79072 - Ruling on using aphrodisiacs

the question

What is the ruling on using aphrodisiacs to increase pleasure – at the time of breaking the fast of course in Ramadaan?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Aphrodisiacs are of two types:

1 – Natural things, such as certain types of foods, plants and the like. There is nothing wrong with consuming these, so long as it is not proven that they are harmful to the body, in which case they should be avoided because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.” Narrated by Ibn Maajah (2341) and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Ibn Maajah. It says in al-Adaab al-Shar’iyyah (2/463): “It is haraam to use as medicine or kohl anything that is naajis (impure), or pure but haraam, or harmful, and so on.” End quote.

In the books of the scholars there is frequent mention of the benefits of some kinds of food which are said to increase desire or give one strength for intercourse. For example, al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, when discussing the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “You should use this aloes-wood (al-‘ood al-hindi) for in it there are seven cures” (narrated by Muslim (5260) and Muslim (4103)): Aloes-wood (al-‘ood al-hindi) is the well-known Indian costmary, and among its benefits are that it aids digestion, stirs desire and clears up pimples. End quote from Fath al-Baari.

The same is also said of fenugreek, pistachios, carob, melon-seeds and so on. See al-Adaab al-Shar’iyyah by Ibn Muflih, 7/3 and 2/370, 375.

It is important not to be extravagant in using such things, or be preoccupied that to such an extent that one becomes obsessed with looking for foods and drinks that will increase his desire.

2 – Drugs and medicines that are used for this purpose. The basic principle concerning these is that they are also permissible, so long as they do not include anything that is haraam such as intoxicants, and are not harmful, in which case they are haraam for these two reasons. But they should not be used unless there is a need for that, such as being incapacitated, sick or elderly, and in consultation with a trustworthy medical specialist, because some of them are harmful and may be lethal, and others are not lethal but there is no benefit to be gained by using them if one is healthy and has no need of them, even if they increase desire as mentioned in the question. He spoke well who said: Medicine is like soap: it cleans the garment but it also wears it out. So one should avoid using medicines as much as possible.

We will give you an example of a medicine which has become widespread nowadays, namely the drug called Viagra. Use of this drug by some people without any medical exam or consultation has led to a great deal of harm. Concerning this, Dr. ‘Abd-Allaah al-Nu’aymi, a heart specialist in the Zaayid Military Hospital said during a seminar on aphrodisiacs: This drug has side effects, some of which are severe. There is a study that was carried out in Canada on 8500 people which found that 16% of them suffered headaches and some of them suffered redness and heat especially in the face; some of them suffered from digestive problems and some, especially those who had low blood pressure, found that their blood pressure dropped to dangerous levels. End quote.

He stated that healthy people who do not have any health problems should still consult a doctor, if only briefly, whilst those who had problems, especially any blockage of the arteries of the heart, must consult a doctor first, because “many of them take drugs called nitrates, which interact strongly with Viagra. Viagra prevents this drug from being absorbed by the sick person’s body. We found that the nitrates were multiplied ten times in some cases, which leads to a severe drop in blood pressure, and may cause death. We have heard of deaths which have occurred and most of these deaths happened in such cases, where the person had a heart attack and he had a blockage in the arteries and was taking nitrates, so when he took Viagra with the nitrates, the nitrates

multiplied many times and this led to the side effects. End quote.

Secondly:

With regard to taking these aphrodisiacs, no distinction is made between the nights of Ramadaan or any other time when it is permissible to eat and drink. What is permissible to consume is permissible at all times and what is haraam is also haraam at all times. Allaah has permitted the fasting person to enjoy intimacy with his wife after breaking his fast, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of As-Sawm (the fasts). They are Libaas [i.e. body-cover, or screen, or Sakan (i.e. you enjoy the pleasure of living with them — as in Verse 7:189) Tafsir At-Tabari] for you and you are the same for them. Allaah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you (accepted your repentance) and forgave you. So now have sexual relations with them and seek that which Allaah has ordained for you (offspring), and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your Sawm (fast) till the nightfall. And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I‘tikaaf (i.e. confining oneself in a mosque for prayers and invocations leaving the worldly activities) in the mosques. These are the limits (set) by Allaah, so approach them not. Thus does Allaah make clear His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, revelations, verses, laws, legal and illegal things, Allaah’s set limits, orders, etc.) to mankind that they may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious”

[al-Baqarah 2:187]

And Allaah knows best.