

Quit Smoking

Medications to Help You Quit

Medications can double your chances of quitting for good. Using medications to help you quit smoking doesn't mean you aren't strong enough to quit on your own. Using medication can strengthen your determination to quit and help prevent the cravings that accompany withdrawal.

Over the Counter Medications: No Prescription Needed

The most commonly used medication to help you quit smoking is nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). NRT reduces withdrawal feelings by giving you a small controlled amount of nicotine but none of the other dangerous chemicals found in cigarettes. This small amount of nicotine helps satisfy your craving for nicotine and reduces the urge to smoke.

Research shows that NRT is safe and effective for most people trying to quit

NRT Type	How to Use	If You Smoke this Many Cigarettes:	Take the following:
Patch	Place on the skin to get a small and steady amount of nicotine	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than 10 cigs/day 2. More than 10 cigs/day 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 14 mg patch daily x 6 weeks, then a 7 mg patch daily x 2 weeks. 2. 21 mg patch daily x 6 weeks, then a 14 mg patch daily x 2 weeks, then a 7 mg patch daily x 2 weeks.
Gum	Chew to release nicotine until you get a tingling feeling, then place between cheek and gums	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than 25 cigs/day 2. More than 25 cigs/day 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chew 2 mg gum until soft then hold for 30 minutes. 2. Chew 4 mg gum until soft then hold for 30 minutes.
Lozenge	Place in the mouth like hard candy to release nicotine as it slowly dissolves in the mouth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Longer than 30 minutes after waking 2. Less than 30 minutes after waking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 mg lozenge 2. 4 mg lozenge

Prescription Medications: Ordered by your Doctor

NRT is only one type of medication that can help with withdrawal and reduce your urge to smoke. Bupropion SR and Varenicline are other medications your doctor can prescribe.

Bupropion SR (Wellbutrin, Zyban)

Bupropion SR is a medicine that contains no nicotine. Studies have shown it can be very effective in helping with withdrawal and reduce the urge to smoke. While most people tolerate it very well, some people have side effects when using bupropion SR. Side effects can include dry mouth and insomnia. Ask your doctor if this medicine is right for you and if it is prescribed, make sure to use it the way your doctor prescribes it.

This medicine may not be right for:

- Pregnant women
- People who have seizures
- People who have eating disorders
- Heavy drinkers

Varenicline (Chantix)

Varenicline is another medicine that contains no nicotine. This drug may help you quit by easing withdrawal symptoms and blocking the effects of nicotine from cigarettes if you start smoking again. While most people tolerate it very well, some people have side effects when using varenicline, including nausea, vivid dreams or mood swings. There have been rare reports of depression and suicidal thoughts. If these happen, contact your doctor right away. Always be sure to ask the doctor if this medicine is right for you, and make sure to use it the way your doctor prescribes it. *Please note, depending on your health plan, Varenicline may require a prior authorization and may not be covered unless you have failed or are intolerant to Bupropion SR and/or NRTs.*

This medicine may not be right for:

- People with kidney problems
- Women who are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding

While quit smoking medications can help, they won't do all the work. To give yourself the best chance for success, you should choose to combine medication with other quit methods including strategies around the behaviors and habits that drive you to smoke.