

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) & other Medications

Research shows that almost all tobacco users can benefit from tobacco medication, and that these products can double your chances of quitting if used correctly.

The patch, gum and lozenge (NRT) deliver nicotine to your body to help reduce the urges and cravings of tobacco withdrawal. NRT is a safe delivery of nicotine and is not addictive. It is important to follow the directions carefully when using NRT.

Bupropion (Zyban) and Varenicline (Chantix) are prescription medications that do not contain nicotine. They affect certain chemicals in the brain, decreasing symptoms that come when quitting tobacco.

If you have any side effects from the medications, be sure to tell your health care provider right away.

You have the best chance of quitting if you use these four methods together:

- *Use NRT, Zyban or Chantix*
- *Seek counseling*
- *Learn ways to handle stress and urges to use tobacco*
- *Be certain you want to stop, and stick to your decision*

Many types of health care providers can help you quit tobacco:

- *Family doctor*
- *Health educator*
- *Nurse*
- *Tobacco counselor*
- *Dentist*
- *Other health care providers*



ALASKA NATIVE
MEDICAL CENTER



Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) & other Medications

Drugs to Treat Tobacco Users	Prescription?	How to Use	Recommended Dosage	Pros	Cons
Nicotine Gum or Lozenge	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't eat/drink 15 minutes prior to use • Chew briefly then "park" in mouth • Nicotine absorbed through the mouth • Each piece should be used for about 30 minutes to get all the nicotine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 or 4 mg per piece • 1 cigarette = 2mg of nicotine • Decrease dose as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient • Flexible • Faster nicotine delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't eat or drink while chewing • If you have dental/jaw problems talk with your dentist
Nicotine Patch	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply to hairless skin every day • Releases steady dose of nicotine through skin • Place a new patch in a different spot to lessen irritation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7, 14, 21 mg per patch • 1 cigarette = 2 mg of nicotine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use • Few side effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases nicotine more slowly than other NRTs • Can cause skin irritation and vivid dreams
Bupropion (Zyban)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow 8 hours between doses • Start 1 week before quit date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 pill (150 mg) per day for 3 days, then • 2 pills (150 mg x2) (1 pill in a.m./1 pill in p.m.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use • Few side effects • Proven to be more helpful when used with patch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot use if you have seizures/eating disorders
Varenicline (Chantix)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start taking one week before quit date • Take after eating with a full glass of water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 pill (.5 mg) per day for 3 days, then • 2 pills (.5 mg x2) (1 pill in a.m./1 pill in p.m.) for four days • 2 pills (1 mg x2) (1 pill in a.m./1 pill in p.m.) until end of treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use • Few side effects • No additional NRTs are needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea • Sleep disturbances • If nausea occurs the dose may have to be lowered to .5 mg temporarily or permanently

Sources: www.cancer.org • www.ahrq.gov • US Dept of Health and Human Services

Patient Education • Cont/Prep • HEC approval 1/04