

248799 - Is it obligatory to inform a suitor of a possible health problem?

the question

One year ago I had an infection of the optic nerve (optic neuritis), which was treated. I consulted three doctors about the cause of it. The first doctor said: You have a small risk of being affected by multiple sclerosis (MS), the first symptom of which is optic neuritis. The possibility of that is, as I said, very small, and it cannot be proven that one is affected with it until after ten or fifteen years. Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a nerve disease that can lead to physical disability. The second doctor said that optic neuritis is caused by a virus, and told me that I do not have MS. The third doctor also ruled out MS. Now someone has come to propose marriage to me; do I have to tell him about this possible health problem?

Detailed answer

The fuqaha' differed concerning the matters that could affect a marriage and must be disclosed. The majority are of the view that that should be limited to specific matters that would prevent physical pleasure, such as insanity, leprosy, and genital defects.

The second view is that any defect (or health problem) that may put one of the spouses off the other in such a way that the purposes of marriage – compassion and love – cannot be achieved is a defect that must be disclosed, and the marriage may be annulled if it is concealed.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The analogy is that any defect (or health problem) that would put one spouse off the other, and would prevent fulfilment of the aims of marriage, namely compassion and love, would result in giving the option of annulling the marriage.

End quote from Zaad al-Ma'aad (5/166).

The second view is most likely to be correct.

In the answer to question no. [111980](#) we noted three guidelines regarding this matter:

1. if the sickness will have any impact on married life and will affect the wife's ability to fulfil her duties towards her husband and children;
2. if it will be off-putting to the husband because of its appearance or smell;
3. if it is real and permanent, and is not something imagined or temporary that will disappear with the passage of time or after marriage.

Based on that, you do not have to disclose that you suffered optical neuritis, because you have been treated and have recovered from it.

No attention should be paid to a possible health problem that has not been proven and needs ten years to be sure whether one has been affected by it.

And Allah knows best.