

Waiting between Meat and Dairy:

Pesakim of Dayan
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WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DIFFERENT MINHAGIM FOR HOW LONG TO WAIT BETWEEN MEAT AND MILK?

The *Shulchan Aruch* and the *Tur*² write that one should wait a full six hours after eating meat (*fleishigs*) before eating dairy and this is the standard accepted *minhag*.

There are those who wait only five and a half hours, or even five hours and a few minutes. The source for this *minhag* is the language of the *Rambam*³ who writes "*k'mo sheish shaos*" (lit. "like six hours") which seems to imply that the six hours do not have to be complete but rather approximate.

The *minhag* of German Jews is to wait only three hours. Some explain that this *minhag* is based on the opinion of the *Pri Chadash*⁴ who writes that a person does not have to wait a fixed amount of time, but rather the average amount of time that exists between a person's morning and evening meals. Therefore, in northern parts of the world in the winter where the days get very short a person's meals could end up being only around three hours apart, and waiting that long would be sufficient.

In practice, unless someone's family has one of the above mentioned *minhagim*, they should wait a full six hours in accordance with the language of the *Shulchan Aruch* and the majority of *Poskim*.

A *Ger* or a *Baal Teshuva* should take up the *minhag* of the *tzibur* (congregation) that he is joining. If there is no standard *minhag* amongst that *tzibur*, then he should wait a full six hours.

The *poskim* brings the opinion of *Tosfos*⁵ which is that one does not have to wait any specific time between eating meat and milk; one is just not allowed to have milk after meat in the same meal. Once a person finishes his meat meal and recites *birchas hamazon*, he can begin a milk meal immediately.

The *Rama* adds, however, that even those who were lenient like the opinion of *Tosfos* would wait at least an hour in between meat and milk to fulfill the *Zohar* who writes that "meat and milk should not be eaten in one meal or in one hour." This is still the *minhag* of some communities in Scandinavian countries.

The *Rama*, *Shach*⁶ and *Taz* all conclude that one should wait six hours. The opinion of *Tosfos* is only relied upon in cases of someone who is not feeling well, as will be mentioned below.

HOW LONG SHOULD I HAVE MY KIDS WAIT IN BETWEEN MEAT AND MILK?

Until a child reaches the age of *chinuch* (6 or 7 years old depending on the child's comprehension), they do not have to wait at all. One just has to make sure not to feed the child milk and meat at the same time⁷. For example, a mother feeding a child chicken soup should first remove the bowl of soup from the tray and can then give them a bottle with milk immediately.

Once a child reaches the age of *chinuch*, the *halacha* is as follows. The *Magan Avrohom*⁸ in *hilchos kiddush* writes that in regards to time-based prohibitions on food, such as not eating before *kiddush*, if it is causing the child discomfort (*inuy*), *chinuch* does not apply. Therefore, if a child, even above the age of *chinuch*, is hungry on *Shabbos* morning they are allowed to eat before *kiddush*.

The same applies to waiting between milk and meat⁹. Ideally, once a child reaches the age of *chinuch*, one should get them used to waiting six hours. If, however, the child is hungry or they want the *milchig* food badly, one can feed it to them even before an hour.

ARE THERE ANY LENIENCIES FOR A PERSON WHO IS NOT FEELING WELL OR FOR PREGNANT AND NURSING WOMEN?

The *Chayie Adam*¹⁰ writes that a person who is not feeling well (*choleh k'tzas*), and feels that having something dairy will alleviate his discomfort, is allowed to be lenient and only wait one hour between meat and milk.

A pregnant or nursing woman who has a strong craving or is feeling weak and feels that having something dairy will help her, can also be lenient and have dairy an hour after eating *fleishigs*¹¹.

IF ONE CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT TIME THEY FINISHED EATING FLEISHIGS, HOW LONG SHOULD THEY WAIT?

If someone is unsure if six hours have already passed since they have eaten meat, there is a *machlokes haposkim* as to what they should do.

The *Yad Yehuda*¹² writes that although it is only a *safek* on a *derabanan*, since the question can be avoided entirely by simply waiting a bit longer, we are not lenient. This principle is referred to in *Halacha* as a "*davar sheyesh lo matirin*," literally "a thing which can become permitted."

The *Darchoi Teshuva*¹³, however, cites many *poskim* who argue on the *Yad Yehuda* and give different reasons why the concept of *davar she yesh lo matirin* would not apply in this

case. According to those *poskim*, one can be lenient and assume that six hours have already passed.

In practice, if one can approximate that six hours have passed, one does not have to have the number down to the minute.

If they are really unsure, then ideally one should try and be stringent like the opinion of the *Yad Yehuda* and wait until they are certain that six hours have passed. If, however, one is in a pressing circumstance, one can rely upon the opinion of the *Darchei Teshuva* and assume that six hours have already passed¹⁴.

IF I JUST CHEWED THE MEAT BUT DIDN'T SWALLOW IT, AM I STILL FLEISHIGS?

If someone accidentally took a bite of *fleishigs* and then remembered that they had planned on having *milchigs* for dinner and quickly spit it out, do they still have to wait six hours?

The amount of meat doesn't matter; the *Haflah*¹⁵ writes that any amount of meat that one eats is sufficient to make them *fleishig*, even less than a *kezayis*.

In regards to the fact that the meat was not swallowed, there are two reasons given in the *Rishonim* as to why we wait six hours between eating meat and milk:

1. *Rashi* - Meat has a strong flavor that lingers in one's mouth even after it has been eaten.

2. *Rambam* - Meat very often gets stuck between one's teeth (after 6 hrs. any meat that remains in the mouth has already been broken down and is no longer considered meat).

The *Tur*¹⁶ writes that if someone chews meat and spits it out, they must still wait six hours. The reason of *Rashi* would not apply, since he didn't swallow the meat so the taste would not linger. The reason of the *Rambam*, however, is still relevant, since he chewed the meat, so pieces may have gotten stuck in his teeth.

Therefore, even if someone didn't swallow the meat, they still must wait six hours before eating dairy.

Rav Shlomo Kluger¹⁷ discusses a case in which a person did not chew on the meat, but simply tasted it and spit it out i.e., tasting chicken soup before *Shabbos*. In that case, since they didn't chew or swallow any meat, neither of the two reasons would apply. Therefore, as long as they wash out their mouth and eat something *pareve* in between, they can have dairy immediately.

IF I EAT FRENCH FRIES FROM A FLEISHIG RESTAURANT, DO THEY MAKE ME FLEISHIGS?

The *Rama*¹⁸ writes that even if someone only ate a *tavshil shel basar* (something that was cooked together with meat) i.e., a potato from a *cholent*, they still must wait six hours before eating dairy. If the potato was not actually cooked with meat but simply prepared in a fleishig pot, one does not become *fleishig*.

Therefore, when it comes to French fries and the like, it will depend on the establishment. In many fast-food places,

the oil in the deep fryer is not just a bit greasy, it actually becomes loaded with fat, grease and pieces of meat. Also, they will often cook French fries and meat in the fryer simultaneously. Since those French fries were actually cooked with meat or in meat fat, eating them would make one *fleishigs*, similar to eating a potato from the *cholent*.

Whenever ordering things from a *fleishig* restaurant, one should assume that it would make them *fleishigs* unless they verify otherwise¹⁹.

DOES EATING A FLEISHIG ONION MAKE ME FLEISHIG?

We know that onions have a special status in *Halacha*. For example, if one cuts an onion with a *fleishig* knife, even if the knife was clean and the onion was cold, the onion becomes *fleishig*, and can no longer be eaten together with *milchigs*.

That being said, Rabbi Akiva Eiger²⁰ writes that eating an onion which was cut with a *fleishig* knife does not make someone *fleishigs*, and they do not have to wait six hours before eating dairy.

The *Pri Megadim* in *Hilchos Shavous*²¹, however, writes that in the opposite scenario, if someone already ate meat and is currently *fleishigs*, they cannot eat onions that were cut with a dairy knife.

The *Yad Yehuda*²² explains that the reason for this distinction is that once a person has already become *fleishigs*, they can no longer eat things that even just have the taste of dairy. He does add, however, that the ruling of the *Pri Megadim* is only true if the knife had been used for hot dairy in the past 24 hours (a *ben yomo*). If not, then one would be allowed to eat onions cut with a *milchig* knife even while still *fleishigs*.

Endnotes

1. Based on a Shiur delivered by the Dayan Shlit"a at Kollel Tiferes Yisroel Iyar 5781

2. יו"ד סימן פט

3. רמב"ם הלכות מאכלות אסורות פרק ט הלכה כח וז"ל "מי שאכל בשר בתחלה וכו' לא יאכל אחריו חלב עד שיהיה

ביניהם כדי שיעור סעודה אחרת והוא כמו שש שעות וכו' ע"כ

4. שם אות ו' וז"ל "ומיהו לא דווקא שש שעות כגון בחורף שהימים קצרים כל שאכל בשר בשחר מותר לאכול גבינה

בסעודת הצהרים, וכן אם אכל בשר בחצי היום מותר לאכול בערבית אף על גב דליכא בין אכילה לאכילה אלא

כמו ד' שעות בקיבוץ. וזה דבר מוסכם לכלי עלמא, דהא לשון המגמא [שם] הוי בהא סעודתא הוא דלא אכילנא

לסעודתא אחרתא אכילנא שמע דמסעודה שפיר דמי ולא קמפלוג בין ימים קצרים לימים ארוכים אלא

משמע דכתיבנא ע"כ

וראיתו בספר אלה עקב שמביא בשם הגר"ש שוואב זצ"ל שהביא עוד טעם להמנהג שהוא כעין חומרא על שיטת

הרמ"א של שעה אחת, והוסיפו ב' שעות דכן איתא בגמ' דעד ב' שעות דרך האדם לטעות.

5. חולין קה. ד"ה לסעודתא אחרתא.

6. וז"ל הש"ך שם ס"ק ח' נכון להמתין שש שעות וכו' כמ"הרש"ל דכן ראוי לעשות לכל מי שיש בו ריח תורה ע"כ

7. כך שמע דיין פורסט שליט"א מפי הגר"מ פיינשטיין זצ"ל.

8. א"ח ס' רס"ט: והובאו דבריו גם במ"ב שם ס"ק א' וכן בסיומן קו' ס"ק ה' לענין אכילה לפני תפילה ביום חול ע"ש

9. דיין פורסט מפי הגר"מ פיינשטיין זצ"ל וכן מצאתי בספר תשובות והנהגות ח"א ס' תלה' וע"ש מה שכתב בנידון זה

10. חכמת אדם כלל מ' דין יג' וז"ל ומכל מקום לצורך חול קצת נראה לי פשוט דיש להחיר אפילו אכל בשר בהמה

לאחר שמתין שעה ויחטט שיניו לאחר ברכת המזון: וכן כתב הערוך השולחן פ"ג: ע"ש

11. דיין פורסט שליט"א דהרי דינא שיהי' שחולק קצת, וכן כתב בס' אמת ליעקב בהנהגות על ש"ע, וכן שמעתי בשם

החזו"א

12. ריש סימן פט.

13. ס"ק ה' וז"ל לפמ"ש הפת"ש להלן ס' ק"ב סק"ו בשם הצ"ח והצ"ח דדוקא בדבר שאם יעשנה היום לא יעשנה

למחר שייך דשיל"מ ע"כ ובדבריו שם (ס"ק ל"ו) ממילא הא לא שייך ענין דשיל"מ דהא יכול לאכול גבינה עתה

וגם לאחר ששה שעות וצ"ע. שוב ראיתי בס' דלתי תשובה שהעתיק שם תשובה מרב א' שהעלה להקל בזה מטעם

ס"ס שמא העיקר כהפוסקים שא"צ להמתין שש שעות ואת"ל דצריך להמתין שמא כבר עבר ששה שעות ואל"ה דהוי

דבר שיש לו מתירין ולכמה פוסקים לא מהני ס"ס שיל"מ דהא ודאי ליתא דהא הא עיקר הספק הוא הו"מ

והזמן הזה לא יבא לידי היתר לעולם ולא דמי לנסק בצצה שנולדה ביום טוב דהתם הוי עיקר הספק על הבצצה וכו'

ע"ש עוד

14. הכרעת דיין פורסט שליט"א. וראיתו באחרוני זמנא שיש שרוצים לצרף בזה דעת הרמב"ם של "כמו שש שעות"

15. כסניעף להקל

16. בהנהגות לש"ע סימן פט

17. שם

18. הובא בדרכי תשובה אות י'

19. שם סעיף י'

20. הכרעת דיין פורסט שליט"א

21. בהג"ה על הש"ך ס"ק יט' וכן כתב הבית מאיר שם

22. פרי מגדים א"ח א' סימן תצד ס"ק ו' וז"ל ולאכול צנן שחתך בסכין חולב אחר בשר תוך ששה שעות. י"ל דאסור, 21.

[ענין יורה דעה סימן פ"ט (סעיף ג') וסימן צ"ו (סעיף א')

ס' פ"י פירוש הארוך אות ה': אבל ע' בדעת תורה להמרסם בא"ח ס' תצד" 22.

