Nicotine replacement therapies (NRT)

**IMPORTANT:** Talk to a health care provider or a pharmacist for help with using NRT. If you're using NRT, you have to use it regularly – not just when you feel like you need a cigarette.

**TYPES OF MEDICINES TO HELP YOU QUIT SMOKING**

There are two main types of medicines to help you quit: nicotine replacement therapies (NRT) that can help with cravings, and non-nicotine medications that help cut down on your cravings. Be sure to read all instructions and talk to your pharmacist or health care provider so you know how to use your medicines and know about potential side effects.

**NICOTINE PATCH**
Available over the counter.
- Wear it on the skin like a band-aid
- Put a new one on every day

**NICOTINE LOZENGE**
Available over the counter.
- Use up to 20 lozenges a day
- Do not suck or chew
- Don’t eat or drink 15 minutes before you use it or while you have one in your mouth
- Let it dissolve slowly between your cheek and gum, which takes about 30 minutes

**NICOTINE INHALER**
Available by prescription only.
- Put the cartridge into the inhaler, then put the mouthpiece between your lips and tilt it slightly toward the roof of your mouth
- “Suck” it like a straw
- You can replace cartridge when nicotine taste is gone
- You can use up to 16 cartridges/day

**NICOTINE NASAL SPRAY**
Available by prescription only.
- Take a deep breath, spray once into each nostril, and breathe out through the mouth
- Typically used once or twice an hour, up to 40 times a day

**NICOTINE GUM**
Available over the counter.
- Use 1-2 pieces of gum each hour (up to 24 in a day)
- Do NOT just use when you feel cravings
- Do NOT chew it like regular gum
- Don’t eat or drink for 15 minutes before using or while chewing the gum.
- Chew it a few times, and when it tastes peppery, stop chewing and “park” it between your cheek and your gums. When the taste fades, take a few more chews then park it again. Repeat for 20 to 30 minutes
- If your cravings are really bad, talk to your health care team to see if you can use nicotine gum with other kinds of NRT

Visit cancer.org for more information, or call your state quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW for FREE counseling and more resources. Talk to your health care team or pharmacist to pick a quit date and get started.
Non-nicotine Medications

**BUPROPION SR (ZYBAN)**
- Start taking 1-2 weeks before you stop smoking
- Take 1 pill a day for 3 days, then increase to 1 pill in the morning and 1 in late afternoon
- Might be more helpful if you use NRT, too

**VARENICLINE (CHANTIX)**
- Start taking 7 days before your quit date
- Dosage is different for different people and increases during the first week

A word about e-cigarettes/vaping
You may be wondering if e-cigarettes (or “vapes”), which also contain nicotine, can help you quit smoking. Some people do use them for help when trying to quit, but these products don’t have as much proof that they’re as safe and effective as the 7 types of FDA-approved medications listed above, which are all proven to help you quit. Also, we don’t know if e-cigarettes will harm people over time, but we do have plenty of evidence that NRTs are the least harmful nicotine product available. Talk to your doctor if you want to know more.

Myths about Quitting Smoking

**Myth 1: It’s just a matter of willpower.**
Wrong. The nicotine in cigarettes is highly addictive, and it isn’t easy to break that addiction. But it can be done; more than half of the people who once smoked have now quit.

**Myth 2: If you fail to quit the first time you try, you’ll never be able to quit.**
Wrong. The average person tries to quit many times before they actually succeed. You learn something each time you try, and each time you try, you are more likely to succeed.

**Myth 3: It’s too late; the damage is already done.**
Wrong. It’s never too late to quit smoking! Your body can start healing within hours, days, and weeks and continues to recover for years when you stop filling it with smoke.

Sources: California Smokers Helpline and Pharmacy Partnership for Tobacco Cessation

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