

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT NICOTINE GUM

Nicotine gum is a safe method to reduce cravings for cigarettes when used as directed. The gum provides you with a small dose of nicotine directly in the mouth and will help you to quit smoking and eventually nicotine altogether. You can buy the gum over-the-counter without a prescription. Nicotine gum is safe; it does not cause cancer or heart attacks like smoking cigarettes. Nicotine gum won't give you the same feeling as cigarettes – it is not a complete substitute. It will reduce your cravings and keep you comfortable while you are in the process of quitting.

## HOW DO I GET READY TO USE THE GUM?

### 1. Talk to your doctor about nicotine gum

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, a chest pain in the area of your heart.

Work with your provider to figure out what will work best for you in terms of dosage and use. Sometimes your doctor will want you to use the nicotine gum with the patch or Wellbutrin (Bupropion) if you have breakthrough cravings.



### 2. Get the gum before your planned quit day and be sure to get more before you run out.

Nicotine gum usually comes in 2mg and 4mg doses

- If you smoke more than 25 cigarettes or a pack a day, use the 4 mg dosage.
- If you smoke less than 25 cigarettes, use the 2mg dosage

Recommended Dosage for 3 months			
	Week 1-6	Week 7-9	Week 10-12
Dosage	1 piece/ 1-2 hours	1 piece/2-4 hours	1 piece/4-8 hours
Total Per Day	12 -24	6-12	3-6

**DO NOT USE MORE THAN 24 PIECES PER DAY.**

## 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.

1. Stop smoking completely when you begin using the gum.
2. Start the morning of your quit day, as soon as you wake up.
3. Don't eat or drink 15 minutes before using nicotine gum or while chewing the gum (food or drinks can keep you from absorbing the nicotine). If you have eaten within 15 minutes, rinse your mouth out with water before using the gum.
4. Bite or chew slowly on and off, just enough to let the peppery flavor or tingling out, then "park" the gum between your cheek and gum-line for a minute, so the nicotine can be absorbed. Do not shew like chewing gum, you just park it and let the "medicine-Nicotine go thru your gum into your cheek. DO not swallow. Let it go thru your cheek into your bloodstream. Swallowing will upset your stomach and make the medicine ineffective. Practice until you get it right.
5. 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**.
6. Nicotine is absorbed only through the lining of the mouth. It is used differently than regular gum so very little will get in the stomach where it can cause heartburn, hiccups, and upset stomach. Do not swallow the nicotine or your saliva. Let the nicotine be absorbed through your mouth.

### **Warning!! Too much Nicotine can cause:**

Nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, Rapid heartbeat, Cold Sweats, Blurred Vision, Dizziness, Headaches, and Drooling

If you are having any of these symptoms, stop using the gum and talk to your healthcare provider.

### **Tips:**

- 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.
- **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 as you are quitting. It is important to use the gum for the recommended time – usually 8 weeks and then taper off after a few months.