



## Some Tools for Reducing and Quitting Tobacco

### Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Nicotine replacement therapy works to reduce withdrawal symptoms when you quit smoking by substituting for the nicotine you would get through smoking.

The Dads in Gear program is pleased to offer free, non prescription Nicotine Patches or Nicotine Gum. Both products are explained further in the following pages and frequently asked questions are included in the "other" section of your DIG binder.

If you choose to use this strategy we will be distributing supplies for to each of you one week at a time. Other NRT options include lozenges and inhalers.

You should **not use NRT** if one of the following applies to you:

- Allergy to nicotine
- Generalized skin disorders (for the patch)
- Active jaw disease (for gum)
- Non-smokers or occasional smokers
- Less than 18 years of age
- Immediately after having a heart attack or stroke, people with life-threatening
- irregular heart rhythms (arrhythmias), severe angina
- If one of the following applies to you, speak to your doctor or pharmacist about whether NRT is right for you:
  - High blood pressure,
  - Thyroid problems,
  - Stomach problems,
  - Blood circulation problems,
  - Stomach ulcers,
  - Kidney or liver problems,
  - Treatment of circulation problems of the brain,
  - Diabetes requiring insulin



## Nicotine Patch: How does it work?

The Nicotine Patch helps you to quit by delivering a continuous, controlled dose of nicotine into your body to help relieve cravings and withdrawal symptoms. The nicotine is released through your skin over 16 hours. It is absorbed quite slowly compared to smoking a cigarette so you should be prepared to wait a little while longer for the nicotine to get into your system.

## How do I use the Nicotine Patch?

For your Nicotine Patch to work it is important that you use it properly, so make sure that you read through all the instructions carefully.

### Do

1. Apply one fresh Nicotine Patch first thing every morning
2. Remove the Patch before going to bed and dispose of it safely
3. Apply the Patch to a clean, dry, hairless area of skin on the front or side of your chest, upper arm or hip.

### Don't

1. Apply the Patch to the same spot of skin two days running
2. Use the Patch on broken or inflamed skin
3. Smoke while you are wearing the Patch.

## Nicotine Patch Reduction Guide

It is important to gradually reduce the amount of nicotine you absorb until you can do without it.

The Nicotine Patch is available in three strengths so you can start on the highest dose and then gradually reduce your intake:

1. Start with the **15mg** full strength patches for **six weeks**
2. Switch to the **10mg** patch for **two weeks**
3. Finally, lower the dose to the **5mg** patches for a further **2 weeks** before giving up all together.

Remember, if you have any questions or are not sure of anything you can contact experts at QuitNow ([www.quitnow.ca](http://www.quitnow.ca)) at 1-877-455-2233, or talk to your pharmacist or doctor. Your DIG team is also available to help you.



## **Nicotine Patch: How does it work?**

When you chew Nicotine Gum it releases controlled amounts of nicotine into your body to help you deal with cravings and withdrawal symptoms. When you use Nicotine Gum correctly you can double your chances of stopping smoking successfully vs willpower alone.

## **How do I use the Gum?**

To make sure you get the most from Nicotine Gum you should use the correct chewing technique:

1. Chew the gum slowly until the taste becomes strong.
2. When this happens, rest the gum between your cheek and teeth.
3. Chewing the gum releases the nicotine, which is then absorbed through the lining of the mouth.
4. When the taste has faded chew the gum again.

## **How many pieces do I need?**

Most people start by using up to 15 pieces of gum each day. You should use the gum for at least three months and then gradually reduce the number of pieces you chew.

Remember, if you have any questions about nicotine replacement therapy call Quitnow ([www.quitnow.ca](http://www.quitnow.ca)) at 1-877-455-2233.

*Adapted from <http://www.nicorette.ca>*