

Frequently Asked Questions about Nicorette

NICORETTE

Q: What is Nicorette?

A: Nicorette is a stop smoking Aid in the form of sugar-free nicotine gum. It helps calm cravings that make quitting smoking so hard.

Q: How can Nicorette help to stop smoking?

A: Nicorette works by releasing a small amount of nicotine into the body which is just enough to help relieve cravings and withdrawal symptoms but cuts out the harmful effects of tobacco smoke.

Q: Is Nicorette really effective?

A: Yes. Nicorette doubles the chance of success (18%-30%) compared to relying on will power alone (10%).

Q: Can I smoke while using Nicorette?

A: No because the whole reason is to quit smoking. If you slip and start smoking again, a lapse of one or two or even a few cigarettes has not spoiled your efforts. Discard your cigarettes, forgive yourself and try again. In order to break the smoking addiction, smokers also need to immediately dissociate themselves from the habit of smoking.

Q: Can I use Nicorette if I'm pregnant or breast feeding?

A: If you are pregnant or breast feeding, only use this medicine on the advice of your health care provider. Smoking can seriously harm your child. Try to stop smoking without using any nicotine replacement medicine. This medicine is believed to be safer than smoking. However, the risks to your child from this medicine are not fully known.

Q: Is Nicorette sugar free?

A: Yes. Nicorette is sweetened with sorbitol, a natural sweetener produced commercially from corn.

Q: What strength of Nicorette gum do I use?

A: If you smoke 20 or more cigarettes a day, use the 4mg strength. If you smoke less than 20 cigarettes a day, use the 2mg strength. You can determine your nicotine dependence using Fagerstrom Questionnaire and know which Nicorette product is the right one for you.

Q: Should I ever change to a different strength of Nicorette?

A: No, the strength of Nicorette that you use to start on the program is the strength you should use throughout the program.

Q: Will I gain weight if I quit smoking?

A: When it comes to quitting smoking, this is the primary concern of women and men. Even if you do gain a bit, it's nothing compared to all the good things you're doing to yourself. If you keep gaining weight after a few months, think about what you're eating and plan a healthier diet. Eat fruit, not junk. Drink lots of water, which makes you eat less and is good for your body and skin. Also get some exercise.

Q: Can I eat or drink before using Nicorette?

A: Eating or drinking even mildly acidic foods and beverages directly before using or during use of Nicorette inhibits nicotine absorption into your bloodstream. A basic alkaline pH is required for the nicotine in Nicorette to be properly released from the gum and absorbed through the lining of your mouth. We recommend waiting 15 minutes after eating or drinking before using Nicorette.

Q: Can I use Nicorette to help quit chewing tobacco, smoking cigars or using a pipe?

A: No, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of Nicorette only as Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) for cigarette smoking. We therefore do not recommend using Nicorette to stop using other tobacco products including snuff, chewing tobacco, pipes or cigars. The product has not been tested in this context. You may want to discuss this further with your doctor.

Q: Can I use Nicorette if I have a medical condition?

A: If you are concerned, your doctor or pharmacist is the best person to advise you based on your medical history and present state of health. We specifically recommend you speak with your physician if you have:

- Sodium restricted diet
- Heart disease, recent heart attack, irregular heartbeat. Nicotine can increase your heart rate
- High blood pressure not controlled with medication. Nicotine can increase blood pressure
- Stomach ulcer or diabetes

Also ask a doctor or pharmacist if you are:

- Using a non-nicotine stop smoking drug.
- Taking a medicine for depression or asthma. Your prescription dose may need to be adjusted.

Q: Can I use Nicorette if I take other medications?

A: Any questions about drug interactions between medications should be answered by your physician or other healthcare professional. Talk to your doctor if you take other medications. Nicorette releases nicotine, which is already in your system if you are a smoker. However, stopping smoking may affect how your body handles medications.

Q: Can I drink alcohol if I am using Nicorette?

A: You can safely drink in moderation. However, you should not eat or drink anything for 15 minutes before using Nicorette. Eating or drinking 15 minutes before using Nicorette may limit the absorption of Nicorette through the membrane of your mouth. You may want to avoid drinking alcohol if you associate it with smoking.

Q: Nicorette is expensive bah!!!

A: Yes, it is costly, but it is just a short term cost. After completing 3-4 months of NRT treatment, the successful quitter could save money from buying cigarette for the whole life (long term financial reward). Besides, NRT will help save the health cost (health problems caused by smoking).

Q: Will nicotine from Nicorette cause addiction?

A: No, the peak nicotine concentration in the blood is much lower in people who use nicorette compared with cigarette. Nicotine from cigarette takes 7-10 seconds to reach the brain and this causes addiction. NRT replaces a small amount of nicotine that the body misses when smoker quits but will not cause addiction.

Q: Which Nicorette is the right one for me?

A: Nicorette provide a range of products because no two smokers are alike. It is important to choose the Nicorette that suits their previous smoking habit to have the best chance of successfully quitting. It is also important to use their chosen Nicorette product for the recommended treatment course while you learn not to smoke in certain situations. Ask how many cigarettes they smoke daily or use the Fagerstrom Test as a guideline. For those who have hand to mouth habit, gums and inhalers are suitable for them while for those who want convenient and easy to use, patch can be their option. Chose the right dose, then the type which is comfortable for them to use.

Q: Will NRT cause cardiovascular disease?

A: The use of NRT is not associated with any increase in the risk of myocardial infarction, stroke or death.

Q: Which NRT format is more effective?

A: All NRT formats are equally effective. We have different formats to suit different type of smoker.

Q: Can a cancer / high blood pressure patient use NRT?

A: Yes.

Q: Is it a must to follow the recommended NRT course? If not, how should a person cut down the dosage?

A: Not really. Not all smokers are alike. Smokers should use NRT as and when the craving comes.

NICORETTE GUM

Q: Can I use more than 12 pieces of gum?

A: Yes but do not exceed more than 60mg which is 15 pieces of 4mg gum and 30 pieces of 2mg gum.

Q: Will Nicorette stick to dentures or dental work?

A: Nicorette is sugar-free and made in such a way as to reduce stickiness. However, it may stick to dentures, dental caps, or partial bridges and you may want to consult your dentist.

Q: How long is Nicorette used?

A: The recommended course of therapy is 12 weeks. You should use Nicorette for the full 12 weeks to improve your chances of success. You should chew one piece every 1-2 hours for weeks 1-6. During weeks 7-9, you should chew one piece every 2-4 hours. During weeks 10-12, you should chew one piece every 4-8 hours. Do not chew more than 24 pieces per day. Do not chew Nicorette longer than 12 weeks.

Q: How many pieces do I use a day?

A: To improve your chances of success, chew at least 9 pieces per day in the first six weeks. During weeks 7 to 9, chew 1 piece every 2 to 4 hours. Finally, during weeks 10 to 12, chew 1 piece every 4 to 8 hours.

Q: How long do I keep a piece of Nicorette gum in my mouth?

A: Usually about half an hour, this is when the peppery taste or tingle won't return.

Q: Is Nicorette gum more expensive than smoking?

A: No. The total cost of Nicorette gum over a 12-week program is about the cost of a pack and a half a day smoking habit. But when you think of the long-term costs of smoking, not to mention the health problems of smoking, Nicorette gum is a short-term cost.

Q: What are the side effects of Nicorette gum?

A: The possible side effects of the nicorette gum are

- sore mouth, sore throat and jaw ache,
- dizziness and headache, stomach or bowel discomfort, nausea, hiccups and vomiting

Q: How do I use the Nicorette gum?

A: To use the Nicorette chewing gum, we have to teach the smokers the correct chewing technique, that is chew, rest, and chew. Usually the gum can be chew about 30 minutes or until all the taste of gum totally fades; then the smokers can throw the gum to safety place.

Q: How long is the treatment duration for Nicorette gum?

A: We provide a weaning program to help smokers follow the therapy to successfully quit smoking. That is in the first 12 week the smokers are recommended to use 8-12 pieces per day and slowly reduce to 4-6 pieces per day for another 2 week and use 1-3 pieces per day and gradually reduce to zero.

Q: Nicorette gum causes nausea and vomit feeling, why?

A: Probably the patient has practiced the wrong chewing technique. Continuous chewing without stop will lead to the excessive intake of nicotine into the stomach. As a result, it causes nausea, headache and dizziness. It's so important to get the right chewing technique, which is CHEW-REST-CHEW technique

Q: What is the difference between 2mg and 4mg gums?

A: 2mg gum is suitable for those who have low to medium nicotine dependence (less than 20 cigarettes per day). 4mg gum is suitable for those who have high nicotine dependence (more than 20 cigarettes per day).

Q: How long do we have to chew the gum?

A: Until the taste has faded, takes around 30 minutes

Q: Can a person split a 4mg gum into half to use it as a 2mg gum?

A: No.

Q: Can a person chew the gum for 5 minutes then keep it for certain time and chew again?

A: yes but it's not hygienic.

Q: The smokers feed back that the taste of gum is not good.

A: Make sure that the smokers have correct chewing technique. Too much chewing or improper chewing may produce an unpleasant strong taste. This is the sign that they should slow down chewing. Alternately, they can use Nicorette patch or inhaler.

Q: Why must they follow the correct chewing technique?

A: If the gum is not chewed properly, nicotine is swallowed in saliva and broken down in stomach. It is therefore wasted. Another reason is to avoid the possible side effects such as hiccups, flatulence, nausea and dizziness.

Q: How many gums can be chewed each day?

A: Do not exceed 60mg/day.

NICORETTE PATCH

Q: What are the side effects of Nicorette patch?

- Headache, dizziness; likely to be related to nicotine withdrawal.
- Sleep disturbance.
- Skin reactions such as itching, redness at site of application.

Q: How to use the Nicorette patch?

A: Nicorette patch is applied to clean dry hairless area of skin either on the upper arm or thigh in every morning and remove at bedtime.

Q: How long is the treatment duration for Nicorette patch?

A: The smoker can use patch to reduce nicotine by progressively using lower strength patch over three month weaning program. In first 8 weeks the smokers are recommended to use 15mg patch, and 10mg patch in following 2 week and finally reduce to 5mg in another two week.

Q: Some patients complain that the patch can't stick, why?

A: Double check with the way they paste the patch. After applying once, never ever remove it and try to paste on another spots. Make sure the skin surface is clean, dry and hairless. Check with the patients on their types of job, do they tend to sweat? If the patch really doesn't work well for the patients, you might suggest them to try the gums and inhaler.

Q: Can we cut the patch into 2, to get 2 pieces of 5mg patch from 1 piece of 10mg patch?

A: No, the structure of the layers is designed to give the best penetration or absorption of the nicotine into the body. Cutting the patch will destroy the structured layers, thus affecting the effectiveness of the patch.

Q: Why do we have 3 strengths of patch?

A: The patch is suitable for those who have medium to high nicotine dependence. In the weaning program, we have to use all 15mg, 10mg and 5mg patches. The reason why we need to have these 3 strengths is to reduce the nicotine intake when undergoing the treatment, to avoid nicotine addiction.

NICORETTE INHALER

Q: What are the side effects of Nicorette inhaler?

- Cough, irritation of nose
- Irritation on mouth and throat
- Gastro-intestinal symptoms

Q: How do I use the Nicorette inhaler?

A: To use the Nicorette inhaler is very simple. First insert the nicotine cartridge between two parts of the mouthpiece and the mouthpiece is then reassembled. When puffed, air is drawn into the mouthpiece releasing nicotine.

Q: What is the dosage for those smokers using the Nicorette inhaler?

A: The dosage for smokers is initially 6-12 cartridges used daily in first 8 week and 3-6 cartridges in another two week and reduced 1-3 cartridges in another two week and finally reduced to zero.

Q: How does the Nicorette inhaler look like? How do you use it?

A: It consists of a mouthpiece and disposable cartridges. The cartridges contain nicotine. When you want to use it, insert a cartridge into the mouthpiece. Holding the mouthpiece is like holding a cigarette, inhaling the mouthpiece is like puffing a cigarette. This is specially designed for those who miss the hand-to-mouth action of smoking

Q: I see smoke coming out from the Nicorette inhaler.

A: No, inhaler works by evaporating the nicotine.

Q: How long can the inhaler last?

A: It actually depends on individuals (number of puffing). Those who puff more frequent will finish the nicotine cartridge faster, until the taste has faded. In general, 1 cartridge can last for 1-2 hours.

Q: Can I shorten/extend the treatment course?

A: The treatment course is just a guideline. However, it is advisable to follow the guideline for better result.