

MEDfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®

Tobacco/Smoking Cessation Medications

The Details of Non-Nicotine Replacement Medications

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the following medicines to help you quit smoking.

Varenicline (Chantix)

Varenicline (Chantix) is a relatively new and different type of medication for smoking cessation. Chantix is a prescription medicine that works by blocking some of nicotine's effects in the brain. Read the information below and talk to your doctor about Varenicline to see if it is appropriate for you.

- Chantix is an effective non-nicotine prescription medication for many tobacco users trying to quit.
- Before your Quit Date, talk to your doctor about Chantix and if it is appropriate for you. Your doctor will advise you about how to take this medicine.
- Chantix should be started one week before your Quit Date and can be taken while continuing to smoke until the Quit Date.
- In general, Chantix is taken once a day for three days and then increased to twice a day. Chantix is generally taken for at least 12 weeks. If you have quit smoking at the end of 12 weeks, your doctor may advise taking for 12 more weeks.
- The most common side effects are nausea, vomiting and trouble sleeping. These side effects lessen with continued use.
- When taken every day, Chantix reduces the rewarding effects of smoking. Once you quit smoking, it helps to lessen cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

Bupropion (Zyban or Wellbutrin)

The medicine Bupropion SR (Zyban or Wellbutrin) is a prescription quit smoking aid. Read the information below and talk to your doctor about Bupropion to see if it is appropriate for you.

Bupropion SR does not contain nicotine. It is a tablet that you take by mouth once or twice a day. It should be started one to two weeks before your Quit Date.



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When taken every day, it helps to lessen your desire to smoke. Once you quit, it reduces the severity of cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Before your Quit Date, talk to your doctor about Bupropion SR and if it is appropriate for you. Your doctor will advise you about how to take this medicine. Some people will begin with a single dose every morning for three days, then increase to twice daily. Most people use Bupropion SR for seven to twelve weeks. The most common side effects are trouble sleeping and dry mouth.

Bupropion SR is not recommended if you have a history of seizures, eating disorder, for those taking another form of Bupropion or those who have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days.

Combinations of Medicines

Some medicines can be combined for more relief. Some people do better by using a combination of nicotine replacement products, such as the nicotine patch with the nicotine lozenges or gum. Another effective combination for some is Bupropion and the nicotine patch.

Talk to your doctor before your Quit Day to decide what is right for you. Studies show that the right combination of medicines can help your chances of quitting for good.

Note: This information is provided to you as an educational service of LUNG LINE® (1-800-222-LUNG). It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

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