



## Tasting Meat Liquids

**Question:** When I cook for Shabbat, I like to taste the chicken soup and gravies to make sure they are properly spiced. Does that “make me *fleishig*”?

**Answer:** In many areas of Halacha, such a question would be easier to decide conclusively, but for whatever reason, *Klal Yisrael* shies away from leniency regarding meat and milk. We start by telegraphically mentioning multiple ways that such a case is or may be distanced from the Torah-level prohibition.

1) If the meat is poultry, not beef; 2) Perhaps, if you are tasting only gravies and not the meat itself; 3) The meat and milk were not cooked together; 4) You are eating one after the other, not together.

Different *Rishonim* give different reasons to wait six hours (or a different *minhag*'s time) between *fleishig* followed by *milchig* foods. Rashi (Chulin 105a) says that “meat exudes fat, and it sticks to the mouth and gives taste for a long time.” The Rambam (Ma’achalot Asurot 9:28) says that we are concerned that meat got stuck between the teeth in a manner that it is difficult to remove. The Tur (Yoreh Deah 89) brings



*nafka minot* between the opinions: 1. If meat is found between the teeth after 6 hours, is the meat still *fleishig*? (Rambam-no; Rashi- yes); 2. If it was chewed but not swallowed (Rambam- must wait, as meat could be between teeth; Rashi – no wait, as swallowing is what makes the taste linger). The Tur and Shulchan Aruch (YD 89:1) rule like the stringencies of both positions, therefore even if one does not eat the *fleishig* food but chews and then spits out (e.g., to feed to one’s baby), he still has to wait before eating *milchigs*. The Pri Megadim (MZ 89:1) reasons that our being *machmir* for both opinions is logical either due to our carefulness about *safek* in all the relevant cases, or because the two reasons could both be true.

The Pri Megadim continues that if one chewed *pareve* food that absorbed *fleishig* taste, but does not contain pieces of meat (e.g., chicken soup broth), neither reason indicates having to wait. However, he says that holy Jews do not distinguish (*lo plug*) between similar cases and always wait, and the Pitchei Teshuva (YD 89:1) accepts his opinion. How broad is this *lo plug*? While some *rabbanim* view it as applying to everything that is put in the mouth, the more accepted opinion is that tasting with the tongue (without chewing) and then

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spitting out the *fleishig* food does not make waiting necessary (Pri Chadash, YD 89:18; Aruch Hashulchan, YD 89:14; Darchei Teshuva 89:22). (There are discussions in other *kashrut* areas on the extent to which tasting with the tongue alone is an especially lenient case – see Pitchei Teshuva, YD 98:1). Among Sephardi *poskim* as well, the mainstream approach is to be lenient (Kaf Hachayim, YD 89:4; Yalkut Yosef, YD 89:13). (See also a similar discussion in Living the Halachic Process, III, E-1).

There are some provisos, though. First, just as between milk followed by meat, we require washing the mouth by first eating liquid and solid *pareve* food (Shulchan Aruch ibid. 2), so too this is needed to remove the tasted meat residue (see the aforementioned lenient opinions). Since there is no minimum amount for how much one needs to eat to become *fleishig* (Badei Hashulchan 89:2), one would have to determine that the tasting included **no** swallowing.

These rules can be burdensome to follow. Consider also that on a day of substantial *fleishig* cooking, some people tend to eat samples of their food without giving it much thought and forget thereafter that they are *fleishig*. Therefore, it might be prudent for

many home Shabbat chefs who want to eat *milchig* food around the time of their major cooking, to eat the real *milchig* food prior to tasting *fleishig* food and spending a long time around them.

However, this suggestion is no more than practical advice where it applies. As far as a halachic ruling is concerned, if one just tasted *fleishig* food with his tongue, spat it out, and washed his mouth, he does not need to wait six hours before eating *milchig* food. ■

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