

Nicotine Gum

Also known as Nicorette® (generics available)

Why choose the nicotine gum?

- The nicotine gum is used to help you quit smoking by “replacing” the nicotine that you would normally get from a cigarette, but without the harmful chemicals found in cigarette smoke.
- It makes you more comfortable while you are quitting because it reduces the cravings and withdrawal that you feel when you stop smoking.
- It can be used with the nicotine patch—and studies have shown that this works better than using only one nicotine replacement medicine.
- It is inexpensive compared to some of the other medicines for quitting smoking, and is available without a prescription.

How do I use the nicotine gum?

- Chew 1 piece of gum slowly until it feels tingly or peppery (after about 15 to 30 chews)—this tingle is caused by the nicotine being released from the gum—then “park” it between your cheek and gum.
- Keep the gum parked until the tingle fades, then chew it again slowly until you feel the tingling again. Park the gum again, in a different place in your mouth.
- Repeat the “chew-and-park” process for about 30 minutes, or until you no longer feel the tingling when you chew the gum—this means that there is no more nicotine left and you can discard the gum safely, away from children and pets.
- Do not eat or drink for 15 minutes before or while you have the gum in your mouth (drinking water before using the gum is OK).
- Do not chew too quickly or swallow the gum because the medicine will not work, and it might upset your stomach.
- **If the gum is the only quit smoking medicine you are using**, be sure to use at least 9 pieces every day for the first 6 weeks. If you plan to use the gum AND the patch, talk with your pharmacist about dosing.

What strength you use depends on when you smoke your first cigarette of the day:

If you smoke your first cigarette of the day	Use the
Within 30 minutes of waking	4 mg gum
More than 30 minutes after waking	2 mg gum

(continued on back side)



Dosing schedule (for use while you are awake):

Weeks 1 – 6	Weeks 7 – 9	Weeks 10 – 12
1 piece every 1 to 2 hours	1 piece every 2 to 4 hours	1 piece every 4 to 8 hours
Do not use more than 24 pieces of gum a day.		

How long is the treatment?

- It is recommended that you take this medicine for 12 weeks.

What are the side effects of the nicotine gum?

- Hiccups or upset stomach (be sure not to chew too quickly).
- Sore jaw from chewing (this gum is harder to chew than regular chewing gum).
- Mouth or throat irritation (be sure to “park” the gum in different areas of your mouth).
- May stick to dental work.

What else do I need to know?

- If you have TMJ (temporomandibular joint disease; pain or general aching of the jaw) or a lot of dental work (e.g., crowns, dentures, braces), the nicotine gum is not a good choice for you.
- Let your pharmacist know if you are less than 18 years old, pregnant or breastfeeding, had a heart attack within the past 2 weeks, or have irregular heartbeats or angina.
- Be sure to read all of the information on the box of gum—call your pharmacist if you have questions.
- Be sure to take this medicine according to a regular schedule to **prevent** withdrawal—do not wait until you are craving a cigarette to take a dose, because it does not work as quickly as nicotine from cigarettes.

You have a better chance of quitting for good if you also seek counseling. Talk with your pharmacist and/or call your state’s tobacco quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

