

How to pray wearing a colostomy bag

Answered by the Permanent Committee of Scholars

Question: I am the Imam of a Masjid and I was stricken with intestinal cancer. The doctors determined the disease was in the rectum which contains waste material and it was necessary to remove it. They performed the operation, blocked the passage, and opened an orifice on the side for the feces to pass into nylon bags throughout the day and night. The bag is connected to the opening with glue; thus no odor, secretion, or anything foul exits from it. After the day and night pass I remove the bag and wash the orifice with a new washing; then I put another bag in its place. I am currently the Imam of a Masjid. Is it correct for me to be the Imam?

Answer: All praises belong to Allah alone, may the salutations and peace be upon His Messenger, and the Messenger's family and his companions collectively. As to what follows:

If the situation is as you have stated, then your Wudu (purification for prayer) is invalidated by that which exits from you such as feces going into the bag; whether it is a little or a lot. Therefore it is obligatory upon you to perform Wudu for every prayer just like the person who suffers from urinary incontinence and the woman who suffers from constant non-menstrual bleeding. You are excused as it relates to wearing the bag during the prayer which contains filth. And you are excused for wearing the bag that transports feces from you into the bag while you are praying.

It is not permissible for you to lead the people in prayer whether it is an obligatory prayer or a supererogatory prayer.

And with Allah lies all success and may the salutations of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and his companions collectively.

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Translated by Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee