

Nicotine Replacement Therapy – Gum (Nicorette® , Nicotinell®)

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) delivers nicotine without the other harmful chemicals present in cigarette smoke. It reduces the withdrawal symptoms experienced when you are trying to quit smoking, allowing you to focus on the other aspects in your effort to quit smoking.

Nicotine gum releases a dose of nicotine when chewed to reduce the urge to smoke.

How should I use this medication?

When you feel the urge to smoke, chew one gum to release a taste or until you feel a tingling sensation then park the gum between your cheek and gum. Continue chewing the gum when the taste has faded. Repeat for about 30 minutes until the gum has no more taste, then spit it out. You can chew on one gum every 1-2 hours.

Do not swallow the gum.

Do not use more than the recommended maximum number of gums as instructed by your healthcare professional or use more than one gum each time.

What precautions should I take?

You should stop smoking once you start to use NRT. Smoking and using NRT at the same time may increase the risk of adverse effects from the additive effects of nicotine in your body.

If you continue to feel the urge to smoke or experience severe nicotine withdrawal symptoms even after using the NRT gums, please inform your healthcare professional as you may need other types of NRT.

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.
- You recently had a heart attack or stroke.

- You have active peptic ulcer disease.
- You are using dentures.
- You have any other medical conditions.
- You are taking any other medications, including supplements, traditional medications and herbal remedies.
- You are less than 18 years old.

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

- Throat irritation
- Jaw ache
- Increased salivation
- Hiccups
- Dry mouth
- Flatulence
- Stomach discomfort
- Heartburn
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness
- Headache

These side effects usually occur as a result of intense chewing of gum. Make sure to park the gum between your cheek and gum once the taste appears and take longer breaks in between gums to reduce these side effects.

What are some rare but serious side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?

- Avoid coffee, tea, juices, acidic and fizzy drinks 15 minutes before and during use of nicotine gum as this may reduce nicotine absorption.

- Nicotine may reduce the effect of certain medications. When NRT dose is reduced or stopped, adjustments to these medications may be necessary.
- These medications include:
 - Benzodiazepines (e.g. diazepam, lorazepam)
 - Insulin
 - Beta-blocker (e.g. bisoprolol, atenolol)
 - Opioid painkillers (e.g. codeine)
- Inform your doctor or pharmacist about other medications – including over-the-counter medications, supplements and traditional/herbal remedies – that you are currently taking as they may affect the way you benefit from NRT.

How should I store this medication?

Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medication away from children.

How should I throw away this medication safely?

Discard the gum properly into the empty blister packaging or into a tissue paper before disposing into a black trash bag. Seal it tightly before throwing into the rubbish chute or bin.

Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.

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