279406 - Is wearing pads or diapers essential for one who suffers incontinence to contain the impurity (najasah)?

the question

I constantly experience a yellowish discharge, and I wash myself and do wudu’ for every prayer, but sometimes I do not use a pad or diaper. Does this invalidate my prayer, or is using a pad or diaper essential in order for the prayer to be valid?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Yellowish or brownish discharge from the vagina is impure, and the one who suffers from this incessantly must prevent this impurity from going beyond its location, by inserting a piece of cotton or placing a cloth or pad over the private part if necessary.

It was narrated from Hamnah bint Jahsh that she experienced prolonged non-menstrual bleeding (istihadah) at the time of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). She came to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: I am suffering prolonged and painful bleeding. He said, “Fill it with a pad of cloth.” She said: It is worse than that, it is flowing copiously. He said: “Then bind yourself with a cloth and observe your menses for six or seven days of every month, then do ghusl and pray and fast for twenty-three or twenty-four days. Delay Zuhr and bring ‘Asr forward, and do ghusl for both, and delay Maghrib and bring `Isha’ forward, and do ghusl for both. This is what I prefer.” Narrated by Ibn Majah, 619; Abu Dawud, 287; at-Tirmidhi, 128; and others. Classed as sahih by Imam Ahmad, al-Bukhari and others.

At-Tirmidhi (may Allah have mercy on him) said, after narrating this hadith: I asked Muhammad [that is, al-Bukhari] about this hadith, and he said: It is an authentic, sound [sahih hasan] hadith.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal also said it is an authentic, sound [sahih hasan] hadith.

It was also classed as sound (hasan) by al-Albani. See: *Irwa' al-Ghalil*, 1/202; *Sahih Sunan Ibn Majah*, 510.

Ash-Shawkani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The phrase "bind yourself with a cloth" refers to the cloth that a menstruating woman ties around herself. Al-Khalil said: What is meant is: Do something to prevent the blood from flowing and going everywhere.

This refers to tying a wide piece of cloth over the private part and tying its two ends in the middle, after inserting a piece of cotton. This is done to stop the bleeding.

End quote from *Nayl al-Awtar*, 1/343.

Al-Khattabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What we understand from this is that the one who is suffering prolonged non-menstrual bleeding must tie a cloth around herself and take measures to block where the blood is coming from and prevent the blood coming out, using cotton and the like, as it says in the hadith of Hamnah: "Fill it with a pad of cloth." And he said to her: "Then bind yourself with a cloth."

This indicates that if she does not do that, she must repeat wudu' if any blood comes out of her.

However, we may understand from what was narrated from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) – that he said: "The woman who is suffering prolonged non-menstrual bleeding must pray even if blood is dripping onto the mat" – that this applies to the one who has taken proper measures by tying a cloth around herself and the like; if anything happens after taking such measures that could not be prevented by tying a cloth, and the blood drips on to the mat, she does not have to repeat wudu'.

But if she did not take such measures, she is not excused; rather it is her fault and she must do wudu'.

The same applies to one who is suffering urinary incontinence: he must block the urethra with cotton and the like, then wrap it with a cloth. If he does not do that and some urine drips out, he must repeat wudu’.

End quote from *Ma`alim as-Sunan*, 1/74-75.

It says in *Matalib Uli an-Nuha*, 1/236:

She does not have to repeat ghusl or wrapping the place for every prayer, if she was not negligent and took proper measures in wrapping it, because what invalidates wudu’, when it is overwhelming and strong, cannot be guarded against. `A’ishah said: One of the wives of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) observed i`tikaf with him, and she used to see the blood and the bowl beneath her as she was praying. Narrated by al-Bukhari.

However, if she is negligent about wrapping it and blood comes out after doing wudu’, she must repeat her wudu’, because that is something that invalidates wudu’ that it was possible to guard against. End quote.

To sum up, if you did not take proper measures and use a pad or diaper, and something came out from its place, then your wudu’ was rendered invalid, and you must repeat the wudu’ and the prayer.

But if you took proper measures by using a pad or diaper and the like, then something came out, it may be overlooked, so as to avoid putting the woman through hardship.

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said: What comes under the heading of a small amount of impurity (najasah) that can be overlooked because it is too difficult to avoid it includes a small amount of urinary incontinence for the one who suffers from that and has taken proper measures to prevent it spreading to the best of his ability.

End quote from *Ash-Sharh al-Mumti` `ala Zad al-Mustaqni`*, 1/447.

But if it is too difficult to take measures in some situations, such as if you are outside your house,

and you do not have any pads or diapers with you, or in similar unforeseen circumstances, then there is no blame on you for praying when you are in that situation.

In the answer to question no. 271041, we explained that if it is difficult for someone to take precautions by using a pad or diaper, there is no blame on him if he follows the view of those scholars who say that taking precautions by using a pad or diaper is recommended in principle, and is not obligatory.

And Allah knows best.