



Homeland Security

The following document was produced by the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

Document Description:

Common Sikh American Head Coverings

Sikhism is a religion that originated in South Asia during the 15th Century and is distinct from both Islam and Hinduism. For religious reasons, practicing Sikhs do not cut their hair. Sikh men wrap their long hair with a turban called a pagri (see photo a), a practice that typically takes 10-15 minutes. Sikh boys wrap their hair in a smaller under-turban called a patka, with their hair knotted on top of their head (photo b). Some Sikh women also wear turbans (photo c); however, many wear a cloth called a chunni to cover their head (photo d).

Points to keep in mind when searching someone wearing a Sikh head covering

- Show RESPECT
- Explain why you need to conduct search
- Offer private room for search if available
- Searches should be conducted by a screener of the same gender as the passenger being searched

Picture A: Man with pagri

Picture B: Boy with patka

Picture C: Woman with pagri

Picture D: Woman with chunni

Transportation Security Administration

Produced by the Department of Homeland Security, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2005. Images and descriptions of Sikh head coverings provided by Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF).

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Common Sikh American Head Coverings



Sikhism is a religion that originated in South Asia during the 15th Century and is distinct from both Islam and Hinduism. For religious reasons, practicing Sikhs do not cut their hair. Sikh men wrap and knot their long hair with a turban called a *pagri* (see photo a), a practice that typically takes 10-15 minutes. Sikh boys wrap their hair in a smaller under-turban called a *patka*, with their hair knotted on top of their head (photo b). Some Sikh women also wear turbans (photo c); however, many wear a cloth called a *chunni* to cover their head (photo d).

Points to keep in mind when searching someone wearing a Sikh head covering:

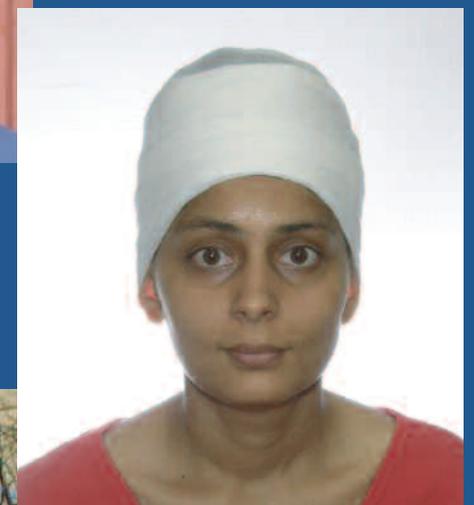
- Show RESPECT
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a. Man with pagri



b. Boy with patka



c. Woman with pagri



d. Woman with chunni



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