904 (risque de le contenir E104-E122-E141-E150-E153-E171-E173-E180-E240-E214-E477-E151 .

The fatwa is on the following websites

-www.islamweb.com

- www.islamonline.net

“The mentioned above numbers according to Muslim scientists are substances that have been transformed into totally different substances. They cannot have their original attributes and thus they cannot be named according to the original substance they are made of.

This chemical or natural transformation made the substance into another one. It is permissible then to eat products containing those substances after it loses its original attributes. The Muslim scholars know that transformation cancels prohibition. An example of this was given by the known scholar imam ibn taymiyah :” if a pig or a dog falls into a saltcellar and transformed under the effect of salt until it loses its original attributes, it is permissible to use this salt” this is a known rule to the early Muslim scholars. They used transformation as a way to make some impermissible things permissible. What is haram is to use products that contain pork fat or meat, as fat does not normally change by heating or boiling. So if it is written on the cover of the product that it contains pork fat or animals fat, this makes the particular product impermissible to eat, and it is haram to

eat it for the mentioned reason”
Do I have to search on the covers of all products I buy? And how can we know the haram substances? If these numbers are not prohibited, then what is their purpose? A common person does not understand some of these numbers, and some products may contain these substances but they will not be written on the cover.
Is it correct that if the mentioned substances exist in a product but in small proportion, it becomes halal? And what if we do not know the exact proportion?
What is your opinion regarding who says that some firms feed turkeys with pork products?
Will I be sinful if I eat a product that I found it contains one of a substance that maybe extracted from pork? Will I be sinful if I eat a product and after eating it discover that it contains one of the mentioned numbers referring that it maybe extracted from pork?
I apologise for this long question. May Allah reward you greatly!.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

One of the things that distinguishes the Muslim from others is that he pays attention to the shar’i rulings that have to do with his life. That includes his earnings, his food, his drink. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated the importance of halal food to the Muslim in this world and the Hereafter. He stated that eating haram food is a cause of du`a’s not being answered and with regard to the Hereafter, there is a stern warning to the one who nourishes his body with haram things.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Every body that is nourished with haram things, the Fire is more befitting for it.” Narrated by al-Tabaraani; classed as saheeh by Shaykh al-Albani in Saheeh al-Jaami’ (4519).

The Muslim should beware of eating that which is it not permissible for him to eat, and he should

seek out halal food, even if it is more expensive than other food, and even if obtaining it involves more effort.

Secondly:

The pig is haram and najis (impure); it is haram to eat its meat or fat, and it is not permissible to eat a little of it or part of it. If some parts of its meat or fat is found in bread, food or medicine, it is haram to consume it at all.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

If the Muslim is certain or thinks it most like that any pork, lard (pig fat), or ground up pig bones has gotten into his food, medicine, toothpaste and so on, then it is not permissible for him to eat it or drink it, or apply it to his skin. Whatever he is uncertain about, he should abstain from it, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.” End quote.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baz, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Razzaaq ‘Afeefi, Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah ibn Ghadyaan, Shaykh ‘Abd0Allah ibn Qa’ood.

Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (22/281).

Thirdly:

Does the Muslim have to ask and find out before eating any ingredients if he is uncertain about whether there is anything haram in them?

The scholars of the Standing Committee said: If he is uncertain about something, he should leave it. Elsewhere (22/285) they said: He should ask for details because it is obligatory to beware of eating haram things.

This is what must be done if the country where those foods and drinks were manufactured is one where factories are not banned from using pork derivatives. Those people use a lot of pork by-products such as lard (pig fat) which they use in many kinds of food, drink, medicines, pastes and

so on.

If the country of manufacture is a Muslim country which bans the use of pork and its by-products, then the Muslim does not have to research and enquire and ask about product that is permissible in and of itself, as it is unlikely that there will be any of these haram things in it.

Depending on the country where the food is produced or manufactured, the scholars will say whether one should enquire or not. Part of enquiring is asking scientists and experts about the chemical composition and organic materials. It also includes reading the lists of ingredients on foods. This is sufficient to make sure, even if it comes from a kaafir country, because such lists are paid proper attention to for fear of the laws and penalties. They are slaves to money and do not indulge in lying – in most cases. What is written on them of symbols and names of ingredients that are not understood should also be asked about by the one who is able to do that. Knowledge is available nowadays via many means. The one who trusts them regarding this matter and trusts what they write can read the list of ingredients, otherwise he has to enquire further, or avoid it altogether, which is safer for him.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked:

Is it essential to read the list of ingredients written on food, to make sure that there are no pork or alcohol related products?

They relied:

Yes, that is essential. End quote.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baz, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Razzaaq ‘Afeefi.

Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (22/285)

Fourthly:

Everything mentioned above applies whether there is a little pork or lard or there is a lot in food, drink or medicine. If that meat or fat is manufactured in a manner that changes its form, is the

prohibition lifted or does it remain haram and must be avoided?

The scholars differed concerning that. The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas are of the view that the prohibition is not lifted, and the ruling does not change at all. Others – such as the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences – disagreed and said that najis, haram substances become permissible if they are turned into something else, and the quality of impurity and the name no longer apply to them. This is in accordance with what Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) thought most likely to be correct and what we think is most likely to be correct. We have quoted both opinions in the answer to question no. 97541.

We should add here that this is also the view regarded as more correct by the Council of Senior Scholars in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In their book al-Buhooth al-'Ilmiyyah (3/467), they said:

Similar to that is the purity of that which has been fertilized of trees and crops with impure things; their fruits are permissible because of the transformation of the impure substance. Another similar case is the purity of alcohol which turns into vinegar; it is permissible to consume it, sell it, drink it and use it in other ways, after it had been alcohol which it is haram to drink, sell or buy, and that is because of this transformation. End quote.

Fifthly:

If a person eats some haram food and does not know anything about it, he should avoid the rest (as soon as he finds out that it is haram); he does not have to do anything about what happened in the past, but he should be careful in the future.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked:

A man ate pork without realizing, then another man came to him after he had finished eating and told him that it was pork, and as we know, pork is haram for Muslims. What should he do?

They replied:

He does not have to do anything about that, and there is no sin on him, because he did not know

that it was pork. But he has to be careful and be cautious in the future. End quote.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baz, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Razzaaq ‘Afeefi, Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah ibn Qa’ood.

Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (22/282, 283)

And Allah knows best.