



Smoking Cessation Aids

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) delivers “clean” nicotine to the body to reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms during the quit smoking process. It is recommended that you talk to your healthcare provider before starting to use NRT.

Prescription Medications

There are prescription medications that don't supply nicotine but can help to reduce the urge to smoke. These are started before the quit date.

How does it work?

When you smoke a cigarette high levels of nicotine enter your lungs and are quickly absorbed into your bloodstream. Nicotine reaches the brain in about 7-10 seconds stimulating feelings of pleasure. When you use an NRT, clean nicotine is released at a slower, less intense pace than cigarettes. This helps to stabilize the brain so you will feel more comfortable and in control when you try to stop smoking.

Options for Smoking Cessation Aids

	Availability	How it Works	Side Effects
 <p>NICOTINE PATCH</p>	Over the counter and by prescription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a self-adhesive skin patch that contains nicotine which delivers a steady dose. The patch ranges in strength from 7 mg-21 mg. Apply to clean dry area above the waist. Change every 24 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleep disturbance Skin irritability
 <p>NICOTINE GUM</p>	Over the counter and by prescription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nicotine gum contains nicotine and is slowly released when chewed. Do not chew like normal gum. Place gum in mouth and chew a few times then park between your gum and cheek and leave for a few minutes. The gum ranges in strength from 2 mg-4 mg. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to use with dentures No acidic food/ beverages before or during use Mouth soreness Hiccups
 <p>NICOTINE INHALER</p>	Over the counter and by prescription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nicotine vapour is absorbed through the lining of your mouth and throat. Each cartridge delivers up to 400 puffs of nicotine vapour. It takes at least 80 puffs to equal amount of nicotine delivered by 1 cigarette. 1 cartridge can last 20 minutes and delivers 4 mg of nicotine; only 2 mg is actually absorbed. Max dose of 12 cartridges a day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irritation of mouth and throat Coughing Hiccups Headache
 <p>NICOTINE LOZENGE</p>	Over the counter and by prescription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place lozenge in mouth and allow it to dissolve slowly. Do not chew. Suck until there is a strong taste, then rest lozenge in your cheek. Lozenge should take 20 to 30 minutes to dissolve. Don't eat or drink 15 minutes before or while using. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nausea Hiccups Heartburn Coughing
 <p>BUPROPION (ZYBAN®)</p>	Prescription needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a drug originally used to treat depression and is not established how it helps people quit smoking, but it helps with withdrawal symptoms. Treatment should start while the person is still smoking. Treatment spans from 7 to 12 weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insomnia Dry mouth Vivid dreams Bad taste in mouth
 <p>VARENICLINE (CHAMPIX®)</p>	Prescription needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This drug works in two ways; it makes smoking less satisfying and at the same time reduces the smoker's craving and withdrawal symptoms. Treatment should start while the person is still smoking. Treatment spans for 7 to 12 weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nausea Vivid/strange dreams Depressed mood, agitation, changes in behavior, suicidal thoughts

What is Nicotine Withdrawal?

Withdrawal is your body's response to being without nicotine. Withdrawal symptoms usually only last one to two minutes and are less noticeable after the first 4 to 5 days of being smoke free. Each time you experience one of these symptoms, your body is telling you it is recovering from the effects of nicotine. Some recovery symptoms include anxiety, constipation, cravings, difficulty concentrating, and difficulty sleeping.

Coverage for Tobacco Cessation Aids

- Many residents including seniors, registered Indigenous residents and those with Extended Health Benefits already have coverage for smoking cessation aids. Other residents can obtain coverage if existing benefits are used up or if they do not have coverage from another source.
- Contact the **Health Services Administration office** at **1-800-661-0830** ext 0 to request prior approval.
- Coverage can be obtained for all aids that are on the Non Insured Health Benefit Drug List:
 - Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRT)** – Nicotine Patch, Gum, Inhaler and Lozenge
 - Medications** – Zyban (Bupropion) and Champix (Varenicline)
 - Coverage is limited to a 3-month supply during a one-year period
 - The year starts on the date the prescription is filled
 - Once this quantity has been reached, the client is eligible again for the NRT when one year has elapsed from the day the initial prescription was filled

Important reminder

Non-smokers are more affected by caffeine. Cut back your caffeine intake (coffee, tea, colas or other caffeinated drinks) by at least half to reduce unpleasant effects such as jitters, irritability, headaches and sleeplessness.



NWT Resources

Available at: www.nwtquitline.ca

- NWT Tobacco Quit Guide
- Quit Calendar
- Questions and Answers on Coverage of Quit Smoking Aids
- You can Quit Smoking – Your Path to a Smoke Free Life
- Your Tobacco Quit Plan
- Smoking and Weight



The Quitline is a confidential, toll-free help line for people who want to quit using tobacco.

Trained cessation counsellors offer personalized call back programs to support patients through the quitting process. The counsellor will work with the tobacco user to establish a quit plan, resolve practical problems and prevent relapse.

The line operates in both French and English, but a caller can request the services of a 3rd party translator for any official NWT languages, and many other languages as well.

A healthcare provider can initiate a call by the Quitline to the smoker by completing a Quitline fax referral form available from: www.nwtquitline.ca.

Check out a short video on how the Quitline works at: www.nwtquitline.ca