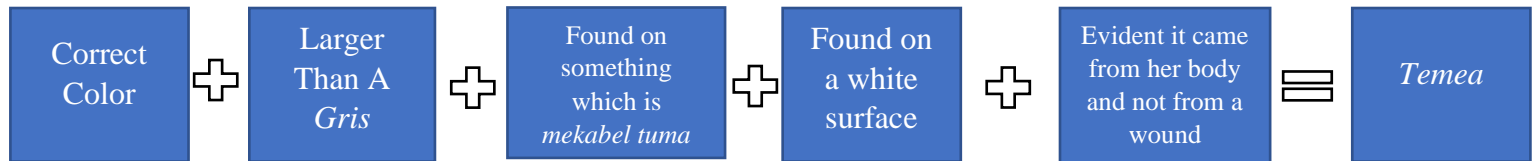


A "How To" on Hilchos Kesamim

Often *hilchos kesamim* can involve many different unique conditions in questions we will be asked, so it is important to always break it down into the basics. The purpose of this is to visualize how the basics stem to frequent questions and answers.

There are **5 requirements**¹ for a *kesem* to be *metame*, without one of them she is going to be *tehora*



Sizes & Measurements

- Less than a *gris* = *tehora*
- *Poskim* check the size of a *gris* in America by taking out a penny and putting it over the *kesem*; in Israel they take a *shekel*; in South Africa they use a 5 rand coin; in England they use 5 pence coin.
- *L'maysa*, we *paskin halacha* based off of the **surface area** of the *kesem*, not the volume.

Tziruf

If there are multiple spots that, if added up, would equal a *gris*, do we combine them? This again splits into two situations:

- (1) Found on her **clothes/bedsheet/underwear** – not *mitztaref* & *tehora*
- (2) Found on her **body** – *we paskin l'maysa l'chumra and she is temea!*

→ Within *tziruf*, we have the case of the “accordion clothes” – meaning clothes which can open and then if the *kesem* falls on the crack it can look like two separate *kesamim*. We *paskin* that she would be *temea* since we would have to use our *sechel* and understand that the *kesem* fell as one drop of blood, and not 2.

Source

*Rebbi Nechemya paskins*¹ that any item which is not *mekabel tuma* is not *mekabel ketamim*. Meaning if she found a *kesem*¹ on an item which *isn't* *mekabel tuma* then she is *tehora*!

Reason

Why? The *Nodeh B'Yehuda*¹ explains that the *ikker gezeira* of *kesamim* was made to protect women from *tuma v'tahara* problems, and in order not to confuse people the *Rabanan* added on the *issur* of *kesamim* to husband and wife. But, if the item being dealt with is not *mekabel tuma*, then we are also going to be *meikel* when it comes to the husband and wife!

Colored Garments

The *Mechaber paskins* that if she finds a *kesem yoter m'k'gris* on a colored garment then she can be *meikel* (since she cannot identify the color)! Practically, we are *meikel* for all colors except white and off-white.

Practical Advice: The *Rama paskins* that when a woman is *tehora* she should wear colored underwear in order to save her from *kesamim*.

Striped Underwear:

Rebbi Akiva Eiger paskins that if there is enough blood on the white parts of the underwear then we are *machmir* and she is *temea*. However, if there is only a *shiur gris* with the combination of the color, then she is *tehora*.

Where Is The Kesem Found

First, we need to use our logic and understand that if she finds blood on her hand she isn't *temea*. Rather, the problematic areas, for which a question will arise, will be if she finds blood from the waist down. Then, the *din* splits into two/three situations:

(1) Found on her **clothes** – can be *toleh* up until *pachot m'k'gris*

(2) Found on her **body** – practically, *halacha l'can* be *meikel* and *toleh* until *pachot m'k'gris*; *Rambam* is *machmir* that she is *temea* no matter the size.

(3) If it is found on the floor she can be *meikel*.

¹ We will not deal with the colors, practically speaking it needs to be red, although other colors are also problematic.

Extra Information

Regarding Mekabel Tuma:

Here are some of the most common cases for items which a woman would find a *kesem* on:

- Toilet Paper/Tissue – Rav Moshe, Rav Shlomo Zalman, & Rav Ovadia explain that toilet paper is **NOT** *mekabel tuma*, since it cannot be washed nor reused. Because it is not *mekabel tuma*, her *tuma/tehora* status depends on:
 - If she wiped right away – it is like a *bedika* and she is *temea*
 - If she waited to wipe – it is like a *kesem* and she can be *meikel*

Therefore, the advice is that the women shouldn't look after wiping!
- Toilet – Since a house-toilet is *mechubar la'karka* – connected to the ground – it is not *mekabel tuma*. Thus, if she finds a *kesem* there then she would be *tehora*.
- Pad – A pad is **NOT** *mekabel tuma*, however, *l'maysa* one should still check the pad because of its absorbent nature². Note that YU is *meikel*.
- Tampon – A tampon is **NOT** *mekabel tuma*, but because it is considered to act as a *bedika penimit* – an inner *bedika* – **any blood which is found on a tampon makes the woman temea!**

Regarding Being Evident It Came From Her Body

There is a major concept within *hilchos kesamim* of *телиya*: A woman can be *toleh* a *kesem* which is “*k'gris*,” **unequivocally**³! Meaning, if the *kesem* is less than a *gris* then she is *tehora l'gamrei*.

→ Is “*k'gris*” A *Din* of *Teliya* or a *Din* of It's Own⁴?

L'maysa, *k'gris* is an absolute *din* of its own, and even when *masiach* comes we will be able to use the size of *pachot m'k'gris*.

→ Toleh B'chol Davar – The *Mechaber* paskins that since *kesamim* are *d'raban*, we can be *toleh* on anything that is reasonable – if she walked through a butchery and then finds blood on her we can be *toleh*; a doctor or nurse who deals with blood can be *toleh*; if the husband bleeds due to ejaculation then she can be *toleh* on him; if she has hemorrhoids she can be *toleh* so long as it isn't her *sha'as vesta*, although there are those who are even *meikel* for this. Based on this, if she loses a *bedika* cloth then we can be *meikel* that she is *tehora*.

→ If a woman does a *bedika* then puts it under her pillow to show her husband later, if she finds it now as a streak then she is *niddah* whereas circular she is *tehora* because she can be *toleh*.

→ Sfek Sfeika – If she puts the *bedika* cloth into her purse, which has other red items, then there is a *sfek sfeika* – *safek* whether it is a *kesem* or not, and *safek* if it came from some other red item. Therefore, she is *tehora*⁵.

² Additionally, there are many *Poskim* who hold that a pad **is** *mekabel tuma*.

³ Meaning that even if she didn't kill a *ma'acholes*, she can still be *toleh*.

⁴ The question stems from the fact that the entire reason the *Gemara* allows us to be *toleh k'gris* is because it used to be that there were these “bed-bugs” which would **inevitably** be killed, causing blood on the bed. But, nowadays, when there aren't bed bugs, can we still use this logic? Meaning, if *k'gris* is based on *телиya*, then nowadays we can't be *toleh* on *dam ma'acholes* and she would be *temea* for **any size kesem**, whereas if *k'gris* is a *din* of its own – meaning that the *Rabanan* were only *gozer* on a *gris* or more – then we **can** be *toleh* for *pachot m'k'gris*.

****⁵ Rav Moshe paskins that after getting a psak that she is *tehora* she can act normally with her husband and doesn't gain anything from doing more *bedikot*!**