

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Information Guide

Getting help while quitting tobacco greatly improves your chances of success. Using Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), prescription medications and counselling support have all been shown to double your chances of staying smoke-free long term.

NRT gives your body a dose of nicotine, which lessens the unpleasant symptoms of nicotine withdrawal, without the other harmful health effects of inhaled tobacco smoke or other commercial tobacco products. Typically, a combination of long-acting NRT (patches) and short-acting NRT (mist, gum, lozenges, inhaler) is recommended. This Guide contains information on how to use each form of NRT for best results.

How to Use LONG-ACTING NRT

NICOTINE PATCH			
I use:	Cigarettes per day	Nicotine Patch Strength	How to use
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 10	Step 3 (7 mg) for 6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For use with a short-acting NRT (for cravings). Patch dosing here is based on using the patch with gum or other short-acting NRT. • If you are only using the patch, you may be given different dosing. • If you are not ready to move to a lower dose after the number of weeks listed at left, talk to a health professional about staying on the current dose longer. • If you do go down to a lower dose and it feels like not enough you can always go back up. • See video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=mznlQQFAsiM • Apply one new patch every 24 hours. Can be removed before bedtime if causing sleep issues such as odd or vivid dreams. • Position between neck and waist, or on back of upper arm on skin that is clean, dry and non-hairy. • Remove backing, press firmly onto skin, hold in place for 10 seconds. • Change patch site each day. Do not place the patch on the same site more than once a week (to limit skin irritation).
<input type="checkbox"/>	10-20	Step 2 (14 mg) for 6 weeks; then Step 3 (7 mg) for 4 weeks	
<input type="checkbox"/>	21-30	Step 1 (21 mg) for 6 weeks; then Step 2 (14 mg) for 2 weeks; then Step 3 (7 mg) for 2 weeks	
<input type="checkbox"/>	31-40	Step 1 + Step 3 (28 mg) for 6 weeks; then Step 1 (21 mg) for 4 weeks; then Step 2 (14 mg) for 2 weeks; then Step 3 (7 mg) for 2 weeks	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 40	Step 1 + Step 1 (42 mg) for 6 weeks; then Step 1 + Step 2 (35 mg) for 2 weeks; then Step 1 + Step 3 (28 mg) for 2 weeks; then Step 1 (21 mg) for 4 weeks; then Step 2 (14 mg) for 2 weeks; then Step 3 (7 mg) for 2 weeks	

How to Use SHORT-ACTING NRT

If you find you need to use close to the maximum daily amount of your short acting NRT, consult with a health professional. They may advise to increase the dose of patch you are using.

If you are taking medications for a mental health condition, consult your care provider. The dosage of some of your medications may need to change as you use NRT and as you reduce or stop smoking.

Store NRT away from heat, moisture, direct sunlight, children and pets. Dispose of used NRT in a secure garbage. Enough nicotine remains in used products to be harmful to pets and children if swallowed.

All forms of NRT placed in the mouth (gum, lozenge, inhaler, mist) will not be absorbed as well if you drink acidic beverages (coffee, tea, carbonated water, pop and citrus juices) just before using the NRT. It is best to avoid these acidic drinks at least 15 minutes before short-acting NRT.

NICOTINE GUM			
I use:	Cigarettes per day	Gum Strength	How to use
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 21 and also using patch	2 mg, 1 piece in 1-2 hours, as needed; maximum = 15/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicotine gum is NOT chewed like normal gum • See video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRWT1KvAOSs • Place gum into mouth and bite a few times until you feel a tingling sensation. • Park gum in cheek or between the lip and gum until tingling goes away (about 30-60 seconds), then repeat: Bite, Bite, Park. • Discard the gum after about 30 minutes. • Note: Nicotine gum is stiff. If you have issues with your teeth that can make chewing difficult, or if you wear dentures, choose a different form of short acting NRT.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 21 and using gum alone	2 mg, 1 piece in 1-2 hours, as needed; maximum = 20/day	
<input type="checkbox"/>	21 or more and also using patch	2 mg, 1 piece in 1-2 hours, as needed; maximum = 15/day	
<input type="checkbox"/>	21 or more and using gum alone	4 mg, 1 piece in 1-2 hours, as needed; maximum = 20/day	

NICOTINE LOZENGE		
Cigarettes per day	Lozenge Strength	How to use
Same as gum; see table above.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicotine lozenge is NOT used like a normal lozenge. • See video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=us-jdNEHAKk • Place lozenge into mouth and allow it to dissolve (takes about 10 minutes). • Roll lozenge around in your mouth from time to time: Roll, Roll, Park. Do not suck, chew or swallow the lozenge, as this could cause heartburn, burping, or nausea.
	Daily maximum = 20 lozenges per day	

NICOTINE INHALER	
One Strength	How to use
<p>Daily maximum = 12 cartridges per day</p> <p>Note: Nicotine is absorbed through the lining of the mouth, not the lungs. “Puff” on it in short breaths (like sipping on a straw); do not inhale deeply as with a cigarette.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=aoAvKh0Rc3c • Assemble inhaler as per product instructions. • Place into mouth and inhale gently, like sipping on a straw. • Puff frequently (several times per minute) for 10-15 minutes. • Hold air in mouth for a few seconds before breathing out. • You may store your inhaler in a sealed plastic bag and use same opened cartridge later in the day.

NICOTINE MIST	
One Strength	How to use
<p>Maximum 2 sprays at a time</p> <p>Daily maximum = 4 sprays per hour; 64 sprays per day</p> <p>Note: Nicotine is absorbed through the lining of the mouth, not the lungs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKGDYO-5OWg • When first using, spray a few times into a tissue until mist starts to come out (need to prime the pump before use). • Spray into mouth, either under your tongue or into your cheek. Wait a few seconds before swallowing to avoid swallowing nicotine. • 1-2 sprays every 30-60 minutes or as cravings arise.

Signs of Too Much or Too Little Nicotine

SIGNS OF TOO LITTLE NICOTINE (NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL)	SIGNS OF TOO MUCH NICOTINE		
Increased appetite Restlessness Depression Irritability Cravings Poor concentration Sleep disturbances Lightheadedness	Headache Dizziness Nausea Abdominal pain Drooling	Vomiting Diarrhea Cold sweat Blurred vision Difficulty hearing	Mental confusion Weakness Fainting Rapid heartbeat Difficulty breathing
Stop using NRT and seek medical attention if any of these symptoms appear. If symptoms are mild, reduce amount of NRT being used.			