



Quick Guide To

Nicotine Dependence Pharmacotherapy



NICOTINE REPLACEMENT (NRT) ^a

Combining long-acting NRT (patch) with a short-acting NRT (gum, lozenge, or inhaler) is more effective than using a single type of NRT

LONG-ACTING PRODUCTS

Medication	Dosing	Instructions
Nicotine Patch (OTC) (Nicoderm CQ & generic nicotine patch)	Use one patch every day. This is a 24 hr patch that comes in 3 doses for tapering. If ≥ 10 cigarettes per day start with 21 mg for 4-6 weeks; 14 mg for 2 weeks; and 7 mg for 2 weeks. If < 10 start with 14 mg.	Every morning, place a fresh patch on a relatively hairless area of skin between the waist and neck. If sleep disruption occurs, remove the patch at bedtime. Use a hydrocortisone cream for minor skin reactions. Recommended length of treatment is 8-10 weeks.

SHORT-ACTING PRODUCTS

Nicotine Gum (OTC) (Nicorette/NicMint & generic nicotine gum)	Use 2 mg gum for those who smoke their first cigarette after 30 minutes of waking; 4 mg gum for those who smoke their first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking. Up to 24 pieces of gum may be used daily. Recommended dosing scheme is 1 piece: every 1-2 hrs weeks 1-6; every 2-4 hrs	Chew the gum slowly until mint or pepper is tasted. Then park the gum between the cheek and gum to permit absorption through the oral mucosa. Repeat when taste subsides and continue for approximately 30 minutes. Avoid eating or drinking for 15 minutes before and during use. Use for up to 12 weeks.
Nicotine Lozenge (OTC) (Commit Lozenge & generic nicotine lozenge)	Use 2 mg lozenge for those who smoke their first cigarette after 30 minutes of waking; 4 mg lozenge for those who smoke their first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking. Up to 20 lozenges per day. Recommended dosing scheme is 1 lozenge: every 1-2 hrs for weeks 1-6; every 2-4 hrs during weeks 7-9; and 4-8 hrs during weeks 10-12.	Suck on the lozenge until it dissolves. Do not bite or chew it like a hard candy, and do not swallow it. Do not eat or drink 15 minutes before using or while the lozenge is in your mouth. Recommended length of therapy is 12 weeks.
Nicorette Mini Lozenge (OTC) Dissolves 3 times faster than the regular lozenge		
Nicotine Nasal Spray (Rx)	A dose is one spray in each nostril (1 mg total nicotine). Initial treatment is 1-2 doses per hour, as needed, for symptom relief. Minimum treatment is 8 doses/day; maximum is 40 doses/day (5 doses/hour). Each bottle contains 100 mg of nicotine.	Do not sniff, inhale, or swallow during administration as this increases irritating effects. Tilt the head back slightly during administration. Duration of therapy is 3-6 months.
Nicotine Inhaler (Rx) (Nicotrol Inhaler)	Puff as needed. One cartridge delivers 4 mg of nicotine in the course of 80 inhalations (about 20 minutes). 6-16 cartridges should be used per day, with tapering of use in the last 6-12 weeks of therapy.	Avoid eating or drinking for 15 minutes before and during use. Duration of therapy is up to 3-6 months.

BUPROPION SR ^b (Rx) - may be combined with nicotine replacement

(Zyban, Wellbutrin)	Take 150mg for first 3 days; 300mg after day 3. Ensure at least 8 hours between doses.	Begin bupropion 1-2 weeks before quit date. Limit alcohol intake. Duration of therapy is 7-12 weeks and may be extended up to 6 months.
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VARENICLINE ^b (Rx)

(Chantix)	Take 0.5mg daily for 3 days then 0.5mg twice daily for 4 days then 1mg twice daily for up to 12 weeks.	Begin varenicline 7-35 days before quit date. Duration of therapy is for up to 12 weeks and may be extended for up to another 12 weeks
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Inclusion of this adult dosage chart is strictly for the convenience of the prescribing provider. Please consult the Physicians' Desk Reference for complete product information and precautions. Source: adapted from USDHHS Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence Clinical Practice Guideline (2008) and Quick Reference Guide (2009); and Pharmacologic Product Guide (Rx for Change, 2017).

^a FDA recommended labeling change in 2013 noting there are no safety concerns in combining NRT products or use of NRT and tobacco.

^b Black box warnings removed by FDA in December 2016 after results of mandated clinical trial.

OTC = Over the counter Rx = Prescription

Rev 10/2020