

Quit aids



When you quit, your body doesn't feel right without nicotine so you get withdrawal symptoms. Using a quit aid reduces symptoms and doubles your chances of successfully quitting. Quit aids include prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Before starting any quit aid, discuss your options with your doctor. Carefully read and follow the package instructions of any quit aid.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)

NRT is a group of quit aids that deliver nicotine to your body without the other harmful effects from tobacco products. You gradually decrease the amount of nicotine you get over time, which means you can slowly adjust to life without nicotine. NRT comes in a few forms: nicotine patch, gum, lozenge, inhaler and nasal spray.

A few tips about NRT:

- Talk with your doctor before using NRT even if the product is over-the-counter. This is especially important if you are pregnant, nursing, have a heart condition, or take medication for high blood pressure, asthma or depression.
- Don't smoke while using NRT. Excessive doses of nicotine can cause severe symptoms.
- Only use the recommended dosage and use it according to the package instructions.
- Gradually switch to a lower dose by following the package instructions.

Non-NRT Quit Aids

Two prescription quit aids are also available: varenicline (Chantix®) and bupropion (Zyban® or Wellbutrin®). Both Chantix and Zyban are only available by prescription. Talk with your doctor about whether either of these medications is right for you. Always follow your doctor's instructions on how to take them. Zyban and Chantix should come with a medication guide. Read and carefully follow the instructions included with the guide.

What about e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes are battery-operated devices designed to deliver nicotine and other chemicals into a vapor that is inhaled. E-cigarettes aren't approved by the FDA for use as a tobacco cessation aid. Since they haven't been fully studied, we don't know the risks of using e-cigarettes, how much nicotine or other chemicals are being inhaled, or whether there are any benefits associated with using them. All of the quit aids listed above are safe and approved by the FDA to help you quit.

Quit aids



Quit aid options: all ease withdrawal symptoms

Option	How it works	Possible side effects
Nicotine patches	Patches provide nicotine through the skin. The doses are lowered over the course of weeks. Patches come in various strengths, commonly in 21 mg, 14 mg and 7 mg strengths.	Dizziness, headaches, muscle stiffness, nausea, racing heartbeat, skin irritation (redness & itching), sleep problems, vomiting
Nicotine gum	Nicotine is absorbed through the mouth and quickly delivered to the blood stream. Gum comes in 2 mg and 4 mg strengths.	Bad taste, hiccups, jaw discomfort, mouth ulcers, nausea, racing heartbeat, throat irritation
Nicotine nasal spray <i>prescription</i>	Nicotine is absorbed through the nose and quickly delivered to the blood stream.	Coughing, nasal irritation, runny nose, sneezing, throat irritation, watery eyes
Nicotine inhalers <i>prescription</i>	The nicotine inhaler is a plastic tube with a nicotine cartridge inside. When you puff on the inhaler, you inhale nicotine vapor to your mouth.	Coughing, nasal, mouth, and throat irritation, upset stomach
Varenicline (Chantix) <i>prescription</i>	Chantix is a non-nicotine pill that affects the nicotine receptors of the brain and can lessen satisfaction of smoking.	Nausea, sleep problems/vivid dreams, constipation, gas, vomiting *If you have serious changes in mood or behavior or have suicidal thoughts while taking Chantix, stop taking Chantix and contact your provider immediately
Bupropion (Zyban) <i>prescription</i>	Zyban is a non-nicotine pill that affects the chemicals in the brain related to nicotine. It can ease tobacco cravings.	Dry mouth, difficulty sleeping, agitation, anxiety, constipation, dizziness

Next Step

What type of quit aid do you think you'd like to use?

What do you need to do to prepare to use the quit aid?

Who can you ask if you have questions or concerns about the quit aid?

What will you do if you decide to smoke while you're using the quit aid?