

Know about NRT

NRT stands for *Nicotine Replacement Therapy*. NRT works by giving your body *nicotine* (the addictive chemical in tobacco) slowly and without the harmful smoke (or vapor) that goes with smoking (or vaping). Although you won't get a hit from NRT (like when you take a drag on a cigarette or vape) it will get rid of *nicotine withdrawal symptoms* like cravings, irritability, feeling anxious or sad, restlessness, concentration difficulties and insomnia.

Nicotine Patches

- Open and place on smooth, clean, dry skin - avoid hairy, broken or cut skin.
- Do not *cut* patches.
- Press firmly in place, hold until it sticks and then leave it for 24hrs.
- You can remove the patch at night and replace in the morning if wearing at night doesn't suit you.
- When applying a new patch, *change its placement* to a new area of skin (e.g. the other arm).



How much can you use?

- Use one patch once every 24hrs (it's often easiest to remember to apply one when you wake up).

What are the potential side-effects?

- When first using patches skin irritation may occur but don't worry, your skin will adjust over time.
- Some people get nightmares when using patches at night. If this happens remove the patch before bed.

Nicotine chewing gum and lozenges

- When experiencing a craving or urge for a smoke (or vape), have a lozenge or a piece of gum.
- Chew the gum or suck on the lozenge 1-2 times until the taste changes (hot, fruity, or peppery).
- When this happens stop sucking or chewing and "park" (hold) the gum between your gums and cheek.
- Repeat this (chew / suck then 'park') over a 30-minute period and then throw away.
- Try to avoid swallowing your saliva and not drinking fluids for 15 minutes after using.

How much can you use?

- Do not use more than 8-12 pieces of gum (or lozenges) over 24 hours.
- If you are, reach out to the person who gave you NRT and let them know.



What are the potential side effects?

- If people swallow their saliva or drink water while using gum or lozenges, they may notice nausea, an upset stomach or hiccups. Stop using NRT until the feeling passes, and then resume. If this happens a lot, revisit these instructions and see if you can change things so you're not swallowing so much.

Other recommendations

- Combining a patch with lozenges or gum can be more effective at reducing your cravings .
- Don't smoke or vape while you are using NRT. This can make you sick (from too much nicotine) and may make your addiction to nicotine worse.
- Reducing nicotine use is a marathon, not a sprint. Take your time – up to 12 weeks – to gradually cut down and adjust to life without nicotine.
- NRT doesn't suit everyone, and using it correctly takes some practice. Contact us or your prescriber to get more support around this.
- **Keep NRT out of the reach of children** and pets as it can be poisonous if taken incorrectly.