



Guidelines for the Ill on Sukkot

Taken with permission from:
*Guide to Traditional Jewish Observance in a
Hospital*

Rabbi Dr. Jason Weiner

Distributed by Ematai

www.ematai.org

5. The above rules apply equally in the case of a woman who has a live birth, a stillbirth, an abortion, or miscarriage more than forty days after becoming pregnant.⁴⁰²
6. A nursing woman is obligated to fast on *Yom Kippur*.⁴⁰³ If the baby drinks formula, she should feed the baby with formula rather than break her fast. However, she may drink (but not eat) in measurements if she would not otherwise have sufficient milk for her baby and the baby is entirely dependent on her milk for its sustenance, thus putting the baby's life in danger.⁴⁰⁴ She should try to avoid this situation by drinking large quantities of liquid before *Yom Kippur* begins.⁴⁰⁵

D. Sukkot

Sukkot, the Festival of “Tabernacles,” is a joyful holiday celebrated five days after *Yom Kippur*. It begins before sunset and extends until nightfall seven days later, when *Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah* begins. The first two and last two days of this period have Sabbath-like festival restrictions. During the first seven or eight days of this holiday, one eats and dwells in a *Sukkah* (temporary outdoor structure) and recites blessings over the Four Species (citron, palm branch, myrtle and willow branches).

- 1a. One who is ill is not obligated to dwell in a *Sukkah*.⁴⁰⁶ This is because one is supposed to dwell in a *Sukkah* the way they would dwell in their home. Since hospitalized patients are not dwelling in their homes, they are exempt.⁴⁰⁷ This exemption not only applies to one whose life is in danger, but also to a person suffering from a mild ailment [see **pg. 15**, for an explanation of this concept], who need not eat in the *Sukkah*⁴⁰⁸ if eating elsewhere is more comfortable.⁴⁰⁹
- 1b. One who is assisting a patient is also exempt from dwelling in a *Sukkah* during the time that the patient requires him or her.⁴¹⁰ If the patient's life is in danger and they need constant supervision, one who is attending to them would remain exempt at all times.⁴¹¹
2. One should not eat before fulfilling the *Mitzvah* of shaking the *Lulav*.⁴¹² However, one who is ill and would find it difficult to go without food until they will be able to do this *Mitzvah*, may eat before they pray, but should at least recite the blessings of the Torah and the first paragraph of the *Shema* (and recite *Kiddush* if it is Shabbat or *Yom Tov*) before eating.⁴¹³

⁴⁰² *Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchatah* 39:16.

⁴⁰³ *Shulchan Aruch OH* 617:1.

⁴⁰⁴ *Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchatah* 39:18.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁶ *Shulchan Aruch OH* 640:3.

⁴⁰⁷ *Mishnah Berurah* 640:6.

⁴⁰⁸ *Shulchan Aruch OH* 640:3.

⁴⁰⁹ *Mishnah Berurah* 640:9.

⁴¹⁰ *Shulchan Aruch OH* 640:3.

⁴¹¹ *Mishnah Berurah* 640:11.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 692:15.

⁴¹³ *Lev Avraham* 19:13.

- 3a. One who does not have any use of their hands should take hold of the *Lulav* and *Eetrog* with their arm if possible.⁴¹⁴ If one has only one hand, they should take hold of the *Lulav* (along with the *Haddassim* and *Aravot*) with that hand and hold the *Eetrog* with the arm opposite it. If one is unable to take hold of the *Eetrog* with their arm, then they should take the *Lulav* and *Eetrog* individually in succession, first the *Lulav* by itself and then the *Eetrog* by itself, in their good hand (regardless if that is the right or left hand).⁴¹⁵
- 3b. One whose arm is paralyzed, but is able to take hold of the *Lulav* and *Eetrog* with some assistance from another person, may fulfill the *Mitzvah* in this manner.⁴¹⁶
4. Although one should stand while making the blessings “*Al Netilat Lulav*” and “*Shehecheyanu*,”⁴¹⁷ if one is unable to stand, they may say it while sitting.⁴¹⁸
5. If possible, one should remove any Band-Aids or bandages from their hands before performing the *Mitzvah* of taking the *Lulav* and *Eetrog*, but if they are unable to, or if it is inadvisable to do so, they may nevertheless perform the *Mitzvah* and say the blessings with them on.⁴¹⁹ Similarly, one whose hand is encased so that they can only hold the *Lulav* or *Eetrog* with their fingers, may nevertheless perform the *Mitzvah* and say the blessings.⁴²⁰

- On *Sukkot*, a proper *Sukkah* is always available for patients, their families and staff on the Plaza Level of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center main building, near the south tower.
- During *Sukkot*, a *Lulav* and *Eetrog* are available in the *Sukkah* and upon request from the Spiritual Care office.

⁴¹⁴ *Shulchan Aruch OH* 651:4.

⁴¹⁵ *Mishnah Berurah* 651:23.

⁴¹⁶ *Lev Avraham* 19:13.

⁴¹⁷ *Shulchan Aruch OH* 651:4 *Rema*.

⁴¹⁸ *Mishnah Berurah* 651:27.

⁴¹⁹ *Lev Avraham* 19:13.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*.