

Ways To Stop Using Tobacco

Over-the-counter Methods

Purpose of Medicines

- These medicines are used to remove cravings or lower them to a level you can manage.

If your cravings are still severe while using these medicines, call your doctor or tobacco counselor for help in making changes to dosages or medicine.

- When cravings are less intense and less often, they allow you to focus on figuring out how to live your life without tobacco. Sometimes this is as simple as changing a habit.

Other triggers, such as stress, can sometimes take longer to figure out how to cope without tobacco use. Keep using medicines until your new routine and coping skills feel comfortable for you.



- Insurance often pays for these medicines as long as they are prescribed by a health care provider.

Nicotine Gum or Lozenge

■ What are they?

- Gum slowly releases nicotine into your mouth when you chew it and “park” it between your cheek and gums.
- Lozenge slowly releases nicotine when it dissolves in your mouth.

- Lozenges are available in regular and mini forms. The mini is made to dissolve more quickly and has a different texture. It tends to work faster



than the regular form. Check with your insurance company to see if the mini lozenge is covered.

- They are both available in 2 mg and 4 mg strengths.

■ How to use:

- Chew the gum slowly until a peppery taste comes out. Then, put the gum between your cheek and gums and hold it there until the taste goes away. This can take at least 2 to 3 minutes. Repeat this process until the gum loses its taste.

(over)

Use each piece of gum for about 30 minutes.

- Put a lozenge in your mouth and let it dissolve for about 20 to 30 minutes. Move the lozenge from one side of your mouth to the other.
 - Do not chew or swallow it as it may make you feel sick and you will absorb less nicotine.
 - Try not to eat or drink 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after using the gum and lozenge. (Sips of water are OK.) If you do, the nicotine may not work as well.

■ **Dosing:**

- One piece of 2 mg gum is about equal to one cigarette. The 4 mg is about equal to 2 cigarettes.
- A 2 mg lozenge is about equal to 1 ½ cigarettes. The 4 mg lozenge is about equal to 3 cigarettes.
- You can use a 2 mg nicotine lozenge or gum if you use tobacco later than 30 minutes after you wake up. You can use a 4 mg dose if you use tobacco within 30 minutes of waking up.
- If the 4 mg dosage is too strong, try the 2 mg dose. If you use nicotine lozenges or gum with patches, you may want to use the 2 mg dosage.

■ **Side effects:**

- The most common side effects are hiccups, upset stomach, heartburn or jaw pain. These should go away if you use the medicines the correct way.

- **Length of treatment:** Try to spread the use of the medicines during the day. They can also be used when you have a craving or when you know you are about to have one.

For example, if you usually smoke when you drive, start using the gum or lozenge 15 minutes before getting in your car. Then it will work well by the time you need it.

- **Advantages:** You have something in your mouth, you control how much you use and when you use it, you can carry it around, and it's easy to use.

- **Disadvantages:** You may not use enough gum or lozenges each day and each week to get the benefit.

Nicotine Patch

■ **What it is:**

It is a sticker that releases a steady dose of nicotine through your skin. This reduces your craving for nicotine.



■ **How to use:**

- Put a new patch on a clean hairless place on your upper body when you wake up.
- Press for 10 seconds to help it stick to your skin.
- Run your fingers around the edges of patch.
- When you take it off, fold the patch in half so the sticky sides touch each other. Throw it away where children and pets can't get to it.
- Wash your hands after touching the patch.
- Try to change it at the same time every day closest to when you wake up. If the patch does not stick well, use rubbing alcohol to clean the area first.
- Wear the patch for 24 hours each day. If you have sleep issues, remove the patch before bedtime and replace with one as soon as you wake up. Remember to change the location of the patch each day to avoid irritating your skin. Avoid using the same area for 2 weeks, if possible.

Important: Do not cut the patch.

■ Dosing:

- There are 3 dosages of patches. Here's how to choose where to start:
 - If you smoke 11 or more cigarettes each day: start with the 21 mg patch (Step 1).
 - If you smoke 10 or fewer cigarettes each day: start with the 14 mg patch (Step 2).
 - As you wean off the patches: use the 7 mg patch (Step 3).
- If you smoke more than 1 pack a day, you may need to add another patch. You can also add a short-acting nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) option like gum, lozenge or inhaler. Ask your doctor or tobacco counselor about what's right for you.
- Use your highest dosed patch for at least 6 weeks. You can use it longer if you need it.
- When you are ready to step down, stay on each level of patch for at least 2 weeks.
- Use each level of patch as long as you think you need to. There is no real deadline.

Did You Know

Smoking while wearing a nicotine patch (or other forms of nicotine replacement therapy) **does not** cause heart attacks.

- **Side effect:** The most common side effects are skin rash and sleep problems.
- **Length of treatment:** Use it for at least 12 weeks. Remember to go off the patch slowly. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about the right dose for you.
- **Advantages:** You only use it once a day, and stepping down your dose slowly reduces your nicotine dose. Your insurance company may cover the charges if you have a prescription from your doctor.

- **Disadvantages:** It takes 1 to 3 hours before the first patch you use begins to help with cravings.

Talk with your doctor before you take any over-the-counter aids if you are pregnant or if you take any prescription medicine.

Nicotine pre-loading

If you are not ready to quit or if you feel anxious about quitting, try nicotine pre-loading. This is a proven method to help reduce your overall craving for smoking while you choose how often you smoke.

You may use NRT such as gum, patches, lozenges and the Nicotrol® inhaler while you smoke.

Please be aware of how you feel when you smoke. If you feel nauseated, "jittery" or if your heart beats faster, stop using tobacco for the moment. These feelings mean your body is telling you there is already enough nicotine in your system. This can mean you need less tobacco than you thought.

After quitting tobacco, stay on NRT, weaning off it slowly. The process can take for at least 4 weeks or longer, if needed.

Combination therapy

This is when more than one type of quitting tobacco medicine is used at the same time. For example, using nicotine patches and nicotine gum at the same time.

This works especially well if you smoke more than one-half pack a day. This increases your chances of quitting. Talk with your doctor, pharmacist or tobacco counselor about what dosages are right for you.

Other Methods

The following methods of quitting have been proven to be the hardest way to quit and remain tobacco-free.

These methods work for only 3 to 6 out of 100 people who try them every year.

Cold turkey

It means stopping suddenly and completely without the help of medicines.

One day you use tobacco, the next day you do not. You will notice that your craving will pass whether you use tobacco or not. If you have difficulty quitting cold turkey, talk with your doctor about using a quit aid.

Weaning and delay

- Cut down your amount of tobacco by what you feel is a realistic amount every day or week.
- Try putting off the first use of the day by 1 or 2 hours. For example, start with no cigarette until 9 a.m. Next day, make 11 a.m. the earliest you can smoke, and so on.
- It is important to set weaning goals to keep you moving forward, with the intention of a setting a date to fully give up tobacco use.

This way takes time. It is easy to get discouraged but keep with it. If you have not been able to quit completely within your desired time frame, then talk with your doctor to consider a quit aid.

Resources

Allina Health (if you had a recent hospital stay)

- Tobacco Intervention Program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital
— 612-863-1648
- Tobacco Intervention Program at Mercy Hospital
— 763-236-8008
- Tobacco Intervention Program at River Falls Area Hospital
— 715-307-6075
- Tobacco Intervention Services at Allina Health United Hospital – Hastings Regina Campus
— 715-307-6075
- *United Hospital Lung and Sleep Clinic Tobacco Cessation Program
— 651-726-6200
- *Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing (LiveWell Center) tobacco intervention coaching
— 612-863-5178

Other

- Quit Partner
— 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or quitpartnermn.com
- My Life, My Quit™ (ages 13 to 17): text “Start My Quit” to 36072 or call 1-855-891-9989 to talk with a coach
- American Indian: 1-833-9AI-QUIT or aiquit.com
- Spanish: 1-855-DEJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569) or quitpartnermn.com/es
- asiansmokersquitline.org
- online tobacco cessation support
— smokefree.gov
- American Lung Association/ Tobacco Quit Line
— 651-227-8014 or 1-800-586-4872
- financial aid Nicotrol® inhaler
— 1-844-989-PATH (7284) or pfizerrxpathways.com
- Plant Extracts aromatherapy
— 1-877-999-4236 or plantextractsinc.com

*There may be a cost to you. Check with your insurance provider.