

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT NICOTINE LOZENGE

Nicotine lozenges are a safe method to reduce cravings for cigarettes when used as directed. You can buy nicotine lozenges without a prescription. The nicotine lozenge does not cause cancer or heart attacks like smoking cigarettes does. The lozenge gives small amounts of nicotine through the lining of your mouth.

## HOW DO I GET READY TO USE THE LOZENGE

1. Talk to your doctor about using nicotine lozenges, especially 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.

If you have any of the above conditions, do NOT use nicotine lozenge without a doctor's specific recommendation. Sometimes your doctor will want you to use the nicotine lozenge with the patch or Wellbutrin (Bupropion) if you have breakthrough cravings.



2. **Get the lozenge in the proper amount before you quit smoking**
  - Lozenges come in 2mg or 4mg
  - Use the lozenge on a fixed schedule, recommended:

Week	1 lozenge per	Lozenges per day
1-6	1-2 hours	12-20
7-9	2-4 hours	8-12
10-12	4-8 hours	3-8

- Do not use more than one lozenge at a time or continuously use one lozenge after another since this may cause hiccups, heartburn, nausea or other side effects.
- Do not use more than 5 lozenges in 6 hours. Do not use more than 20 lozenges per day.
- Many people stop using the nicotine lozenge at the end of 12 weeks. If you still feel the need to use nicotine lozenges, talk to your doctor.

## HOW DO I USE THE LOZENGE?

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

### **Determine which dose works for you:**

- If you smoke your first cigarette within 30 minutes of first waking up, use the 4mg lozenge
- If you smoke your first cigarette more than 30 minutes after waking up, use the 2mg lozenge

1. Place the lozenge in your mouth and allow the lozenge to slowly dissolve (about 20 – 30 minutes). Minimize swallowing. Do not chew or swallow lozenge. You may feel a warm or tingling sensation.
2. Do not eat or drink 15 minutes before using or while the lozenge is in your mouth (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 lozenge.
3. Occasionally move the lozenge from one side of your mouth to the other until completely dissolved (about 20-30 minutes). If the lozenge is dissolving slowly, you may want to cut it into smaller pieces or try the mini lozenge.

#### Tips:

- If you use the 2mg lozenge and have withdrawal symptoms, such as: restlessness, irritability, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, or depressed mood – switch to the 4mg lozenge or use the 2mg lozenge more often.
- If you use the 4mg lozenge and have nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, or palpitations (rapid heartbeat) – switch to the 2mg lozenge
- **Do not** stop using the lozenge before the recommended time. Even if you feel better in a couple of days, continue to use the lozenge for the recommended 8 weeks. The nicotine lozenge will keep you comfortable and reduce cravings as you are quitting.
- 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.
- The lozenge comes in 2 flavors: Mint or Cherry. It can taste chalky. Try a different flavor or cut it in half to minimize gummy texture. Remember to switch sides of your mouth. Do not swallow the nicotine: let it be absorbed through your cheek.

#### **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 Lozenge and talk to your healthcare provider.

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#### **SUPPORT YOUR PROGRESS TO BECOMING SMOKE-FREE BY:**

- Attending the **San Francisco Stop Smoking Program class**, for more information at [www.sfsmokefree.org](http://www.sfsmokefree.org) | phone:628-206-6074
- Calling the California Smoker's Helpline: 1-800-NO-BUTTS (1-800-662-8887)
- Talk to someone who can support you, if you have a slip and pick up a cigarette.