



## THE SEVEN WHITE DAYS

*When a woman is rid of her discharge, she must count seven days.*

—Leviticus 15:28



### OVERVIEW

After the *befsek tabara*, a woman waits seven days before going to the *mikveh*. During this time, she checks herself and her underwear twice daily. This time period, the seven white days, is based on the above verse<sup>1</sup>.

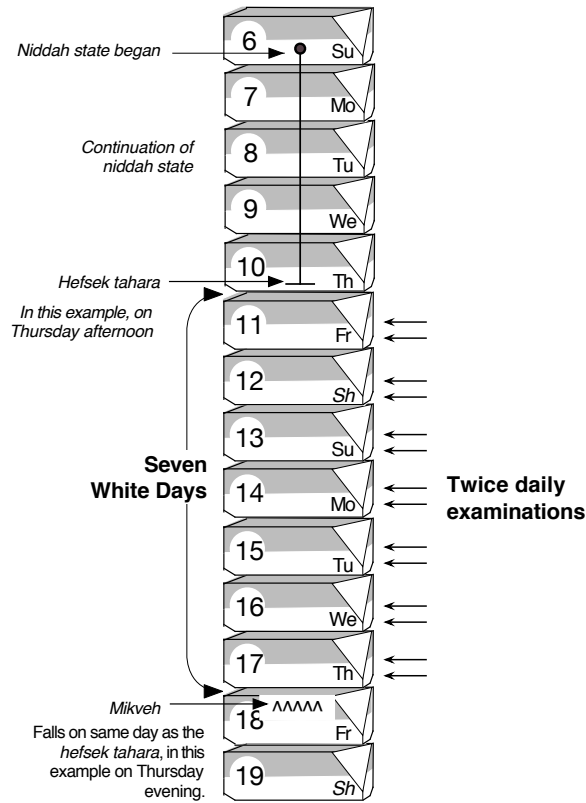
The seven white day period normally<sup>2</sup> begins the day following the *befsek tabara*. If the *befsek tabara* was on Thursday afternoon then Friday is the *first* day of the seven white days. The following Thursday is the seventh day and Thursday night is the immersion in the *mikveh*.

---

1 As explained at length in Appendix - Seven White Days.

2 But not necessarily, as explained further in the text.

To make sure these days are completely void of any uterine bleeding, the Talmudic Rabbis required a woman during these days to perform internal examinations twice daily<sup>3</sup>, wear white underwear<sup>4</sup> and sleep on white sheets. Hence the name **seven white days**.



<sup>3</sup> *Tzemach Tzedek* 196:5.

<sup>4</sup> In *Ramo* 196:3 “dawns whites (*levinim*),” in *Mehaber* and *Tzemach Tzedek* “robe (*challukab*).” *Bodei Hasbulchan* 196:46 and 196:52, brings opinions specifying the above to refer to underwear. See also contemporary *niddah* guides where this custom is brought.

This seven white day period must form a non-interrupted “block” of seven days<sup>5</sup>, completely clean of any trace of menstrual bleeding.

There are *no* leniencies in the laws of separation (dealt with in Chapter Four) during the seven white days<sup>6</sup>.

### FIRST THREE DAYS

Finding a stain on one of the first three days is stricter than the other days and cannot be readily dismissed as originating from an external source<sup>7</sup>. However a stain smaller than the minimum size is pure even during the first three days<sup>8</sup>.

During these days, a woman cannot dismiss a stain as being caused by a cut or bruise<sup>9</sup>. Under certain circumstances, for example, a chronic skin condition or a bruise which excretes so much blood that it penetrates the bandage, it is possible to dismiss the stain as originating from this source<sup>10</sup>. Considering the complicated *halachic* aspects to this subject, it should only be decided through an orthodox Rabbi expert in these laws.

### WHITE UNDERWEAR/WHITE BED SHEETS

During the seven white day period, she must wear white<sup>11</sup> underwear pre-checked for stains (*kesomim*). She starts doing so immediately after the first check prior to performing the *moch docbuk*<sup>12</sup>.

Commencing from the night of the *hefsek tabara* and until the end of the seven days, the wife’s bed sheets must be white<sup>13</sup> and checked for any stains. The blankets and pillow covers need not be white. It is sufficient for them to be clean and checked for stains<sup>14</sup>.

If white underwear and sheets are unavailable, for example on a journey, the seven day

---

5 This is learned from, “After’ she will count seven days.” (Leviticus 15:28) “After” implying one block of seven days following her impurity, introduction to Chapter 183, *Shulchan Aruch Admur Hazoken*.

6 *Mehaber* and *Ramo* 195:14.

7 *Ramo* 196:10. *Tzemach Tzedek* 196:21.

8 *Ramo* 196:10. *Tzemach Tzedek* 196:21.

9 *Sbach* 196:13.

10 *Sbach* 196:13.

11 *Ramo* 196:3, 381:5.

12 *Bodei Hasbulchan* 196:45.

13 *Ramo* 381:5.

14 *Mehaber* 196:3, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 159:1, *Tabara Kegalacha* 16:42.