



DO GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMS INVALIDATE THE FAST?

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Does a Gynecological Exam Invalidate the Fast?

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Question: Will a gynecology exam that involves the insertion of a vaginal ultrasound break my fast during Ramadān if it's done for medical purposes?

The Ulamā' disputed this matter because they had something similar to it back in their time. For example, Ash-Shāfi'īyyah unconditionally said it voids the fast. The Ahnāf said if the object enters fully, meaning both its ends enter, or if it has wetness or fluids on it, then it breaks the fast, otherwise it doesn't. The correct opinion is the opinion of some of the Hanābilah and some of the Mālikiyyah — it's the opinion of Adh-Dhāhirīyyah and Ibn Taymiyyah chose it — that this does not break the fast. So the correct opinion is that procedures that involve the insertion of a vaginal speculum, the colposcope, the vaginal ultrasound, other medical devices, or even a finger that's inserted for medical examination, that does not break the fast.

Al-Bahūti, who's an Imam of the Hanābilah, mentioned that Abu Al-Wafā' 'Ali Ibn 'Aqīl said that it does not negate the fasting because the uterus is not connected to the stomach, meaning that there's no pathway to the stomach. Of course, they were talking about something similar that they had during their time. Modern medicine confirmed what Shaykh Al-Hanābilah Abu Al-Wafā' 'Ali Ibn 'Aqīl mentioned nine centuries ago. There is no outlet between the woman's reproductive system and her digestive system. Even if there was an outlet or pathway between the reproductive system and the digestive system, what's entering is not food or nourishment. What's inserted is not among what's prohibited during the days of Ramadān. It's not eating, it's not food, it's not drinks, it's not nourishment, and it's not something similar in nature to that or to anything that is prohibited during the days of Ramadān.

And fasting is something very essential to every Muslim and Muslimah. Everyone needs to know its details. If the insertion of these devices were among the matters that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and the Messenger ﷺ considered Harām during the days of fasting, they would have informed us about it. It would have been something that the Messenger ﷺ would have explained to the Sahābah

رضي الله عنهم أجمعين, and they would have known it and they would have conveyed it to the Ummah just as they conveyed everything else. So when none of the people of knowledge transmitted anything from the Messenger ﷺ pertaining to this matter, we know nothing was mentioned about this, so it does not invalidate the fasting, as Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله تعالى stated.

However, a Muslimah can be more cautious, and she can wait until after Maghrib and have that exam done, or wait until after Ramadān and then have that exam done. But even if she chooses to go without an essential need, that fast is not invalidated inshā'Allāh.