Medication and non-edible products

Products that are not edible, such as cosmetics, glues, shampoos, deodorants, soaps, detergents, and other cleaning products, may be kept in possession or used during Pesach, even if they contain Chamets. Therefore, it is unnecessary to verify the absence of Chamets or obtain a special rabbinical seal or certification for these products (Rabbi Obadia Yosef, Yalqut Yosef, 360: 31, 361: 68).

For Sefaradim, medications that come in the form of non-chewable capsules or hard pills can be used during Pesach, as they are considered “inedible.” This includes medication that may contain Chamets elements. However, nowadays, it is highly unlikely (Yalqut Yosef Mo’adim, 362: 40). Rabbi Eliezer Melamed, a prominent rabbinic authority, notes that many Ashkenazi rabbis follow a similar Halakhic criterion and that most medical hard pills are made with potato or corn starch, which is permitted for Pesach consumption (see Penine Halakha Pesach 102, 103).

If possible, asking doctors to prescribe non-chewable pill medication for Pesach is advisable (obviously, in the case of a serious medical condition, any necessary medication should be taken).

Some Ashkenazi rabbis hold stricter opinions regarding consuming non-edible Chamets for Pesach, with some Ashkenazi rabbis stating that only non-chewable medication should be allowed. Vitamins, even in the form of non-chewable capsules or pills, cannot be used during Pesach unless it has been verified that they do not contain Chamets (many Sephardic rabbis agree with this criterion). Additionally, some Ashkenazi rabbis adopt a stricter stance on using non-edible Chamets for Pesach, such as cleaning products or perfumes made

from wheat alcohol.

Both Sephardic and Ashkenazi rabbis agree that liquid or chewable medicines, syrups, powdered vitamins and/or medications, or vitamins with a pleasant flavor that is drinkable and/or chewable should be certified as “Kasher for Pesach” or verified not to contain any Chamets ingredients. Many dietary supplements and vitamins are made with elements that are 100% Chamets (e.g., grain fibers, wheat germ, etc.), so it is important to be cautious. Similarly, oral perfumery or personal hygiene products with a pleasant taste, such as toothpaste or flavored lipsticks, should also be checked for any Chamets elements.

We recommend the advanced level reader who wants to understand the relevant Halakhic details of the issue of medications in Pesach to see the following links:

Rabbi Melamed (Hebrew)

Star-K (English)

As the reader can appreciate, in all these Halakhot, there are diverse customs and traditions. For a final verdict, consult with the Rabbi of your community.