



QUITLINE IOWA

1 800 QUIT NOW | 1 800 784 8669

Medications for Quitting

There are a number of proven medications that can help you quit tobacco. But medication alone is often not enough. Studies show that combining medication with a quit plan and coaching can dramatically improve the chances of quitting for good. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW and get a free personalized quit plan.

What Medications are available for Quitting Smoking?

There are 2 types of products: nicotine replacement products and medications that do not contain nicotine. Nicotine replacement works by delivering small, measured doses of nicotine which helps to relieve the cravings and withdrawal symptoms often felt by people trying to quit smoking.

Medications that do not include nicotine work by changing the way the brain receives nicotine or by changing the taste of cigarettes.

Nicotine Replacement Products

Remember, It's far less harmful for a person to get nicotine from a nicotine replacement product than from cigarettes because tobacco smoke contains many toxic and cancer-causing substances.

The **nicotine patch** is available without a prescription. A new patch is worn on the skin each day, supplying a small but steady amount of nicotine to the body. The nicotine patch is sold in varying strengths as an 8-week quit smoking

treatment. Nicotine doses are gradually lowered as the treatment progresses. The nicotine patch may not be a good choice for people with skin problems or allergies to adhesive tape.

Nicotine gum is available over the counter in 2- and 4-mg strengths. When a person chews nicotine gum and then places the chewed product between the cheek and gum tissue, nicotine is released into the bloodstream through the lining of the mouth. To keep a steady amount of nicotine in the body, a new piece of gum can be chewed every 1 or 2 hours. The gum releases nicotine more effectively when coffee, juice, and other acidic beverages are not consumed at the same time.

The **nicotine lozenge** is also available over the counter in 2- and 4-mg strengths. The use of the lozenge is similar to that of nicotine gum; it is placed between the cheek and gum tissue and allowed to dissolve. Nicotine is released into the bloodstream through the lining of the mouth. The lozenge works best when used every 1 or 2 hours and when coffee, juice,



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and other acidic beverages are not consumed at the same time.

Nicotine nasal spray is available by prescription only. The spray comes in a pump bottle containing nicotine that tobacco users can inhale when they have an urge to smoke. Absorption of nicotine via the spray is faster than that achieved with any of the other types of nicotine replacement. This product is not recommended for people with nasal or sinus conditions, allergies, or asthma, nor is it recommended for young tobacco users. Side effects from the spray include sneezing, coughing, and watering eyes, but these problems usually go away with continued use of the spray.

A **nicotine inhaler**, also available only by prescription, delivers a vaporized form of nicotine to the mouth through a mouthpiece attached to a plastic cartridge. Even though it is called an inhaler, the device does not deliver nicotine to the lungs the way a cigarette does. Most of the nicotine only travels to the mouth and throat, where it is absorbed through the mucous membranes. Common side effects include throat and mouth irritation and coughing. Anyone with a bronchial problem such as asthma should use it with caution.

Non-Nicotine Medications

Bupropion, a prescription antidepressant marketed as Zyban[®], was approved by the FDA in 1997 to treat nicotine addiction. This drug can help to reduce nicotine withdrawal symptoms and the urge to smoke, and can be used safely with nicotine replacement products. Some common side effects of bupropion are dry mouth, difficulty sleeping, headache, dizziness, and skin rash.



Varenicline, a prescription medicine marketed as Chantix[™], was approved by the FDA in 2006 to help cigarette smokers stop smoking. This drug may help those who wish to quit by easing their withdrawal symptoms and by blocking the effects of nicotine from cigarettes if they resume smoking. Some common side effects of varenicline are nausea, changes in dreaming, constipation, gas, and vomiting.