

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)



What is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)?

- Nicotine is an addictive chemical contained in cigarettes. When you quit smoking, you may experience nicotine withdrawal symptoms such as:
 - Urge to smoke
 - Irritability
 - Low mood
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Sleep disturbance
 - Flu-like symptoms
 - Increased appetite
 - Headache

These symptoms are often experienced a few hours after the last cigarette and may persist for a few weeks after you stop smoking. However, they usually go away with time.

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) helps to reduce the withdrawal symptoms experienced when you are trying to quit smoking. This is because it addresses the need for smoking, allowing you to focus on the other aspects in your effort to quit smoking.
- NRT contains nicotine in a safe form, without the cancer-causing agents or toxic gases found in cigarette smoke.

How are the Medications Administered / Taken?

NRT Product	How To Use
Nicotinell® 1mg lozenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suck 1 lozenge when you feel the urge to smoke. • Suck the lozenge till the taste becomes strong. • Place the lozenge between the gum and cheek. • Suck on the lozenge again when the taste has faded. • One lozenge can be sucked continuously for 30 minutes. • Avoid coffee, tea, juices, acidic and fizzy drinks 15 minutes before consumption, and during consumption. • Do not chew or swallow the lozenge.
Nicorette® 2mg, or 4mg chewing gum Nicotinell® 2mg, or 4mg chewing gum	<p>If you smoke <u>< 20 cigarettes per day</u>, Nicorette® or Nicotinell® <u>2mg gums</u> may be suitable for you.</p> <p>If you smoke <u>> 20 cigarettes per day</u>, Nicorette® or Nicotinell® <u>4mg gums</u> may be suitable for you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chew one piece of gum slowly until the taste becomes strong (10 chews). • Rest the piece of gum between your gum and cheek (Wait one minute). • Chew the gum again when the taste has faded. • Repeat chewing routine for about 30 minutes. • Avoid coffee, tea, juices, acidic and fizzy drinks 15 minutes before consumption, and during consumption. • Do not swallow the gum.

Nicotinell® TTS 10 (7mg/24hr) TTS 20 (14mg/24hr) TTS 30 (21mg/24hr) Nicorette® Invisi (10mg/16hr) (15mg/16hr) (25mg/16hr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the patch onto any hairless, clean and dry area of your chest, back, upper arm or hip. • Remove the backing of the patch and place the sticky side of the patch on the chosen site. • Hold on to the patch for 10 seconds for it to stick properly. • Avoid areas of skin which are inflamed, cut or shaved. Apply the patch to a different area every day at about the same time. • Do not re-use the same skin site for the next 3 days. • Fold the used patch in half with the sticky side inwards before discarding. Ensure it is out of reach of others.
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If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, take only the usual dose. Never take a double dosage to make up for the missed dose.

Which Kind of Nicotine Replacement Therapy Works Best for Me?

- NRT comes in different forms to suit individual needs. Choosing the option that works best for you will depend on the aspect of quitting smoking that you find it hardest to deal with.
- Discuss all options with your pharmacist or doctor to find out which NRT is the most suitable for you.
- Do not give up if you experience withdrawal symptoms or find it hard to quit at first.

Can the Medications be Administered / Taken With Other Medications?

- It is important that you inform the doctor, 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.
- Please also inform your doctor or pharmacist if you have any medical conditions.

What are the Important Side Effects of Nicotine Replacement Therapy?

- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition, even though they may result in some side effects.
- Most of these possible side effects occur during the first few weeks after the start of treatment. Many of them become easier to tolerate over time. They can be minimised with proper use as instructed by the pharmacist.

NRT Product	Side Effects	Management
Nicotine lozenge Nicotine chewing gum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore throat and mouth • Throat irritation • Cough • Increased salivation or dry mouth • Dizziness • Headache • Hiccups • Stomach discomfort • Heartburn • Nausea and vomiting • Jaw-muscle ache (for chewing gum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using tobacco products if you are using NRTs. • Stop using the NRTs if the side effects persist. • Inform a healthcare professional if you experience any side effects, even those not mentioned in this leaflet.
Nicotine patch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red and itchy skin • Insomnia • Dizziness • Headache • Nausea and vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove patch. • Inform a healthcare professional if you experience any side effects, even those not mentioned in this leaflet.

If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- You should consult your pharmacist or doctor before you start using NRT. Also, inform your pharmacist or doctor if you recently had a heart attack or stroke, or if you have any other medical conditions.
- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.

How do I Store These Medications?

- Store your medications in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.
- If you are using the nicotine gums, please dispose of them sensibly.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor or pharmacist.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

