

# NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

**Congratulations! You have decided to do the single best thing for your overall health – quit tobacco. But now what?**

To some, the toughest part of quitting is dealing with nicotine cravings. One way to overcome the need for nicotine is to gradually wean off of it. As your body adapts to having less, you will experience the urge to smoke less often. Eventually, you can completely stop supplying your body with nicotine.

Success in quitting with nicotine replacements usually involves long-term behavioral changes. It is important to quit smoking prior to, or at the time the tobacco replacement product is initiated, or your body could be exposed to too much nicotine, and the effectiveness of these approaches could be compromised or present a danger to you.

Individuals have different tobacco patterns. Below are a few nicotine replacement options. No matter which option you choose, 1-800-Quit-Now (1-800-784-8669) and <http://www.smokefree.gov> are great resources for support.

## NICOTINE PATCH

Nicotine patches are a low-maintenance option that you don't have to think about throughout the day. They look like large adhesive bandages and stick onto the skin. The sticky side of the patch contains a layer of nicotine. While you wear the patch, nicotine passes through the skin into your blood, delivering nicotine in a steady stream.

If you smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day, start out with the 21 mg strength. If you smoke less than 10 cigarettes a day, the 14 mg strength is fine. To help you remember to put it on, apply the patch at the same time every day. Follow the directions carefully and ask your doctor or a pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand.

### Where can I get it?

The nicotine patch is available over the counter at your local pharmacy. If you buy nicotine patches with a prescription, you may be able to get reimbursed by your insurance company. Ask your physician's office or insurance company for more information.

### What is the routine?

Apply a new patch every 24 hours.

### What are the less common, but possible side effects?

- Itching, burning or tingling when the patch is applied
- Redness blisters or swelling at the patch site
- Dizziness, headaches
- Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea

## NICOTINE LOZENGE

Nicotine lozenges allow you to control your nicotine cravings as they occur. They are tablets (usually flavored) that contain a dose of nicotine which dissolves in the mouth to release the nicotine. The effects of the lozenge may be diminished from eating or drinking anything 15 minutes prior to taking the lozenge. They come in two strengths, 2mg and 4mg.

### Where can I get it?

The nicotine lozenge is available over-the-counter at your local pharmacy. If you buy nicotine lozenge with a prescription, you may be able to get reimbursed by your insurance company. Ask your physician's office or insurance company for more information.

### What is the routine?

Take as directed on the box instructions. Do not exceed more than 20 lozenges a day without instructions from your physician.

### What are the less common, but possible side effects?

- Sore throat
- Heartburn
- Nausea/indigestion
- Hiccups

## NICOTINE INHALER

The nicotine inhaler allows you to control your nicotine intake throughout the day. The prescription-only inhaler is a thin, plastic cartridge (similar to the shape of a cigarette) that contains a nicotine cartridge in its base. Using the inhaler makes the withdrawal effects of not smoking less severe. As your body adjusts the nicotine inhaler is decreased gradually over several weeks and finally stopped altogether.

### Where can I get it?

The nicotine inhaler must be prescribed by a physician.

### What is the routine?

On average, you will use six to 12 cartridges per day for 12 weeks.

### What are the less common, but possible side effects?

- Throat and/or mouth irritation
- Cough
- Upset stomach
- Change in taste
- Sinus pain/pressure
- Pain in the jaw, neck or back
- Headaches

# E-CIGARETTE

## What is the E-Cigarette and how does it work?

An electronic cigarette (or e-cigarette) is a device meant to stimulate and substitute for tobacco product. It generally utilizes a heating element that vaporizes liquid to create an aerosol. They are often designed to mimic cigarettes and should be used as a tapering device with the expectation to be off all e- cigarettes and nicotine products. **Research is still being conducted on the safety and effectiveness of the e-cigarette as a tobacco cessation tool, and there are some potentially serious concerns with the delivery system and/or the ingredients in the E-cigarette or vaping products.** Laws vary widely concerning their use and sale and are subject of pending legislation and ongoing debate.

## Who shouldn't use this device as tobacco cessation option?

Pregnant women, youth and young adults

## Where can I get it?

Various local retail stores

## What is the routine?

Varies. No additional nicotine products are recommended while using e- cigarettes.

## What are the less common, but possible side effects?

- Throat/mouth irritation
- Cough
- Upset stomach
- Change in taste
- Sinus pain/pressure
- Jaw, neck or back pain
- Headaches

Please contact your primary care physician if you have additional questions or would like to further discuss your options.

**Because of the unresolved safety concerns and research on e-cigarettes as a stop-smoking aid is inconclusive, St. Elizabeth Healthcare does not recommend the use of e-cigarettes as a way to quit smoking.**