

Stop Smoking Medications Compared

Quit smoking aid	How to use	How long to take it	Possible side effects	Cautions	When not to take it	Advantages
NRT – Nicotine Replacement Therapy						
Nicotine Gum (like Nicorette®). Available over the counter	Bite and park gum 1 piece every 1 to 2 hours 2 mg for light smokers (< 20 a day) 4 mg for heavy smokers (> 20 a day) Stop smoking before starting	Several weeks to several months or longer if necessary	Burning throat, hiccups if chewed too quickly, dental problems	Pregnant* Breastfeeding*	Check with your doctor if you are pregnant*, breast-feeding*, or have an unstable medical condition	You can control when to take the nicotine and how much Satisfies oral craving Delays some weight gain while you use it
Nicotine Patch (like Nicoderm® or Habitrol®). Available over the counter	Light smokers (< 20 a day) start at 14 or 7 mg Heavy smokers (> 20 cigarettes a day) start at 21 mg and taper down	8 to 12 weeks or longer if necessary	Skin reaction at site of patch Disturbed sleep, nightmares	Pregnant* Breastfeeding*	Check with you doctor if you are pregnant*, breast-feeding*, or have an unstable medical condition	You need only apply it once a day No chewing Can control cravings for 24 hours Delays some weight gain while you use it
Nicotine Inhaler	For the first 3 to 12 weeks of treatment, use at least 6 cartridges per day. Do not use more than 12 cartridges in one day. The inhaler has a flexible dosing system. One nicotine cartridge is used up after 20 minutes of continuous puffing.	Initial treatment duration is up to 12 weeks. Following this initial treatment, for the next 6-12 weeks the dosage is gradually reduced. Use beyond 6 months is not recommended.	Possible mild irritation of the mouth or throat, cough during initial use. Stomach upset may occur.	Pregnant* Breastfeeding*	Check with your doctor if you are pregnant*, breast-feeding* or have an unstable medical condition.	Can help relieve nicotine withdrawal symptoms and provide the comfort of the hand-to-mouth ritual.
Nicotine Lozenge	Light smokers start at 1-2mg Heavy smokers start at 4 mg Place in mouth between cheek and gum, suck until nicotine taste, stop until taste fades, repeat. Do not chew or swallow lozenge. One lozenge lasts 20-30 minutes Do not use more than one lozenge at a time or one right after another. Do not use more than five lozenges in 6 hours or more than 20 per day.	Initial treatment duration is up to 12 weeks. Weeks 1-6 take 1 lozenge per hour Weeks 7-9, 1 per 2-4 hours Weeks 10-12, 1 every 4-8 hours	Hiccups, heartburn, nausea	Pregnant* Breastfeeding*	Check with your doctor if you are pregnant*, breast-feeding* or have an unstable medical condition.	You can control when to take the nicotine and how much Satisfies oral craving

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Non-Nicotine Medication						
Bupropion (Zyban®) Available only by prescription	150 mg tablet once a day for 3 days, then twice a day Start 7 to 14 days before quit date	7 to 12 weeks or longer if necessary	Dry mouth Insomnia	If you drink more than 4 drinks a day; take St. John's Wart; take seizure medication**; are pregnant*, or breastfeeding*	If you are pregnant* or breastfeeding*, have a seizure disorder, have an eating disorder, take monoamine oxidase inhibitors**	Inexpensive Improves depression Minimal weight gain while you use it
Varenicline (Champix®) Available only by prescription	0.5 mg tablet once a day for 3 days, then 0.5 mg twice a day for 4 days, then i) remain at this dose or ii) increase to maximum of 0.1 mg pill twice a day Start 7 to 14 days before quit date	12 weeks	Nausea Insomnia	Do not use with nicotine patch or gum See Pfizer/Health Canada Safety Information***	If you are pregnant, If hypersensitive to varenicline.	Very effective Well tolerated Minimal side effects See Pfizer/Health Canada Safety Information***

* Many doctors believe that using the nicotine patch or gum is better than smoking during pregnancy and while breastfeeding because by stopping smoking, you are not inhaling thousands of toxic chemicals from cigarette smoke.

** Remember to tell your doctor about any other medications you are taking. It is always a good idea to check with your doctor before beginning any medications for smoking cessation

*** May 31, 2010, Pfizer and Health Canada issued the following Safety Information related to varenicline tartrate (Champix):

Patients using CHAMPIX® should stop the treatment and contact their healthcare provider immediately if they experience, or if their families or caregivers observe, signs or symptoms including:

- Changes in mood or behaviour (such as depressed mood, agitation, aggression, hostility, thoughts of self-harm or harm towards others);
 - Serious allergic reactions (such as swelling of the face, lips, gums, tongue and throat that can cause trouble breathing) and skin reactions (such as rash, swelling, redness, and peeling of the skin).
- Patients should also be aware that:
- Neuropsychiatric side-effects have occurred in patients taking CHAMPIX® with or without a history of psychiatric disorder;
 - Quitting smoking can be associated with changes in mood or behaviour, even without taking medication to help quit;
 - Drinking alcohol may increase the risk of experiencing neuropsychiatric side effects; and
 - Side-effects such as sleepiness, dizziness, loss of consciousness, seizures, or difficulty concentrating may also occur. Patients should not engage in potentially hazardous activities, such as driving a car or operating dangerous machinery until they know how they may be affected by CHAMPIX®.

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/advisories-avis/public/_2010/champix_2_pc-cp-eng.php

Adapted from: Integrating Smoking Cessation into Daily Nursing Practice. RNAO, October 2007.