

# Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Information



# Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is used to support smokers during the quit process. NRT products deliver nicotine without the harmful chemicals in tobacco smoke, they are used to replace the nicotine the body receives through smoking cigarettes. NRT helps to reduce the craving for a cigarette and lessens the severity of nicotine withdrawals.



There are many types of NRT available:



Patches



Lozenges



Inhalators



Oral spray



Gum

**NRT CAN BE USED AS:**

**SINGLE THERAPY:**

One type of NRT is used to cut down and quit tobacco.

**OR**

**COMBINED THERAPY:**

Two or more types of NRT are used to cut down and quit tobacco.

**When using NRT it is important to remember to use the recommended daily amount to avoid nicotine withdrawal symptoms.**

## TOP TIP

Using NRT can  
**DOUBLE**  
your chances  
of quitting

# Nicotine Patches

## HOW DO NICOTINE PATCHES WORK?

Nicotine patches are like band aids applied to the skin each day. The patch provides a continual level of nicotine during the day, about a third as much nicotine as most people get from smoking. Patches deliver nicotine more slowly than other NRT products and are known as **slow release NRT**.

Patches can be used by themselves or in combination with short acting or intermittent NRT such as spray, gum, lozenges or inhalator.



## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Some people may experience skin irritation, or itching, which usually goes away within one hour.

For some people, sleep disturbances can occur if the patches are worn overnight. Sometimes this is relieved by taking the patch off at night. Sleep problems can also be caused by nicotine withdrawal.

Although uncommon, some people may experience neuralgia (nerve pain). If this happens, cut the patch in half. If symptoms persist, take the patch off and speak to a health professional.

## How to use patches

1. Apply daily at the same time each day.
2. Place the patch on a non-hairy, clean, dry area of skin above the waist (front or back) or upper part of the arm.
3. When changing a patch, always place the new patch on a different place on the body.



**Pregnant or breastfeeding women should ALWAYS remove patches at night.**

# Nicotine Patches

## TIPS FOR USING PATCHES

- ✓ Patches can be put on just before going to sleep. This means that on waking, nicotine levels will be raised and this will decrease the cravings for a cigarette first thing in the morning
- ✓ Patches should not be put on burnt, cut or irritated skin
- ✓ Having a shower or bath is OK when wearing a patch
- ✓ Perfumed soaps or skin lotions should be avoided on the area where the patch will go as this can stop the patch from sticking
- ✓ If a patch does fall off, it can be taped back onto the skin or the patch can be placed on top of the foot and socks/shoes will help keep it in place
- ✓ Always dispose of nicotine products carefully. Nicotine products are only to be used by people addicted to nicotine, and could harm children and pets

### How many patches can be used each day?

Generally most people use one patch a day. However for some heavy smokers they may require two patches a day.

# Nicotine Lozenges

## HOW DO LOZENGES WORK?

When nicotine lozenges are placed in the mouth, **nicotine is released slowly and is absorbed through the lining of the mouth**. This takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Lozenges can be used by themselves or in combination with patches.

There are many different types and sizes of nicotine lozenges available. Some types of lozenge currently available are:

- ✓ 1.5mg, 2mg and 4mg lozenges



## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Swallowing nicotine can cause stomach upset, hiccups, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, heartburn or a sore mouth.

### How to use the 1.5mg, 2mg and 4mg lozenge - single therapy

1. Place the lozenge in the mouth and rest between the inside of the cheek and gum. The lozenge can also be placed under the tongue.
2. Move the lozenge from side to side in the mouth until dissolved. The lozenge takes approximately 15-20 minutes to dissolve.

### How to use the lozenge - combination therapy

When using patches plus lozenges (combination therapy) to 'top-up' nicotine levels, the lozenge is used the same way as in single therapy. When using combination therapy, the number of lozenges required to reduce cravings will vary. Use up to the recommended dose. If cravings persist speak to a Health Professional.

# 1.5mg Mini Lozenge

## HOW DO 1.5mg MINI LOZENGES WORK?

1.5mg Mini lozenges can be used by smokers with low nicotine dependence. Smokers who have their first cigarette **more than** 30 minutes after waking or smoke **less than** 10 cigarettes per day.

## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Swallowing nicotine can cause stomach upset, hiccups, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhoea. For some people, over using the mini lozenge can cause weakness, cold sweats, hearing problems, confusion and blurred vision.

## TIPS FOR USING LOZENGES

- ✓ The lozenge should not be chewed or swallowed whole
- ✓ Do not eat or drink while the lozenge is in the mouth
- ✓ Wait 10 -15 minutes after having the lozenge before eating or drinking



## How many 1.5mg Mini lozenges can be used each day?

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Up to **20** of the 1.5mg Mini lozenges a day.

**COMBINATION THERAPY:** If combining the Mini lozenge 1.5mg with another type of NRT (combination therapy), use up to **12** lozenges per day. Use lozenges when needed. When using lozenges in combination therapy, the number of lozenges required to reduce cravings will vary. Use up to the recommended dose or contact a Health Professional if cravings persist.

## 4mg Mini Lozenge

### HOW DO 4mg MINI LOZENGES WORK?

4mg Mini lozenges can be used by smokers with higher nicotine dependence. Smokers who have their first cigarette **within** 30 minutes of waking or those who smoke **more than** 10 cigarettes per day.

If a person does not normally smoke within the first 30 minutes of waking, they may be less dependent on nicotine and should consider using the 1.5mg lozenge.



### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Swallowing nicotine can cause stomach upset, hiccups, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhoea. For some people, over using the mini lozenge can cause weakness, cold sweats, hearing problems, confusion and blurred vision.

### TIPS FOR USING LOZENGES

- ✓ The lozenge should not be chewed or swallowed whole
- ✓ Do not eat or drink while the lozenge is in the mouth
- ✓ Wait 10 -15 minutes after having the lozenge before eating or drinking

### How many 4mg Mini lozenges can be used each day?

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Up to **15** of the 4mg Mini lozenges a day.

**COMBINATION THERAPY:** It is not recommended to combine 4mg Mini lozenges with patches. The 4mg lozenge is generally used as a single therapy. However, if a person is a heavy smoker and they continue to have cravings speak to a Health Professional for further advice and support .

## 2mg Lozenge

### HOW DO 2mg LOZENGES WORK?

2mg lozenge can be used by smokers with low nicotine dependence. Smokers who have their first cigarette **more than** 30 minutes after waking or smoke **less than** 10 cigarettes per day. The lozenge dissolves completely within about 20 minutes.

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Swallowing nicotine can cause stomach upset, hiccups, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, heartburn or a sore mouth.

### TIPS FOR USING LOZENGES

- ✓ The lozenge should not be chewed or swallowed whole
- ✓ Do not eat or drink while the lozenge is in the mouth
- ✓ Wait 10 -15 minutes after having the lozenge before eating or drinking



### How many 2mg lozenges can be used each day?

How many 2mg lozenges a person can have each day depends on whether they are using the lozenge 2mg as single or combination therapy.

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Up to **15** of the 2mg lozenges per day.

**COMBINATION THERAPY:** If a person is combining the 2mg lozenge with the nicotine patch, they can use up to **12** lozenges a day. If cravings persist speak to a Health Professional.



## 4mg Lozenge

### HOW DO 4mg LOZENGES WORK?

4mg lozenges can be used by smokers with higher nicotine dependence. Smokers who have their first cigarette **within** 30 minutes of waking or those who smoke **more than** 10 cigarettes per day.

If a person does not normally smoke within the first 30 minutes of waking, they may be less dependent on nicotine and should consider using the 2mg lozenge.



### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Swallowing nicotine can cause stomach upset, hiccups, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, heartburn or a sore mouth.

### TIPS FOR USING LOZENGES

- ✓ Do not chew the lozenge or swallow whole. Let the lozenge dissolve in the mouth
- ✓ Do not eat or drink while the lozenge is in the mouth
- ✓ Wait 10 -15 minutes after having the lozenge before eating or drinking

### How many 4mg lozenges can be used each day?

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Up to **15** of the 4mg lozenges a day.

**COMBINATION THERAPY:** It is not recommended to combine 4mg lozenge with patches. The 4mg lozenge is generally used as a single therapy. However, for a heavy smoker who continues to have cravings speak to a Health Professional for further advice and support.

# Nicotine Gum



## HOW DOES NICOTINE GUM WORK?

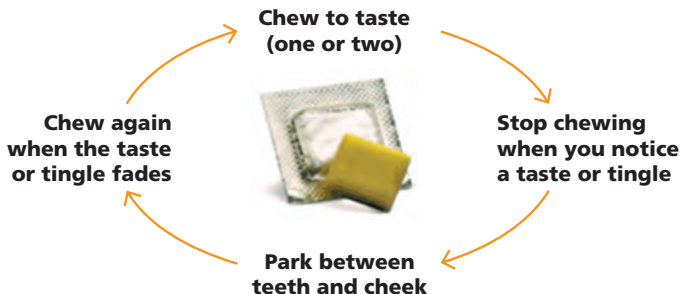
Nicotine gum allows nicotine to be absorbed through the lining of the mouth. Nicotine gum comes in 2mg and 4mg strengths. Gum is chewed only until taste occurs. This chewing releases the nicotine. If a person smokes within 30 minutes of waking, this indicates they are highly nicotine dependent, and should use the 4mg gum. If a person does not normally smoke within 30 minutes of waking, they may be less dependent and should use the 2mg gum.

## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

If the gum is chewed too often it can result in the released nicotine being swallowed and this can upset the stomach. Symptoms include nausea, hiccups and occasional headache. Jaw pain and dental problems can also occur.

### How to use nicotine gum

1. Place one piece of gum inside mouth
2. Chew gently until a peppery/mint/fruity flavour can be tasted (taste will depend on type of gum). Do NOT chew like you would chew a piece of regular 'chewing' gum.
3. Using your tongue, flatten and 'park' the gum against the inside of the cheek until the taste disappears.
4. Repeat this cycle for up to 20mins (i.e. Chew to taste again, then park).
5. Dispose of gum when the taste is gone.



# Nicotine Gum

## TIPS FOR USING NICOTINE GUM

- ✓ People who wear dentures should not use gum (unless they remove the denture)
- ✓ Do not eat or drink while the gum is in the mouth, and do not eat or drink for 10 - 15 minutes after using the gum
- ✓ It is advised that people start using gum immediately after they wake up and continue to use throughout the day
- ✓ Always dispose of nicotine products carefully. Nicotine products are only to be used by people addicted to nicotine, and could harm children and pets

### How many pieces of gum can be used each day?

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Use between **8-12** pieces of gum per day or a fixed dose such as one piece per hour as the gum is more effective if used regularly.

**COMBINATION THERAPY:** Gum can be used in combination therapy to 'top-up' nicotine levels. Gum is to be used when cravings persist. When using gum in combination therapy, the number of pieces required to reduce cravings will vary. Use up to the recommended dose and contact a Health Professional if cravings persist.

# Mouth Spray

Mouth sprays deliver nicotine using a spray dispenser.

At the first sign of cravings or at the time a person would have a cigarette, one or two sprays of mouth spray will lessen the craving. Mouth sprays are the fastest acting NRT.



## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Nausea, vomiting, tingling or burning sensation at the back of the throat or hiccups may be experienced. Sometimes the spray causes lots of saliva (or 'spit') - keep spray in the mouth as long as you can then spit excess into a tissue. After four or five times of doing this you won't have to spit out every time.

## TO OPEN OR CLOSE THE MOUTH SPRAY

1. For best delivery, always prime the spray before use (see tips next page)
2. With your thumb, push on the black button until it can be pushed slightly inwards.
3. Do NOT push too hard. While pushing in, slide slightly down before sliding upwards to unlock the top of the dispenser and release the button.
4. To close, follow the same instructions, but while pushing in slide downwards.

## HOW TO USE MOUTH SPRAY

1. Press the top of the mouth spray dispenser to release one spray **into the side of the cheek or under the tongue**, being sure to avoid the lips. **DO NOT SPRAY DIRECTLY INTO THE THROAT**
2. To avoid getting spray down your throat, do not breathe in while spraying.
3. If the spray causes excessive saliva, hold in the mouth for as long as possible, then spit extra saliva into a tissue. After 4-5 times it won't be necessary to spit each time.
4. **DO NOT** swallow extra saliva.



Using a mouth spray correctly

# Mouth Spray

## TIPS FOR USING MOUTH SPRAY

- ✓ Do not eat or drink for 10-15 minutes after using the mouth spray
- ✓ If being used for the first time, or if the spray has not been used for a few hours, the spray pump should be primed
- ✓ You may feel some tingling in the mouth when you first use the spray or an increased amount of saliva - this is ok

## TO PRIME THE SPRAY:

1. Point the spray away from you and shake.
2. Open the spray.
3. Press the top of the dispenser several times until a fine mist appears. This will ensure the correct dosage.



If spray comes out in a stream when pumped, it has NOT been primed correctly.

## How many sprays can a person have each day?

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Up to **4** sprays per hour—maximum **64** sprays per day.

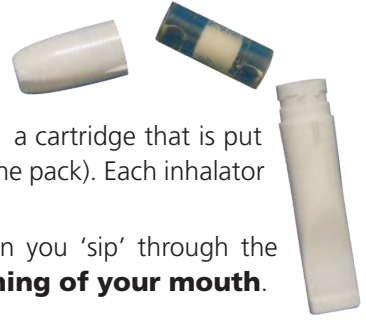
**COMBINATION THERAPY:** Mouth spray can be used with patches to 'top up' nicotine levels. Spray is used when needed. A maximum of **64** sprays per day can be used.

# Inhalator

## HOW DO INHALATORS WORK?

The inhalator consists of a plastic mouthpiece and a cartridge that is put together before use (as per instructions on the side of the pack). Each inhalator cartridge contains 15mg of nicotine.

The inhalator releases nicotine into your mouth when you 'sip' through the inhalator. The nicotine is only absorbed through the **lining of your mouth**.



## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

'Overuse' or 'inhaling too deeply' with the inhalator may cause coughing, nausea, pain in the abdomen, sweating, diarrhoea, headache, dizziness, hearing disturbance or weakness.

## HOW TO USE THE INHALATOR

1. Take a shallow puff/sip about every 2 seconds and hold in the mouth. Alternatively take up to a maximum of 4 puffs/sips per minute. Shallow puffs/sips will help to increase the amount of nicotine that is absorbed through the lining of the cheeks. Try not to draw back on the inhalator as this will give you a sore throat.
2. When the taste fades, this indicates that the cartridge is empty.
3. Each cartridge supplies up to 20-30 mins of gentle puffs/sips.
4. Each cartridge will remain active for 12 hours if not used.

## TIPS FOR USING THE INHALATOR

- ✓ The mouthpiece should be rinsed with warm soapy water and dried thoroughly several times per week
- ✓ Do not eat or drink while using the inhalator
- ✓ Do not eat or drink for 10– 15 minutes after using the inhalator
- ✓ Always dispose of nicotine products carefully. Nicotine products are only to be used by people addicted to nicotine, and could harm children and pets

## How many cartridges can a person use each day?

**SINGLE THERAPY:** Up to **6** cartridges per day.

**COMBINATION THERAPY:** If a person is on patches and using the inhalator to 'top-up' the nicotine level, **6** cartridges can be used each day.

If cravings persist, contact a Health Professional.

## E-Cigarettes



1. There is an increasing interest in e-cigarettes across the world. In Australia, they are not regulated for quality, safety or performance.
2. Electronic cigarettes are battery powered devices which use cartridges containing liquid which is turned into vapour.
3. The liquid may contain tobacco or confectionary flavouring and may also contain nicotine, often at unreliable, non disclosed levels.
4. The sale of nicotine in e-cigarettes is illegal. Flavoured liquid cartridges may contain high doses of nicotine, may be enticing to children and young people but are potentially lethal if swallowed.
5. More research is being undertaken to clearly establish the overall benefits or harms of e-cigarettes.
6. The NSW Government recently introduced legislation to prohibit the sale of electronic cigarettes and e-cigarette accessories to minors see NSW Health fact sheet <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/factsheets/e-cigs-are-they-legal.pdf>
7. The NSW Health Smokefree Healthcare Policy bans the use of electronic cigarettes in NSW Health buildings, grounds and vehicles. [http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/quitting\\_smoking/Pages/e-liquid.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/quitting_smoking/Pages/e-liquid.aspx)
8. The NSW Government has legislated to ban e-cigarette sales to minors (May 2015).



9. For more information on e-cigarettes talk to a Health Professional.





## Disclaimer

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is a tool to assist people to quit smoking but it is not intended to replace independent professional medical advice. If a person has any medical conditions, has suffered from depression, anxiety or other mental illness, are taking medicines, are pregnant or are breastfeeding then they should talk to their pharmacist, doctor or Health Professional.

**NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT) IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE.**

## Contact Numbers for more information

### TALKING TOBACCO TEAM NORTHERN NSW

(02) 6674 9500

(02) 6620 7507

### NNSWLHD WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://bit.ly/104rM94>

### OTHER RESOURCES

Quitline 137848

[icanquit.com.au](http://icanquit.com.au)

Quit for you Quit for two

My QuitBuddy

## Notes:

**For more information  
please phone**

**(02) 6674 9500 OR (02) 6620 7507**

**For a visual demonstration on how to use  
gum, lozenges and patches, please go to  
<http://bit.ly/104rM94>**



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