

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS

School of Public Health

112 Browning Hall
Memphis, Tennessee 38152

Wasim Maziak, MD, PhD
Associate Professor
Director, Syrian Center for Tobacco Studies

Office: 901.678.5018
Fax: 901.678.1675
wmaziak@memphis.edu

05/24/2010

Dear Colleagues

I here testify based on current level of evidence that

- 1- There are no standard sanitation procedures that will render multiple use of waterpipes (hookahs) safe in terms of spreading infectious disease.
- 2- That most youth underestimate the health hazards of waterpipe smoking because of widespread misconception of the water-filtering effect on the inhaled smoke. Also there is no evidence that the general public is adequately aware of the potential hazard of waterpipe smoke on nonsmokers. The smooth and aromatic nature of waterpipe smoke can contribute to the general misconception about its relative harmlessness compared to cigarette. Available evidence suggests that waterpipe smoking is associated with considerable health risks to smokers, and that waterpipe smoke emitted to the surrounding air contains much of the same toxic ingredients as cigarette smoke, hence poses considerable risks to nonsmokers.

Sincerely

Wasim Maziak, MD, PhD

