

147971 - If Breastfed, Is Her Son Mahram to His Daughter?

the question

My wife's father was breastfed by his half-sister more than four times, so he is a Mahram to her children, because he is her brother and because he was breastfed by her.

My question is: are his children Mahrams to her children?

Can his daughter, who is my wife, shake hands with his sons and uncover her hair in front of them or not?

Summary of answer

If the wife's father was breastfed by his sister and it was five full breastfeedings within the first two years, then he becomes a son to her through breastfeeding, and her children, both males and females, become siblings to him through breastfeeding; they become paternal uncles and aunts to his children through breastfeeding. Based on that, your wife may shake hands with the sons of this woman and uncover her hair in front of them, because they are her paternal uncles through breastfeeding.

Detailed answer

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The Impact of Breastfeeding on Family Relationships

If the wife's father was breastfed by his sister and [it was five full breastfeedings within the first two years](#), then he becomes a son to her through breastfeeding, and her children, both males

and females, become siblings to him through breastfeeding; they become paternal uncles and aunts to his children through breastfeeding. Thus it is proven that the [relationship of Mahram](#) exists between them.

Quranic Verse on Mahram Relationships

The basic principle concerning that is the verse in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mothers who gave you suck, your foster milk suckling sisters.} [An-Nisa' 4:23]

So the daughter of a brother through blood ties is a Mahram.

Prophetic Hadith on Mahram Relationships

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "What becomes Mahram (forbidden for marriage) through breastfeeding is that which becomes Mahram through blood ties." (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 2645; Muslim, 1447)

So the daughter of a brother through breastfeeding also becomes a Mahram.

Scholarly Opinion on Breastfeeding and Mahram

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

The breastfeeding which establishes the relationship of Mahram is that which takes place five or more times in the first two years. If the breastfeeding of the two brothers was like this, then they are brothers through breastfeeding and the children of each of them are the children of his brother through breastfeeding. ... And it is not permissible for one of them to marry the daughter of the other, because they are his nieces (children of his brother) through breastfeeding. End quote. (Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da'imah, 21/116)

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

I was breastfed with my maternal uncle by my grandmother – who is his mother. Should my daughters observe the Hijab in front of him, knowing that I was breastfed more than five times?

He replied:

If you were breastfed by your grandmother with five certain breastfeedings, then you became a child to her, and her children are your siblings, both the older and younger ones among them. If they became your brothers, they became paternal uncles to your daughters. Based on that, it is permissible for your daughters to uncover in front of all of their maternal uncles. (End quote from *Liqā' Al-Bab Al-Maftūh*, 40/8)

Based on that, your wife may shake hands with the sons of this woman and uncover her hair in front of them, because they are her paternal uncles through breastfeeding.

More information is available in the following answers:

[**Each of them breastfed the child of the other; do any rulings result from that?**](#)

[**The children of your father through breastfeeding from his second wife who did not breastfeed you are siblings to you**](#)

[**Uncertain of the number of breast-feedings**](#)

And Allah knows best.