When our Torah speaks about the Festival of Sukkos it states, "לךète נְהַווֹת וּכְלָה תִּשְׁתַּפְּרֵנִי" - The Sukkos holiday should be observed at the time that you harvest your grain and your wine, during the fall. Our Chachamim, our sages, have taught us that this verse has another esoteric meaning. The Sukkos, the huts in which we dwell during this festival, should be made from the unused parts of the harvesting grain and wine, namely the stalks of grain and twigs of the vine. These are the items that should be used for the schach, which is placed on top of the sakkah instead of a permanent roof.

Our Rabbis have further taught that this schach directive includes other items that are similar to stalks and twigs, pesoles goren v’yelkev, that are no longer attached to the ground and cannot become ritually impure, tamei. Unfinished wood slats, corn stalks, and palm branches are popular varieties that satisfy the criteria for schach.

Many natural materials are not qualified to be used for schach. Leather is a natural product that does not grow from the ground; neither do cement or natural materials such as metal. None of these may be used for schach. All types of foods are not kosher material for schach. Included in this halachic directive are grain husks that have some grains remaining in the husks. Wood products that are cut and shaped into vessels, utensils, or equipment that have a hollow, would not qualify for schach because these products can become tamei. Furthermore, even if the wood vessels were to be broken and unfit for their original use and can no longer become tamei, they remain disqualified.

Although hollow bent wooden pipes would not be kosher for schach, hollow bamboo poles would be kosher because they grow hollow naturally, and were not fashioned by anyone with the intention of putting things into their hollow. Similarly, straight wooden pipes without indentations would be kosher, as well as wooden beams, even those with imperfections in the wood. However, the custom is not to use them.

Stems that are used for schach must be in their original state and cannot be subject to further processing. For example, wood is kosher, paper is not. Flax stems are kosher, flax rope is not. Cotton wood which has been combed out and no longer resembles the natural cotton plant, would no longer qualify for schach.
For hundreds of years, the Jewish custom has been to begin Rosh Hashana with an apple dipped in honey as a symbol for a sweet new year. It is quite interesting that most honey in the United States is produced by the bees and collected by beekeepers in the summer - just in time to serve on the 10th day of Tishrei. Even older than this custom is the question regarding the kosher status of honey. Many of us are familiar with the famous halacha that states that derivitives of non-kosher species are not kosher. This would include camel’s milk or ostrich eggs. Since a bee is a non-kosher species, honey which comes from a bee is not kosher. Furthermore, if honey is kosher, all products manufactured by the bee, such as royal jelly, beeswax, bee venom, and propolis (all derived from honey), also are kosher.

A brief entomological review of this remarkable insect is necessary in order to answer these questions. Bees suck nectar from flowers with their proboscis (mouth). The nectar mixes with saliva and is swallowed into the honey sac where enzymes from the saliva break down the nectar into honey. The nectar is never “digested,” it is only transformed into honey by the saliva. Upon the bee’s return to the hive, the honey is regurgitated, dried, and placed into the honeycomb. Beekeepers then extract millions of drops of honey from the cavities of the honeycomb by using a machine that applies centrifugal force to the comb.

Why is honey a kosher product? The Gemara explains that honey is kosher as it is not a secretion from the bee; the bee functions only as a carrier and facilitator. Honey is kosher nectar, which enters the honey sac, is transformed into honey, and placed into the honeycomb retaining its kosher status throughout the “transformation.”

The second opinion in the Gemara permits honey because of a “guarantee” - a deduction from a passuk. Therefore, 100% pure honey, whether from Montana, North Dakota, or any state or country, is kosher and does not require a hechsher.

Nevertheless, there are two important issues one must bear in mind when purchasing honey. Honey is usually described by the flower from which the bees draw the nectar. The most popular variety of honey, Clover Honey, is honey that the bees have processed from the nectar of the clover leaf. Orange Honey is nectar that originates from orange groves, where the bees have sucked the nectar from orange blossoms and transformed it into honey. However, there are companies who flavor their honey with an orange flavor and call it “orange honey.” This orange flavored honey would require a hechsher as flavors can be composed of various non-kosher ingredients. One should always check the label carefully to verify that the product is 100% pure honey with no flavors added.

The second issue relates to the use of pure honey on Pesach. Potentially, honey can be adulterated with additives such as corn syrup. Corn syrup, a sweetener, is derived from corn, a legume, and may not be used on Pesach. For example, soda companies must substitute this sweetener with liquid sugar when producing Kosher for Passover soda. Some honey producers have been found to mix the inexpensive corn syrup into honey and illegitimately label and sell it as “pure honey,” with no mention of this almost undetectable “filler.” Although this practice is the exception, one should, nevertheless, only purchase pure honey for Pesach, with a reliable Pesachik hechsher. This problem does not impact the use of honey during the rest of the year.

Propolis - Another important product of the bee is propolis. Bees collect this material from the sap of a tree, and carry it in their pro-bosics. In its pure state, propolis is kosher and is used as an anti-bacterial and anti-fungal remedy, polishing agent, and preservative. Companies commonly process the propolis with other ingredients such as alcohol. Therefore, such a product would require a reliable hechsher.

Bee Pollen - Bees have brushes on their legs which collect the pollen from the flowers. The pollen is brushed toward the back of the bee and is pressed into baskets found on their legs. The bees add traces of saliva and nectar to make a more effective “press.” Although propolis is naturally dusty and requires a binding agent. This popular health food product is kosher.

Royal Jelly - The most important bee in the hive is the “Queen Bee,” who attains her “royal” status by her constant extra-nutritious diet of royal jelly. What is Royal Jelly? This product is a secretion from the hypopharyngeal and mandibular glands located in the head of the bee. It is rich in protein, vitamins, fatty acids, and amino acids, and is available in health food stores. It is also a common ingredient in various health food products and remedies. Because it is a lab-created product that is secreted from the bee, royal jelly should be considered non-kosher.

Apis Mellifica - This homeopathic remedy is derived from the body of the honeybee and is not kosher. However, as in most homeopathic remedies, the active ingredient is less than 1/60 and is therefore batel lo shechita. If the inactive ingredients are kosher, and the honeybee is batel, this product would be batelically permissible to take.

Bee Venom - This product is synthesized in the venom glands of the bee and is released when a bee stings. Using a machine, bee venom is collected from bees and is used as an anti-inflammatory agent or for the treatment of arthritis. It is non-kosher and may only be taken orally if it is batel lo shechita in kosher inactive ingredients. It may be used topically or by injection even if the venom is not batel.

Bee Wax - Used to form the honeycomb in the hive, beeswax is secreted from wax glands located on the underside of the abdomen. The cells of the honeycomb are where bees grow from larva into mature bees. They also store not only honey, but various other products. Beeswax is sold both pure and with honey inside.

In its original state, beeswax is used in non-food grade applications, since the human body cannot adequately digest this material. It is commonly used in candles, lipstick, shoe and floor polish, and buffing wax for surfboards. Since it is not a “ma’achal,” a “food,” its status as a yotzei min hatamei batel b’shabos. This is true if the dilution is at least 2x (1:102) and higher, or 1c (1:100) and higher. For a full discussion of homeopathic remedies, the active ingredient is less than 1/60 and is therefore batel lo shechita. If the inactive ingredients are kosher, and the honeybee is batel, this product would be batelically permissible to take.

However, companies commonly process the propolis with other ingredients such as alcohol. Therefore, such a product would require a reliable hechsher.
New Under Star-K Kosher Certification

Consumer Products
(only when bearing Star-K symbol)
Cheney Brothers (Riveria Beach, FL)
FRONTE CANNED VEGETABLES
Delicious Delights, Ltd (Bronx, NY)
MRS. STARK’S COOKIES & KNISHES
First Vegetarian Foods, Inc. (Baldwin Park, CA)
STARLITE SOY PRODUCTS
Fred’s Organic Foods, Inc. (Brooklyn, NY)
FRED’S ORGANIC FOODS
SOUP & SOUP MIXES
G. Willi-Food International (Yanteh, Brazil)
WILLI-FOOD PICKLED PRODUCTS
Inteco International Trade Corp. (South Secaucus, Nj)
ASSAGO CLASSICO CANNED VEGETABLES
Lacas Coffee (Pennsauken, NJ)
LACAS COFFEE BEANS, COFFEES
Maxus Worldwide Nutrition (Hauppauge, NY)
MAXUS VITAMINS, SUPPLEMENTS & NUTRITIONALs
My Gourmet Oven (San Diego, CA)
MY GOURMET OVEN COOKIE MIKES
Neshama Gourmet Kosher, LLC (Beverly Hills, CA)
NESHAMA GOURMET KOSHER PREPARED FOODS
Samba Comercial Importadora E Exportadora Ltda. (Sao Paulo, Brazil)
SAMBA JUICES
Springwater Sprouts, Inc. (Honeoye Falls, NY)
SPRINGWATER SPROUTS FRESH VEGETABLES
Sure Gida San Tic Ltd. Sti. (Malatya, Turkey)
SURE GIDA DRIED FRUIT
Trout Lake Farm LLC (Trout Lake, WA)
TROUT LAKE FARM HERBS, TEAS, VITAMINS, SUPPLEMENTS & NUTRITIONALs

Establishments
Noah’s Ark
399 Grand Street, New York, NY
MEAT RESTAURANT/CATERER

New Under Star-D
The Star-D is a Kashrus symbol of the National Council of Young Israel (NYC) and is administered by Star-D Septime, Inc. (www.star-d.com)

Establishments
Krispy Kreme #848
1450 Old Country Rd, Riverhead, NY
DOUGHNUT SHOP

Industrial Institutional Products
(see letter of certification)
Ace Biotech Co. (ChungBuk, S. Korea)
ACIDS & ACIDULANTS
Ameraphos (La Habra, CA)
FOOD CHEMICALS
Blue Mountain Flavors (Kinston, NC)
FLAVORS & EXTRACTS
Borregaard Synthesis (Sarpborg, Norway)
VANILLIN
Bunn Capitol (Springfield, Ll)
BEVERAGES & DRINK MIXES
OILS/OILIVE OILS
Chemstation - Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI)
DETERGENTS & CLEANSERS
Delicious Delights, Ltd. (Bronx, NY)
COOKIES & KNISHES
Foodtopia, Inc. (Hasbrouck Heights, NJ)
ACIDS & ACIDULANTS
ICR - International Chemical Resources (Milford, CT)
INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS
Lacas Coffee (Pennsauken, NJ)
COFFEE BEANS, COFFEES
Natural World Trading Co. (Shanghai, China)
RICE PRODUCTS
New Hope Garlic Co. (Oakland, CA)
FRESH VEGETABLES
Rhodia Silica Korea Co. (Incheon City, South Korea)
INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS
The Tartaric Chemical Corp. (NYC, NY)
FOOD CHEMICALS
Total Fina Elf Lubricants USA, Inc. (Linden, NJ)
LUBRICANTS
Tropical Paradise/Tropical Machines (Ronkonkoma, NY)
JUICE & JUICE CONCENTRATES
Yang Ji Chemical Co. (Kyungsu-Da, S. Korea)
ACIDS & ACIDULANTS

Products
First Vegetarian Foods, Inc. (Baldwin Park, CA)
STARLITE SOY PRODUCTS
Sweet Lilly’s Plymouth Meeting PA
SWEET LILLY’S CAKE & PASTRY PRODUCTS
Voges Haut-Chocolat (Chicago, IL)
VOSGES CHOCOLATE PRODUCTS

President’s Message
CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER
all areas where outward appearances can be deceiving, a cursory inspection by even the most well intentioned outsider visitor can lead to erroneous conclusions. The problem is even more exacerbated when certain individuals—masquerading as kashrus experts and pretending that everything they do is “Eshom Shomayim” (for the sake of Heaven)— deliberately distort facts and spread more false information to an already confused public that really has no way of knowing what to believe.

One bright spot in educating kasher consumers has been Kashrus Kurrents. Kashrus Kurrents is not a forum for the Star-K to instruct its readers about the merits of any one certification over another. Rather, it is a means of providing useful and factual information to help individuals understand the issues, so they can make their own intelligent decisions regarding the kashrus of a product. Each article appearing in Kashrus Kurrents contains sufficient background material about the food group subject being discussed so that the reader can fully understand the halachic considerations affecting the kashrus status of a particular item. It is important to us that the author of each article have first hand practical knowledge of the subject matter. In addition, we generally have an expert from the industry review the articles for technical accuracy.

Incidentally, our readers’ comments regarding the new Kashrus Kurrents format were overwhelmingly favorable. We continue to appreciate any and all suggestions to help make this publication an even more efficient vehicle for understanding the complex world of kashrus. In addition to our new look, we have greatly increased our circulation by inserting Kashrus Kurrents into some of the popular Torah oriented newspapers. Many first time readers have called the Star-K requesting the purchase of past issues. Although we do have a very limited number of these on hand, all past Kashrus Kurrents articles are available on our web site (www.star-k.org).

In concert with the “new” Kashrus Kurrents, the Star-K has also launched a lecture program. This past summer’s inaugural series of lectures, in which we dissemination straightforward and unbiased up-to-date kashrus information, were very received by the public. Its popularity has resulted in Rabbinon and community leaders contacting us to arrange lectures in their communities. We shall do our best to accommodate all requests. A list of available speakers and suggested topics is available from our office.

In the last issue of Kashrus Kurrents, I presented a brief history of the last 25 years of this publication and the Star-K. Although it is more than twenty-fve years since the passing of M. Leo Storch, of blessed memory, the vital role he played as a founder of the Orthodox Jewish Council and several Baltimore Moados certainly needs to be acknowledged. We are also grateful to his wife, Hannah, who continues to support this publication in memory of her late husband.

In the name of the entire Star-K family I wish to extend our condolences to Yankel and Pesi Herskovitz on the loss of their dear son, Moshe, z”l. It is our sincere wish that in the future they experience much joy and nachas from their children and grandchildren.

Our best wishes for a K’vscha V’chasima Tova to all our readers.

25 years of kashrus leadership
well over 600 men and women throughout the New York area attend ed the opening series of Star-K Kashrus lectures held recently in Brooklyn, NY and the Catskill mountains. The seminars featured a comprehensive analysis of pertinent Kashrus and Halachic issues, along with a wide ranging open question and answer forum.

Under the leadership of the world renowned Halachic authority Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, shita, it’s Rav Hamachshoir, the Star-K has initiated a national lecture campaign reaching out to the community nationwide.


Dr. Avrem Pollak, President of Star-K, coordinated and moderated the lectures. Dr. Pollak introduced the evening by stating that consumer education has been a hallmark of the Star-K. Consumers have access to up to the moment Kashrus information by calling the Star-K Kashrus hot line, reading Kashrus Kurrents or surfing the Star-K web site. The new lecture series was created by the Star-K as another educational vehicle, to clarify issues and to dispel kashrus misconceptions. Dr. Pollak then introduced the Star-K panel of speakers.

“There has not been a major kosher slaughterhouse in the U.S. that I have not visited” Rav Heinemann, Rav Hamachshoir of the Star-K, told the audience. Rav Heinemann proceeded to treat his listeners to an informative mix of halachos, facts and stories about the contemporary state of shechita. Rav Heinemann considers shechita to be the “heart of any kashrus organization” and he takes an avid interest in all aspects of shechita. The Star-K Rabbinic Administrator traced the emergence of the contemporary varieties of glatt kosher such as B”n Yisrof glatt or chasdei shechita which has recently appeared on the modern kashrus scene. He dispelled some of the preconceived notions of “high speed” and “slow” shechita and explained how, in many instances, “high speed” was actually preferable.

Due to health issues that occur in chickens in Israel, the Rav explained the need for mehadrin glatt kosher chickens there while the same is not the case in the U.S. Rav Heinemann enlightened the crowd about the many pre-slaughtering considerations that are necessary in order to provide the consumers with not only a kosher product but an appealing product as well. He also touched upon some of the real challenges that kashrus certifications have to contend with, such as the white veal issue. Furthermore, the Rav gave the listeners some real insights about the guidelines used by Rabbinim Hamachshirim to determine who is a reliable shochet.

The next speaker, Rabbi Dovid Heber, Kashrus Administrator of the Star-K, is one of the foremost experts in the field of kasher pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals and medications. He gave the audience great insight into the manufacturing of pills, capsules, and liquid medications, and the relevant Kashrus issues. Guidelines regarding the taking of nonkosher medications were reviewed. Rabbi Heber charted the different degrees of illness that confront a patient on Shabbos and Yom Tov and what medications, vitamins and nutritional supplements can and can’t be taken on Shabbos and Yom Tov. The whole field of homeopathic drugs and nutraceuticals was discussed in detail.

Rabbi Tzvi Rosen, Kashrus Administrator and Editor of Kashrus Kurrents, concluded the lecture series in New York with a lively discussion of the kashrus of liquor, beer and liqueur. At the lecture series in Monticello he addressed the new Halachic issues confronting today’s electronic appliances. Taking the listeners through a virtual tour of a distillery, he traced how whiskey is produced differently in various countries and discussed the kashrus issues confronting these alcoholic beverages. Beer production was also reviewed. The discussion ranged from the clarification of beer using isinglass, an issue that was discussed by the Node BV’Yisroel, to the brand new introduction of maltenatives and extreme beers that now appear in the market place.

In Monticello, Rabbi Rosen explained the Halachic problems that new electronic ovens and refrigerators present for Shabbos and Yom Tov use. He traced the history behind the major appliance manufacturers agreement with the Star-K to design ovens and other appliances that would be compliant with a shomer Toarah and Mitzvos house hold.

As one of the world’s leaders in Kashrus excellence, Star-K Kosher Certification has a commitment to the community. Experienced Star-K Kashrus administrators are stationed throughout the world to ensure the highest Kashrus integrity for their products. Every Star-K certification is under the strict guidelines and personal approval of Rav Heinemann making sure that the high standards of Kashrus are maintained and that Kosher consumers can buy Star-K products with confidence.

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Flax rope is problematic for another reason. According to Rashi, if the linen fibers were twisted into threads and braid-ed into rope they are posul min HaTorah. The Torah disqualifies them as it does any other woven material.

Branches of a tree cannot be used for schach if the branches are still connected to the tree while covering the sukkah and was then cut down, the branch would still be disqualified unless a person lifted the branch and then replaced it on the sukkah with the intention of using the branch for schach. Our Rabbis have taught us that schach which has an unpleasant odor should preferably not be used. Use of schach that has a pervasive foul smell is forbidden. Kosher schach has to remain fresh throughout the entire chag. Branches with leaves that will dry out during Sukkos or vines that will shrivel are disqualified, and are not kosher even while the leaves are still fresh.

Kosher schach material must be placed on top of the sukkah with the intention of being used for schach. One cannot place kosher schach material on top of the sukkah with the intention of drying the material and then change his mind in the course of the drying process and use it for schach. To this end, the halacha forbids the use of bundled schach if they are generally subject to drying. Moreover, our Rabbis forbade the use of this bundled kosher schach, even if it was intended for schach. This restriction applies to bundles of 25 sticks or more that are tied in the middle or at both ends.

How wide can the boards be to qualify for schach use? One may use boards that are less than 4 tefachim (14") wide. Even if wider boards would be set on their sides, these boards would not be kosher. It is the custom not to use narrower finished wood planks generally used in construction, as well.

As was stated previously, the criteria for schach is three fold: Items that grow that cannot become tamei, reeds, straw, or wooden slats that are woven into mats would not qualify for schach if they were woven for the purpose of sitting or sleeping on or any other specific function. However, it were made expressly for schach, these mats would be kosher.

Are bamboo mats that are held together with other materials such as string or yarn kosher? HaRav Moshe Feinstein zt”l ruled on venetian blinds that were made out of wooden slats and were held together with cloth tape, which is mekabel tumah; that these blinds are not kosher. Even if the tape were removed, the slats remain non-kosher and are disqualified for schach. Based on Rav Moshe’s reasoning, even if a mat was manufactured string, which is an improper schach material, cannot be used for anchoring instead. A kosher wooden beam can be placed across the mat to hold it down.

Can kosher mats contain more than 25 slats, or would the mat be considered a bundle (chaliva)? Since the mat does not need to be dried, it can contain more than 25 slats.

There is a Rabbinical question whether one can support the schach with something that is not kosher for schach. Therefore, one should not support the schach with anything that can become tamari, i.e. metal rods or pipes. Also, one cannot use metal to weigh down the schach so that it will not blow off with an ordinary wind. One may, however, hold down the support with something that is not kosher for schach. If the schach is supported by wooden beams, which are there to strengthen the schach so that it shouldn’t blow away in an unusual wind, then nails or string can be used as a support to the beams.

How much schach should be used to cover the sukkah? The amount required is determined by the amount necessary to shade the sukkah. The schach must be dense enough so that there should not be more sunlight than shade. However, it cannot be so dense that the rain would not be able to fall into the sukkah.

We have just mentioned some of the dinim of schach. There are many more halachos however, this article does not allow for a more elaborate discussion. In case of questions a halachic authority should be consulted.

May Hashadus Baruch Hu help us fulfill the mitzvah of sukkah properly, and may we merit to see with our own eyes the fulfillment of this mitzvah for the sake of peace over us, the entire Jewish nation, and Yerushalayim.

1 Devarim 16:13
2 In Hilchos Sukkah (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 629:1) it is written that schach cannot consist of something that is ‘mekabel tumah.” It is for this reason that hardwood carpet mats cannot be used for schach. In addition, lichatchila, kosher schach may not be supported by anything which is mekabel tumah (see Rav Meir Feinstein states (Avos, Meir) queled on 127) based on a dinuma, if something which is mekabel tumah is used to hold wooden slats together, the slats themselves are also mekabel tumah and are no longer kosher for schach use. Therefore, Rav Meir Feinstein explains that wooden venetian blinds held together with something woven are not kosher for schach. It follows that according to Rav Meir, bamboo slats in addition to monofilament cord (i.e. it is braided or twisted) are also not kosher schach (even if they are not made to sit or walk on).
Q: What type of aged cheese requires one to wait six hours before eating meat?

A: Generally speaking, aging of cheese is an ongoing process, which occurs when the bacteria found in cheese breaks down the lactose (the milk sugar), creating lactic acid, which acidifies the cheese and makes it harder. A good example of this aging process would be if someone were to leave a wedge of Munster cheese in a nice warm environment until the cheese becomes “tangy.” The housewife would call it spoiled; the cheese maven would call it flavorful. Historically, flavorful cheese took about six months to age. The longer the cheese aged, the harder it became. In Italy today, one can find some cheeses that have been aged for 24 months, which are impossible to break apart without a hammer. (It is important to note that if cheese is sitting in a refrigerator or cooler for long periods of time, it does not mean that the cheese is aging. An appropriate environment is required for the aging process to take effect.)

According to the Rema (Y.D. 89), one who has eaten hard cheese is required to wait six hours before eating meat, just as one who has eaten meat has to wait six hours before eating dairy. According to the Itz (Y.D. 89:4), who comments on the Rema, the criteria for hard cheese is that it has been aged for six months, the time necessary to harden. However, in reality, cheese that has aged for six months does not automatically become hard. Stilton cheese, for example, is aged for six months but still has a creamy consistency. The Shulchan Aruch tells us that if the cheese is hard, one must wait six hours before eating meat. The Shulchan Aruch does not say that the cheese has to be aged for six months. If the cheese would harden in less time, then the six hour wait would be enforced. The Itz above is giving a typical scenario rather than a time limit. Therefore, the Star-K’s policy for six hour cheese is cheese that has aged to the point that it can no longer be sliced, only grated.

Q: Hydroponic produce in supermarket vegetable sections is rapidly expanding. What is the difference between vegetables grown in a greenhouse and those grown hydroponically?

A: Vegetables grown in a greenhouse are actually grown in soil in a controlled environment. Greenhouses offer the benefit of keeping out unwanted infestation. Hydroponically grown vegetables are grown in a solution of nutrients and water, rather than soil. The bruchas that makes on greenhouse grown vegetables is Boreh Pri Hashamua, while the brachos on hydroponically grown vegetables is Shelahul Nihye Bravano, because the vegetables are not grown in soil.

Q: I understand that peeled raw onions should not be left overnight due to health precautions (sakana). Does this adherence apply to frozen onions that are commercially produced and sold in the frozen food section?

A: Based on a teshuva from R’ Moshe Feinstein (Y.D. 3:20), it is our custom to be lenient with processed commercial onions.

Q: On Shabbos does an observant Jew have to close a web site that is selling products online?

A: Yes. As in the case of regular business transactions, no electronic business transactions may be made on Shabbos or Yom Tov on a web site belonging to a shomer shabbos businessperson. The web site may remain open for information purposes, if the shopping cart on the web site is shut down. The time Shabbos and Yom Tov begins is determined by the entrepreneur’s geographic location.

Q: What are the laws regarding OTC medications?

A: The laws of treating one who is ill and the use of non-kosher medication, vitamins, homeopathic, and nutritional remedies were discussed.1 A person who is ill and whose life may be in danger, is required by Jewish law to use any non-kosher medication if an equally effective kosher medicine is not readily available. A person who is bedridden, or noticeably not functioning up to par due to pain or illness, or has fever which is not life threatening, may take medication which is fit for regular eating. In an uncommon manner. This means such a person may take bitter tasting medication or tablets manufactured with the intention that they be swallowed. One who has a slight discomfort, may take medication which is not fit for regular eating. This includes any item that has no food, hydration, or nutritional value. One may also take medication which contains a non-kosher ingredient which is fit for regular eating, used at less than 1 part in 60. Some opinions also permit one who has a slight discomfort, may take medication which contains a non-kosher ingredient which is not fit for regular eating. In addition, one who requires liquid medication, such as cough syrup which contains glycine (an ingredient which may or may not be kosher as it may be derived from animal, vegetable, or petrole- um sources), may mix one teaspoon of medication into two ounces of any beverage (1:1 ratio). The possible non-kosher glycine will then be shehakol nihye shehakol nihye (which is not fit for regular eating).

Ideally, one should purchase over-the-counter (OTC) products with a reliable hechsher. Star-K certified products contain only kosher approved ingredients. A product containing a trace of a non-kosher ingredient (even if it is 1 part in 60) cannot be certified Star-K. Similarly, all products are manufactured without any ketilim concern.

Unfortunately, very few OTC products are kosher certified, and kosher consumers who require such products are often confronted with pareve (questions). The Star-K has reviewed ingredients used in hundreds of OTC products manufactured by many of the major pharmaceutical companies including Bayer, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, McNeil, Novartis, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble, Pharmacia, Purdue, Frederich, Schering-Plough, Shire, and Wyeth.

Note: After eating meat, one should wait one hour before swallowing tablets or caplets that contain dairy.

1 See our website at www.star-k.org.
Gels, Lotions, Oils, Ointments, Nasal Sprays, Powders, Rubbing Alcohols, Shampoos, and Soaps.

Bicarbonate (pure baking soda), Externally applied products including: Antiseptics, Creams, Dermatologicals, Ear Drops, Emollients, Epsom Salts, Eye Drops, threatening (e.g. acne), Canker Sore Medication, Castor Oil (with no additives), Enemas, Injections, Intravenous (IV), Mineral Oil (with no additives), Sodium Bicarbonate (pure baking soda), Externally applied products including: Antiseptics, Creams, Dermatologicals, Ear Drops, Emollients, Epsom Salts, Eye Drops, threatening (e.g. acne), Canker Sore Medication, Castor Oil (with no additives), Enemas, Injections, Intravenous (IV), Mineral Oil (with no additives), Sodium

This list should NOT be used for Passover.

competent Rav and physician.

stand that under no circumstances should one refrain from taking a prescribed medication or withhold such a medication from children without discussing the matter with a

This medication list is a small sample of frequently used over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Prescription medications are not included on this list. If a medication is not listed, it still may be kosher. One should consult a Rav. Certifying agencies are indicated next to products that have kosher certification. It is imperative that each individual under-

The following are products that may always be used without kosher certification: Antibiotics for an infection - except for those skin infections known to be non-life threatening (e.g. acne), Canker Sore Medication, Castor Oil (with no additives), Enemas, Injections, Intravenous (IV), Mineral Oil (with no additives), Sodium Bicarbonate (pure baking soda), Externally applied products including: Antiseptics, Creams, Dermatologicals, Ear Drops, Emollients, Epsom Salts, Eye Drops, threatening (e.g. acne), Canker Sore Medication, Castor Oil (with no additives), Enemas, Injections, Intravenous (IV), Mineral Oil (with no additives), Sodium

NOTE: Products are approved only when sold in the United States and in the indicated form (e.g. “caplets”, “children’s”, etc.).

This list should NOT be used for Passover.

ALGEBSCS
Aleve Tablets & Caplets
Analgin Reg Tabs, Max Str Tabs
Bayer
Children’s Chewable Aspirin (81mg)
Ex Str Plus Aspirin Caplets (500mg)
Ecyacin Aspirin Tablets (25mg & 500 mg)
Motrin
Children’s Chewable Tablets
Junior Strength Chewable Tablets
Regular Tablets & Caplets
St. Joseph Low Str Chewable Tablets (81mg)
Tylenol (see also Cold & Allergy)
Children’s Soft Chews
Ex Str Tablets & Caplets
Jr Str Soft Chews
Reg Str Tablets
Vanquish Caplets

ANTACIDS
Alka Seltzer
Effervescent & Antacid Pain Reliever Tablets (Original, Cherry, Lemon Lime, Extra Str)
Gas-X Reg & Ex Str Chewables
Gaviscon Antacid Reg & Ex Str Tabs
Maalox
Antacid Liquid
Max Str Antacid/Anti-Gas Liquid
Quick Dissolve Antacid Calcium
Carbonate Chews - Reg & Max Str
Mylanta
Reg, Children’s & Ultra Tabs
Pepcid AC Chewable Tablets - Dairy
Pepcid Complete Tablets - Dairy
Phazyme
Quick Dissolve Chews Tablets (125mg)
Rolaid
Reg Str: Cherry, Original Peppermint, Spearmint Tabs
Ex Str: Freshmint, Fruit Cool Strawberry, Tropical Punch Tabs
Tums
Regular - Asst Fruit, Peppermint Tabs
E-X - Asst Berries, Asst Fruit, Asst Tropical Fruit, Wintergreen Tabs
Ultra - Asst Berries, Asst Fruit, Asst Tropical Fruit, Peppermint,Spearmint Tabs
500 Calcium - Asst Frt, Peppermint Tabs
Cool Relief Cool Mint Tabs - Dairy
E-X Fresh Blends Tabs - Dairy
ANTI DIARRHEAL
Imodium
A-D Caplets
Advanced Chewable Tabs & Caplets
Kaopectate
Reg/Vanilla, Cherry, Peppermint Liquid
Extra Str Liquid
Pepto Bismol
Original Liquid
Maximum Strength Liquid
Original & Cherry Chewable Tabs
ANTI-NAUSEA
Bonine Chewable Tablets - Dairy
Dramamine
Chewable Tablets
Original Formula Tablets - Dairy
Less Drowsy Tablets - Dairy
COLD, ALLERGY, DECONGESTANT
 Advil Cold & Sinus Tablets & Caplets
Benadryl
Allergy & Cold Caplets
Children’s Allergy Chewable Tablets
Allergy & Sinus Fastmelt Tabs - Dairy
Chlor-Triflum 4-hr Allergy Tabs - Dairy
Claritin Non-Drowsy 24-hr Tabs - Dairy
Claritin-D
Non-Drowsy 24-hr Tablets - Dairy
12-hr Tablets - Dairy
Coricidin HBP
Max Str Flu Tablets - Dairy
Cold & Flu Tabs - Dairy
Cough & Cold Tablets - Dairy
Primatene Tablets
Singlet Caplets
Sudafed
12-hr Non-Drowsy Tablets
Children’s Non-Drowsy Nasal Decong. Chewables
Siroc & Allergy Tablets - Dairy
Severe Cold Non-Drowsy Caplets
Tavist Allergy Tablets (Reg) - Dairy

Products Always Approved
Triaminic
Cold & Allergy Liquid
Cold & Cough Liquid
Cold & Nighttime Cough Liquid
Cough & Congestion Liquid
Tylenol (see also Analgesics)
Children’s Allergy-D Liquid
Children’s Cold Plus Cough Chewable Tablets
Infant’s Cold Plus Drops
Infant’s Plus Cold & Cough Drops
Severe Allergy Caplets
Vicks
Child’s Nyquil Cold/Cough Relief Liquid
Nyquil (Original, Cherry) Liquid
Nyquil Cough Liquid
FIBER
Citrucel
Caplets
Reg & Bug. Fr. Pedwr.
Fibercore Caplets
Metamucil - All Powders
LACTOSE INTOLERANT
Lactaid Reg, Ultra & Ex Str Caplets - OU
LAXATIVE
Colyca Syrup & Liquid
Ex Lax
Reg, Max Str. & Ultra Pills
Chocolated Pieces - Dairy
Nature’s Remedy Tablets - Dairy
Parlaxin
Caplets
Overnight Relief Powders
Per-Colyca Syrup & Tablets
Phillips’ Original Milk of Magnesia Liquid
Benadryl-D (Stool Softener) Tablets - Dairy
SLEEPING AIDS
Nytoil Quick Caps - Dairy
Sominex Original Formula Tablets
Unisom Sleep Tablets
Vivarin Tablets
THROAT LOZENGES (certified)
Cephalosporins Soothers
Herbal Throat Drops - STAR-K
Luden’s Throat Drops - OU

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