

Nicotine Gum

Information for Quitting Tobacco

About nicotine gum:

The nicotine gum replaces the nicotine you used to get from tobacco. Nicotine gum is not like other kinds of chewing gum. It must be chewed and used in a certain way to work correctly. The nicotine gum releases nicotine into your mouth. The nicotine is absorbed through your cheek into your bloodstream to help reduce cravings and other withdrawal symptoms.

How to use it:

Nicotine gum comes in 2 doses. Your starting dose is determined by how much tobacco you use.

Do not eat any food or drink any liquids while the nicotine gum is in your mouth or for 15 minutes before or after putting the gum in your mouth.

Chew the gum slowly until you begin to feel a tingly sensation and or have a peppery taste in your mouth.

Once it has a peppery taste, place the nicotine gum between your cheek and gum.

After the peppery taste goes away, slowly chew the nicotine gum again until the taste comes back. Park the gum on the other side of your mouth.

Chew and park each piece of nicotine gum for 20-30 minutes and then throw it away.

Chew enough pieces of the nicotine gum each day to control cravings to use tobacco. Many people start with using one piece of gum every 1 to 2 hours.

Do not use more than 24 pieces of nicotine gum in one day unless advised to use more by your health care provider.

Plan to use nicotine gum for about 12 weeks. Cut back on how much you use it as you get comfortable being tobacco free.

Side effects and cautions:

Common side effects from the gum could include: Jaw ache, indigestion, nausea, heartburn or hiccups.

Rare reactions to the gum could include but are not limited to:

Rash on the body, severe nausea, vomiting, headaches, dizziness, fast heart rate and chest pain.

If any serious reactions happen to you, stop using the nicotine gum and call your health care provider or seek emergency care.

Please discuss use of nicotine gum with your health care provider if you have any of the following conditions. Use of nicotine might be a health risk for some people with these conditions.

- Active heart disease
- A recent stroke
- An irregular or abnormal heart beat
- High blood pressure
- Stomach ulcer
- Diabetes

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, do not use nicotine gum unless advised by your health care provider. The safety to your baby is not entirely known.

If you have dentures, no teeth, mouth sores or TMJ (temporomandibular joint) problems, other types of tobacco treatment medication may be better for you to use.

Some brands of nicotine gum contain acesulfame potassium and should not be used by people with PKU.

Some people ask if it is safe to use the gum if you slip and smoke. It is safe for most people to use nicotine gum even if you slip up or haven't completely stopped using tobacco on your quit day. Keep trying to quit.

PLEASE KEEP NICOTINE GUM OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN AND PETS.

The information on this handout can change. Please refer to package inserts, and talk to your health care provider if you have any questions or concerns.

MaineHealth
Center for Tobacco
Independence