טז. יזהר שלא יאחוז באמה וישתין, אם לא מעטרה ולמטה, מפני שמוציא שכבת זרע לבטלה, אלא אם כן הוא נשוי. ומידת חסידות ליזהר אפילו הנשוי. [ש"ע ס"ד]

יז. לא ילכו שנים ביחד לבית הכסא, אלא יכנס אחד לבדו ויסגור הדלת בעדו. ויש להזהיר בזה גם על הקטנים, אם משום שירגילו במילי דצניעותא, ואם משום שלא ירגילו במילי דפריצותא. ואפילו בקטנים שאין יודעים עשות רע, וכל שכן בגדולים קצת. [באו"ח ה"ו, כה"ח סק"ד]

יח. לא ישב במהרה ובחוזק, ולא יאנוס לדחוק עצמו יותר מדאי. [ש"ע ס"ט]. ויבדוק עצמו היטב, ולא ימהר לצאת, אלא ישהה שם עד שירגיש בעצמו שאינו צריך עוד. [כה"ח ס"ק יט בשם הח"א]

Day 40

Holding the penis

16) It is forbidden for an unmarried man to hold onto his penis while urinating, for it might stimulate him and cause him to ejaculate. A married man [who is less likely to be stimulated in this manner] is permitted to hold it while urinating, but the halakha commends men who refrain from doing this even if they are married. It is permissible, however, to hold the penis by the glans while urinating.[131]

Two people in the restroom

17) It is forbidden for two people to be together in the restroom [while one defecates]. The person who needs it should enter the restroom and shut the door behind him. Children should be trained to maintain privacy while using a restroom. This will help them to develop modest habits and it will distance them from perverse behavior. This applies even to very small children and certainly to older children.

Health tips

18) When someone needs to defecate, he should not seat himself forcefully onto the toilet, nor should he push too hard to force his stool out of his body.[132] Also, he should not get up and leave too quickly, until he has ascertained that he has no need to excrete any more.

In light of this, the *Ru'ah Hayim* Palachi instructs men to make sure to aim their urine into the hole on the floor of the restroom, thus avoiding this problem. This is equal to standing on someone above ground level, which the Talmud states is permissible. It is certainly permissible to urinate while standing into modern-day toilets, since they are engineered to avoid such mishaps. This is likewise the ruling of the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 286).

131. The source for this is the Talmud (*Nidda* 13a), cited in the *Shulhan Arukh* 3:14). Judaism forbids masturbation of any kind, even if unintended, as explained in the *Shulhan Arukh* (*E.H.* 23:4). If a man is married, however, the halakha assumes that the slight stimulation of the act of holding the penis while urinating will not rouse him sexually, and it will not result in his ejaculating. Even a married man may not ever handle his penis unnecessarily, except when he urinates (*Mishna Berura* 3:27).

The *Aharonim* debated whether this leniency for someone married applies only when the man's wife is readily available or if it applies even when she is *nidda* or when he is alone far away from home. Harav HIDA (*Birke Yosef*) cited the *Aguda* ruling stringently in these cases, and this is the conclusion of the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (3:22) and the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 287).

The *Shemen Hama'or* (cited in the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer) debated whether the leniency for married men applies only when they are home together with their wives or if it applies as long as she is in the same city. He did not come to a conclusion.

The *Artzot Hahayim* (cited in the *Mishna Berura* 3:28) ruled that if a married man is standing in a place from where it is possible that he might fall, he may certainly hold his penis to urinate. In such a situation, there is no chance that he will be roused sexually.

132. The source for this halakha is the Talmud (*Shabbat* 82a), cited in the *Shulhan Arukh* (3:9). The Talmud explains that if a person pushes too hard he might cause irreversible damage to his colon and anus.

יט. לא יפנה בעמידה. [ספרי הובא במג״א סק״ד, ובמשנ״ב סק״ה]

כ. לא ידבר שום דיבור בבית הכסא. ויתבאר לקמן הלכה כ״ו והלאה.

כא. יזהר לקנח עצמו יפה יפה, כי אם יש לו אפילו משהו צואה בפי הטבעת, אסור לו לומר שום דבר שבקדושה. ולכן צריך ליזהר מאוד. [עי׳ רמב״ם פ״ג מק״ש הי״א, ש״ע סי׳ עו ס״ה]

ועיקר הרחיצה במים, (וכמו שכתוב ״ומצואתו לא רוחץ״. משלי ל, יב). ומנהג ערי אדום (אירופה) שמקנחים בנייר, אין נקי בזה. [באו״ח פי׳ ויצא הי״א, כה״ח ס״ק לה ולקמן סי׳ עו ס״ק כו]. ואפילו מי שלא הורגל בכך, אלא שהורגל לקנח בנייר כמנהג ערי אדום (אירופה), ידחוק עצמו לשנות מנהגו ולהרגיל לקנח במים, כי זה הוא נקיות וטהרה, ובלאו הכי יש לחוש כי אין נקי, ובפרט כשמאריך קצת בבית הכסא שהצואה בפי הטבעת מתייבשת קצת, ואי אפשר לקנח ולהטהר יפה אם לא במים, לכן רחצו הזכו. [מקבציאל ויצא הי״ט]

ואף הניירות המצויים כיום (הנקראים נייר טואלט או טישיו) אין די לקנח בהם, כיון שאינם מועילים כבמים.

[אור לציון פמ״ד ס״ב]

Sit on the toilet

19) One should not defecate while standing.[133]

Speaking in a restroom

20) One must not speak at all while in a restroom. This will be explained below, beginning with halakha 26.

Wiping oneself clean

21) It is very important to wipe one's body clean completely after defecating. If even a trace of excrement remains on a person's rectum, it is forbidden for him to recite any prayer or words of Torah. Thus, people must consider this cleansing to be a top priority.

The proper way to cleanse one's body is to use water, following the verse (*Mishle* 30:12) ״וּמְצֹאָתוֹ לֹא רָחֵץ״ – He has not been rinsed of his own excrement.'' The *Ben Ish Hai* commented that the practice in Western countries to wipe with paper without water is incorrect, for the body cannot be cleaned thoroughly without water. Those people who have been accustomed to use toilet paper must retrain themselves to use water, he insisted. This will enhance people's cleanliness and spiritual purity. This is especially important

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133. The *Magen Avraham* (3:4) states this halakha, citing the *Sifre* to *parashat Ki Tetze*. The *Arukh Hashulhan* (3:5) explained that if a person stands to defecate it wears out his body.

The Talmud states (*Shabbat* 81a) that if someone suspends himself in the restroom, he is likely to develop problems in his abdomen. Rashi defined ''suspends himself'' as defecating while not seated. Rabbenu Nissim explained it more explicitly, that the person crouches and bends his knees instead of sitting on the toilet seat.

The *Mor Uktzi'a* (cited by Harav HIDA in his *Mahazik Berakha* 3:4) asked, ''Why did the *Magen Avraham* use the *Sifre* as the source for this halakha when it is stated plainly in the Talmud?'' He answered that the Talmud's ''suspend himself'' means more than simply standing [but also contorting the body].

At any rate, one should avoid using the type of restroom common in Third World countries, where there is no toilet seat and people crouch over the latrine to defecate.

ולכן יזהר כל אדם לקנח עצמו היטב בנייר לאחר עשיית צרכיו, ואחר כך ירחץ במים, כדי שיהיה כל גופו נקי וטהור בשעה שמזכיר דברים שבקדושה, וכן נאמר (תהלים לה, י) "כל עצמותי תאמרנה ה' מי כמוך". [מרן הראש"ל בילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' קל]

ואם אין לו מים כלל, ינקה עצמו בנייר טואלט היטב היטב. ואף על שמרן כתב שאין לקנח בדבר שהאור שולט בו, כבר נהגו להקל כיום לקנח בנייר וכדומה. [ילקו"י עמ' רפד]

when someone remains seated for some time after defecating, since the excrement dries on his skin and it will be impossible to clean it properly without water.

Although this was written more than a century ago, this remains true even today when we have high quality toilet paper. There is no substitute for cleaning with water. One should first wipe off his body with toilet paper and then clean the skin with water. This will leave the body clean and pure, fit to speak the sacred words of the prayers and Torah, fulfilling the verse (*Tehillim* 35:10), "כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי תֹּאמַרְנָה ה' מִי כָמוֹךָ – All my body parts will say, 'God! Who can be compared to You?'"[134]

If there is no water available, one should make sure to wipe oneself as clean as possible with toilet paper. Although Maran ruled that one must not wipe the body clean with any flammable material, the custom nowadays is to use paper.[135]

134. All the *Aharonim*, without exception, ruled that one must use water to clean the body after defecating. This includes the *Ben Ish Hai*, the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer, the *Or Letziyon*, and Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Yalkut Yosef* Vol. I, first edition page 130). The *Yalkut Yosef* (newest edition, page 284) wrote that if one is loathe to use one's bare hand with water, one may use moistened toilet paper. If there is no water available, one must wipe the skin clean as well as possible with toilet paper.

135. Flammable material

Maran wrote in the *Shulhan Arukh* (3:11) that if someone uses a flammable material to wipe himself clean after defecating he might cause considerable damage to his anus. This is the Talmud's teaching in *Shabbat* 82a. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (3:28) explained that this applies only to material that catches fire without delay, but not to anything that can be damaged by fire. At any rate, in light of this halakha an explanation is necessary why it is permitted to use toilet paper.

The Rama (*Darkhe Moshe* 3:3) cited the *Aguda* saying that we do not follow the Talmud's warning in our times since our restrooms are not located outside the city. The Rama agreed that people ignore the Talmud's warning in our times, but he failed to understand the reason given by the *Aguda*. Why is flammable material dangerous when used outside the city but safe in the city? For lack of a better answer, he suggested that, since it has become such a widespread practice, God will protect us despite our foolishness. He repeated this in his gloss to the *Shulhan Arukh*.

The *Magen Avraham* (3:11) suggested a more plausible explanation. When someone uses a flammable material, he becomes susceptible to the hex of evil magicians. Nowadays, since our restrooms are not outside the city, we need not fear that a magician will cast such a hex on us. Therefore, we may use flammable materials.

The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (3:32) concluded that since this is the basis of our leniency, it does not apply when someone uses a restroom out in a field or forest. Even if it is on a city's outskirts, it is dangerous since people do not frequent that place. If the person is not alone, however, he need not fear even if he is in a field.

According to this, if someone is alone and uses a restroom in a field, he must not wipe himself clean with toilet paper. However, the *Arukh Hashulhan* (3:6) added another element to explain why we are lenient and use toilet paper. We rely on the fact that magicians and hexes are no longer a threat in the modern world. If this is so, one may use paper even in a field restroom.