

What you should know about the . . . ***nicotine gum***

Nicotine gum is a safe method to reduce cravings for cigarettes when used as directed. The gum has been approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) to be sold over-the-counter (without a prescription). Nicotine gum does not cause cancer or heart attacks, but smoking cigarettes does. The chemicals in cigarettes and cigarette smoke are what cause cancer, not the nicotine. Instead of inhaling hundreds of toxic chemicals when you smoke cigarettes, you will only be getting small amounts of nicotine through your mouth when you use the gum.

- Nicotine gum—usually comes in 2mg and 4mg doses. The 4mg dosage is best for people who normally smoke a pack a day or more.

Be prepared !!!

- Get the gum while you are getting ready to quit—before your quit day. Get more before you run out.
- Nicotine gum won't give you the same feeling as cigarettes, as it takes several minutes for the nicotine to get in your blood. Instead, nicotine gum will reduce your cravings and keep you comfortable while you learn other things to do instead of smoking.

How do I use nicotine gum???

Before using nicotine gum read all of the instructions carefully. If you have any questions, talk to your health care provider.

- Start the morning of your quit day, as soon as you wake up.
- Don't eat or drink 15 minutes before using nicotine gum or while chewing the gum (food or drink can keep you from absorbing the nicotine). If you have eaten within 15 minutes, rinse your mouth out with water before using the gum.
- Bite or chew slowly off and on, just enough to let the peppery flavor or tingling out, then "park" the gum between your cheek and gumline for a minute, so the nicotine can be absorbed. When the taste or tingling goes down, go back to slowly chewing it again. Continue to alternate chewing and "parking" for 15-30 minutes until you no longer feel the tingly or peppery flavor. Then throw the gum away where it will not be picked up by children or pets.
- Nicotine is absorbed only through the lining of the mouth. It is used differently than other gum so very little will get in the stomach where it can cause heartburn, hiccups, and upset stomach.
- Use the gum on a fixed schedule: 1 piece every 1-2 hours. Try to use at least 9 pieces per day for the first month. Extra pieces may be used as needed, but do not use more than 24 pieces a day.
- After a month or 2 of not smoking, and after talking to your health provider, you may start to slowly cut down the number of pieces per day: 1 piece per day, every 4 to 7 days. Some people prefer to stop using the gum in certain places or at certain times. Others keep chewing the same number of pieces, but chew them for a shorter time. Work with your provider to figure out what will work best for you.
- Carry the gum where you used to carry your cigarettes. Carry the gum for 3-12 months so you can use it if you have a major craving, urge to smoke, or are under extreme stress.

Take good care of yourself!
deep breathing
breaks music
asking for help and support

(Flip the page!!!)

Don't....

stop using the gum before the recommended time.

Even if you feel better in a couple of days, continue to use the gum. Nicotine gum will keep you comfortable and reduce cravings while you learn other things to do instead of smoking. It is important to use the gum for the recommended time—usually 8 weeks, and then taper off after a few months.

Using the gum with other quit-smoking medications . . .

Sometimes your doctor will want you to use the nicotine gum with the patch or Zyban if you have breakthrough cravings.

You can continue to have the gum as a safety net *after* you quit smoking.

Stay quit
LONGER

- Learn how to use it and carry it with you for a good 6 months in case you have overwhelming urges or cravings.
- Carry it with you when you are in the middle of a high stress or high risk situation.

Warning !!!

Too much nicotine can cause symptoms of:

- Nausea, diarrhea vomiting
 - Rapid heartbeat
 - Cold sweats
 - Blurred vision
 - Dizziness
 - Headaches
 - Drooling
- If you are having any of these symptoms, stop using the gum and talk to your health care provider .**

Consult a doctor before using nicotine gum , if you . . .

- have had a heart attack in the last 2 weeks;
- are pregnant or nursing;
- have severe heart rhythm problems;
- have angina, or a chest pain in the area of your heart.

Do NOT use nicotine gum without a Dr.'s specific recommendation if you have any of the above conditions.

Do, do, do...

- Talk to someone who can support you, if you have a slip and pick up a cigarette. Try not to feel bad. This is a hard process. Try to stop smoking immediately.
- Call your doctor if you are having any problems using the gum.

Most importantly . . .

Take good care of yourself!

deep breathing
breaks music
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help **and** support

Call 1-800-NO-BUTTS for FREE help and support

