

RESOURCES ON NIDDAH, AND MIKVEHS (RITUAL BATHS) IN THE DC AREA

The resources in this section are intended to provide an introduction to the subject of *Niddah* or *Taharat HaMishpacha* (the “laws of family purity”), as well as to non-traditional uses for mikvehs (ritual baths). Whether you are looking for a mainstream Orthodox perspective or Conservative approach to *niddah*, or you are looking for ideas for incorporating the mikveh into new rituals, there are resources here for you. Please see the end of this section for a list of local mikvehs.

Please note, as with all sections of this resource guide, this by no means represents a comprehensive set of information or exhaustive list of resources. We would welcome any and all suggestions for adding to the usefulness of this page. E-mail us at lifecycle@dcminyan.org.

Traditional / Orthodox Perspective on *Niddah/Taharat HaMishpacha*

<http://www.yoatzot.org/index.php>

Yoatzot: The Women’s Health and Halacha Website.

This website is run by NISHMAT, and “provides halachic and medical information about taharat hamishpachah.” It is supervised by R. Yehudah Henkin, and Dr. Deena Zimmerman, both respected authorities in their own right. It offers on-line kallah classes, an extensive frequently-asked-questions, and an avenue to ask more questions of your own.

The Marriage Covenant: A Guide to Jewish Marriage, by Rabbi Elyashiv Knohl, J Levine/Millennium (2008).

This book was first published in Hebrew in 2002 and is very highly respected. It was translated into English in 2008. It gives a comprehensive introduction to *Niddah* from an Orthodox perspective, and is very scrupulous about citing sources.

A Lifetime Companion to the Laws of Jewish Family Life, by Dr. Deena Zimmerman, Urim Publications; 2nd, revised edition (2006).

This book has also gained a wide following, provides a good, clear introduction to *Niddah*, and is very user (reader) friendly.

New Conservative Adaptations relating to *Niddah*:

Recently, the Rabbinical Assembly, the *halachic* arm of the Conservative movement, approved three Teshuvot (*halachic* opinions) on *Niddah*. The opinions vary widely and some are quite different from the traditional *halacha*, but they are a useful resource for those who may not be comfortable with all of the contours of traditional Orthodox practice, but are still interested in undertaking some obligations. They discuss both re-interpreting the language of *Niddah* from a modern, more feminist perspective, and

amending the laws. All are available at
http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/law/teshuvot_public.html

- Miriam Berkowitz, Susan Grossman, Avram Reisner, "Mikveh and the Sanctity of Family Relations" YD 183.2006a (This is an introduction, explaining the three different decisions).
 - http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/teshuvot/docs/20052010/mikveh_introduction.pdf
- Susan Grossman, "Mikveh and the Sanctity of Being Created Human" YD 183.2006b
 - http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/teshuvot/docs/20052010/grossman_niddah.pdf
- Avram Reisner, "Observing Niddah in Our Day" YD 183.2006
 - http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/teshuvot/docs/20052010/reisner_niddah.pdf
- Miriam Berkowitz, "Reshaping the Laws of Family Purity for the Modern World" YD 183.2006d.
 - http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/teshuvot/docs/20052010/berkowitz_niddah.pdf

New Perspectives on the use of the Mikveh

<http://www.mayyimhayyim.org/>

Website of the Mayyim Hayyim Living Water Community Mikveh and the Paula Brody and Family Education Center in Newton, MA. Mayyim Hayyim offers an array of educational resources relating to both traditional and new uses for the mikvah. In their own words, "Mayyim Hayyim is a threshold into Jewish life – a place where the spiritually diverse needs of 21st century Jews are met by reclaiming the ancient tradition of immersing in the mikveh".

MIKVEHS IN THE DC AREA

The information in this list was accurate as of summer 2008. Please email us at lifecycle@dcminyan.org to suggest changes or additions to this list, or if you find that any of this information is no longer accurate.

Adas Israel Mikveh

2850 Quebec Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008

Phone Number: (202) 362-4433

Phone Number: (202) 841-8776 For appointments during week

Phone Number: (202) 387-2686 Suzanne Peters for weekends or evenings

Web Page: www.adasisrael.org

E-mail: mlasasloan@comcast.net

Manager: Naomi Malka

Evening and weekend Mikvah Lady: Suzanne Peters

Operates under: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Information:

- Conservative mikvah located in basement in Adas Israel Synagogue.
- Any Jewish woman or man can use the mikvah.
- Call for an appointment.
- Charges are: Regular needed monthly visit \$18;
- Special occasions \$36; Conversion \$54 (Must have a rabbi present)

Alteres Yisroael Mikveh

11621 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, MD 20854

Phone Number: (301) 299-0144 (Phone ext. 18)

Web Page: www.his.com/~chabad

Contact: Mrs. Zlata Geisinsky

Operates under: Chabad Lubavitch-Maryland Region

Information:

- Orthodox mikvah run by Chabad.
- Open to any Jewish woman
- Open every evening from after 7:30 by appointment.
- Reservations by appointment only. Please call for an appointment 48 hours in advance.
- Membership Fee for One Year: \$54.
- Each mikvah visit is \$10.00.
- Non-Members pay \$15.00 per visit.

Kemp Mill Community Mikvah

Silver Spring Jewish Center

1401 Arcola (entrance off Monticello), Silver Spring, MD 20902

Phone Number: (301) 649-4800

Phone Number: (301) 593-7512 (Robin Niman)

Manager: Robin Niman

Operates under: Va'ad Harabanim/Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington

Information:

- Open in the evenings only to women, by appointment only. Call to schedule an appointment.
- Not available for Kashering utensils at any time.
- The fee is \$18, unless you are a member.
- The operating agency is the Mikvah Emunah Society, with the Vaad Harabanim of Greater Washington.
- Brides- please call to schedule an appointment.

Mikvah Emunah Society of Greater Washington

8901 Georgia Ave (Corner of Ballard Street), Silver Spring, MD 20910

Phone Number: (301) 565-3737 (Call for appointments)

Phone Number: (301) 588-3205 (Libby Fleischmann, Manager)

Web Page: www.mikvahemunah.com

Manager: Libby Fleischmann

Information:

- Women's winter hours: S-Th 7pm-10pm; Sat 30 minutes after Shabbos ends; Fri nights call to schedule.
- Summer hours depend on time of sundown.
- Men's hours: S-Th before 9am; Fri until 1 hour before candlelighting
- Keilim mikvah (outdoors behind mikvah) for dishes during daylight hours
- Tovelng anything made of metal or glass that is going to be used that will touch food.
- Orthodox mikvah.
- \$18.00 each time used/discounts available with membership of \$150

National Capital Mikvah

1308-28th St. NW, Washington, DC 20007-3340

Phone Number: (202) 342-5303 for appointments

E-mail: info@dcmikvah.org

Operates under: Va'ad Harabanim/Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington

Information:

- Call for an appointment
- Waiting area; two dressing areas with showers and baths
- Not handicapped accessible, but arrangements will be made
- Also available for male use before weddings or conversions.
- Suggested donation for use is \$20

Ohev Sholom Mikvah Chaim

1600 Jonquil Street, NW Washington DC 20012

www.ohvsholommikvah.org

202-723-0862

Mikvah Chaim is an inclusive, kosher mikvah open to individuals from all streams of Judaism for any immersive purpose. To schedule an appointment, please email attendant@ohvsholommikvah.org or make an appointment online through the website. All appointments cost \$20, which can be paid online or in person. Please note that appointments are either half an hour or one hour long, depending on the needs of the immerser. There is also a keilim mikvah available for public use.

- Regular women's hours are in the evening. Please check the website for updated evening hours.
- Men who are interested in using the mikvah during daytime hours must contact Rabbi Herzfeld directly at RabbiShmuelHerzfeld@gmail.com. Men will not be able to access the mikvah at night.
- The entrance to the Women's Mikvah is located at the south side of the synagogue, closer to Juniper Street.
- The entrance to the Men's Mikvah is located at the north side of the synagogue, on Jonquil Street.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Maharat Ruth Balinsky Friedman at MaharatRuth@ostns.org

White Oak Mikvah

10900 Lockwood Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20901

Phone Number:(301) 404-7323 24 hour private answering service

Phone Number:(301) 452-8693 Hannie Feldman's cell

Phone Number:(301) 681-7155 Laurie Cohen-donations & calendars

Web Page: www.sehc.us

E-mail: LSCHP@aol.com

Coordinator: Hannie Feldman

Operates Under: Va'ad Harabanim/Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington

Information:

- Located inside the Southeast Hebrew Congregation building.
- Is in operation for all women in the community—regardless of what Shul they belong to—to use on

Friday evenings and on Yom Tov exclusively.

- May be used with special scheduling during inclement weather, where the roads are impassible.

- The Mikvah may not be used by men or for keilim.

- To schedule an appointment: Please call the Mikvah Line at 301-404-7323 (a 24-hour private

answering service) as early in advance that you know you will need to use the Mikvah, so arrangements may be made. You will be discretely called back with scheduling information.

- Nominal annual fee for the on-going maintenance of the Mikvah. The \$40 annual membership fee

entitles a woman to full use of the Mikvah as often as required during the year. It also enables others

to use it when they need it. (Out-of-town visitors only can pay a \$15 one-time fee to use the Mikvah.)