

Will the Fast be Nullified by Applying Kohl or Eye Medicine to the Eye?

Q: Saum-20: Someone says that the fast will not be nullified by applying kohl or eye medicine to the eye. However, the taste and colour of the kohl and medicine are felt in the saliva. A doctor states that although there is no channel between the ears and the brain, Fuqahaa say that administering any medication or oil to the ear will nullify the fast. He says that had there been a channel between the two, then only would the fast be nullified. Please explain.

Answer: When any substance that nullifies the fast is inserted inside the mouth, ear, nose, anus, procreation organ, stomach or head and such a substance reaches the inside of the stomach or the brain, the fast will be nullified. Inserting any substance into the eye will not nullify the fast because there is no channel linking the eye to either the brain or the stomach.

Tears from the eyes are a form of moisture that well up and then overflow from the eyes, much like perspiration. Much the same is the colour and taste of the kohl and eye medication that is sensed in the saliva. This will not nullify the fast, just as oil rubbed into the head will not nullify the fast even though it is absorbed into the scalp.

However, the medication and oil inserted into the ear does have an effect on the brain and will nullify the fast. A tried and tested method of delivering strength to the brain is to pour the yolk of an egg into the ears. Many reliable people have informed me of this and it may also be practised in common medicine. The research of an experienced Hakeem qualified in Lucknow asserts that medicines poured into the ear actually reach the brain and may sometimes even reach the throat.

The gist of it all is that medication administered through the ear reaches the brain. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

Fatawa Rahimiyyah vol.3