

Shaykh Mashhūr Hasan Āl Salmān
(hafīdhahullāh)

ON THE RULING ON HAVING INJECTIONS WHEN FASTING¹

A brother from Turkey asks:

“What is the ruling on a diabetic having insulin injections when fasting during the daylight hours of Ramadān? And do the tablets which are taken by those who suffer from heart palpitations and are administered sublingually (i.e. ‘under the tongue’) break the fast?”

Answer from Shaykh Mashhūr:

We ask Allāh to grant us, and the brother who asked the question, good health. The brother is asking about two matters here:

Firstly: the tablets which are administered sublingually in order to relieve heart palpitations and diffuse immediately after being administered under the tongue after a short time and transmit blood to the heart directly, have been given, by the permission of Allāh, a particular characteristic of stopping heart palpitations.² Such tablets are neither food nor drink, and neither take the

¹ From the Shaykh’s Q & A session dated 13 September 2008 CE, it can be accessed here: www.mashhoor.net

² **Translator’s note [‘AbdulHaq]:** Sublingual administration refers to pharmacological route of administration whereby medical drugs diffuse into the blood via tissues under the tongue. Many pharmaceuticals are designed for sublingual administration, including cardiovascular drugs, steroids, barbiturates, enzymes, vitamins and minerals. The principle behind sublingual administration is that when a chemical comes in contact with the mucous membrane beneath the tongue, or buccal mucosa, it diffuses through it. Because the connective tissue beneath the epithelium contains a profusion of capillaries, the substance then diffuses into them and enters the venous circulation. In contrast, substances absorbed in the intestines are subject to “first pass metabolism” in the liver before entering

meaning of food nor of drink and do not reach the intestine. So, by the will of Allāh, there is no problem in this. However, what is obligatory is to stay away from anything which may be found in the throat and there is anything within the throat then this has to be removed and not let it enter into his stomach. Insha'Allāh this is not from the things which break the fast. As for the insulin injection for the diabetic then it is well-known to medical doctors that the insulin injection is subcutaneous [administered into the skin]³ and helps the body via entry into the skin and most resembles skin creams [which are applied to the skin] and washing with water, and this is not from the things which break the fast.

Nutritional injections and intravenous injections [administered into the bloodstream via a vein], as food goes through to the blood stream as is well-known, are the types which break the fast yet there is a big difference of opinion on the issue among *Ahl ul-'Ilm*. The speech of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrāheem (*rahimabullāh*) pleases me who in his *Fatāwā*, vol.4, pp.187-188 viewed that the like of such injections break the fast after a long halt [in inspecting the matter] and after intense contemplation on the matter. Intravenous injections are rarely found within local pharmacies or chemists and are rather found in general hospitals, this is as opposed to intramuscular injections.⁴ Intravenous injections are mostly found in hospitals and are not found in the general local chemists or pharmacies. As for intramuscular injections then, inshā'Allāh, these are also within the realm of general health and there is no harm in these injections.

the general circulation. Sublingual administration has certain advantages over oral administration. Being more direct, it is often faster, and it ensures that the substance will risk degradation only by salivary enzymes before entering the bloodstream, whereas orally administered drugs must survive passage through the hostile environment of the gastrointestinal tract, which risks degrading them, either by stomach acid or bile, or by the many enzymes therein.

³ **[TN]:** Subcutaneous injections are highly effective in administering vaccines and such medications as insulin, morphine, diacetylmorphine or goserelin. Insulin for example can be injected into the upper area of the arm; above and below the waist; the upper area of the buttocks just behind the hip-bone and the front of the thigh midway between the top and about 4 inches above the knee. These areas can vary according the size of the person.

⁴ **[TN]:** Intramuscular injections involve a substance being injected directly into a muscle and is one of the several alternative methods for the administrations of medications. Many vaccines are administered in this way such as codine, metoclopramide and many other medications.