

## **PATIENT INFORMATION**

### **YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING**

#### ***CAN I QUIT?***

Yes! Half of all people who have ever smoked have quit.

If you have tried to quit smoking, you know how hard it can be. That is because nicotine is a very addictive drug. For some people, it can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine. Within seconds of taking a puff of smoke, nicotine travels to the brain. It tells the brain to release chemicals that make you want to smoke more. Quitting is hard. Usually people make 2 to 3 tries, or more, before finally being able to quit. Studies have shown that each time you try to quit, you will be stronger and will have learned more about what helps and what hurts. Anyone can quit smoking. It does not matter about age, health, or lifestyle. The decision to quit and your success are greatly influenced by how much you want to stop smoking.

#### ***HOW DO I QUIT?***

Experts say three methods work. You have the best chance of quitting if you use them together:

1. Use the nicotine patch or gum, or the nicotine inhaler or nasal spray.
2. Consider a newer agent like bupropion (Zyban/Wellbutrin) or varenicline(CHANTIX)
3. Get support and encouragement or join a class
4. Learn how to handle stress and urges to smoke
5. It is VERY important to set a **QUIT DATE**, as this date is used in setting up the timing of all the medications used to assist you in quitting.

#### ***DOES THE NICOTINE PATCH OR NICOTINE GUM WORK?***

Yes, whichever you choose, the nicotine patch or gum increases your chance of quitting. The patch and gum help lessen the urge to smoke. The nicotine in the patch and gum passes through the skin, thereby decreasing your craving for nicotine when you stop smoking. It is important to follow the directions carefully when using the patch or gum. Ask your health care provider for advice or read the information in the package. **WHILE YOU MAY STILL GET CRAVINGS TO SMOKE, DON'T SMOKE WHILE USING THE PATCH OR GUM!**

#### ***WHO SHOULD USE THE NICOTINE PATCH OR GUM?***

Research shows that almost everyone can benefit from using the patch or gum, but in general it is most effective in patients who are moderate to heavy smokers. That means:

- \*Smoke more than 10 - 20 cigarettes a day (1/2 to 1 pack)
- \*Smoke as soon as you wake up in the morning or when you are sick
- \*Have severe withdrawal symptoms when you don't smoke

If you are pregnant or have heart or blood vessel problems, talk to your health care provider as you will need to be especially careful about using the patch or gum.

## ***HOW DO I KNOW WHAT STRENGTH IS RIGHT FOR ME?***

***The patch:*** Most heavy smokers should start using a full-strength patch (15-22 mg of nicotine) daily for 4-8 weeks and then use weaker patches for another 2-4 weeks each (5-14 mg of nicotine). (i.e. 21mg for 8 wks, 14mg for 2 wks, 7 mg for 2 wks). Discuss options with your health care provider if you smoke less than 1 pack per day.

***The gum:*** Most smokers should start using the 2-mg dose. However, you may want to use 4-mg gum if you are a heavy smoker.

\*If you are a very light smoker (less than 10 cigarettes a day) or have health problems, a health care provider should help you select the right dose for either the patch or gum.

## ***SHOULD I USE THE NICOTINE GUM OR THE NICOTINE PATCH?***

Both treatments can help once you are ready to quit. The choice is up to you. Some people don't like the taste of the gum or don't like chewing in public and might prefer the patch. Others have been unable to quit on the patch or have an allergic reaction on their body to the adhesive in the patch and may want to try the gum. Here is some information to help you decide which one is right for you.

### ***Nicotine Patch***

***Directions for use:*** At the start of each day, a new patch is placed on a part of the body between the neck and the waist. Take it off prior to going to bed. Each day, the patch is moved to a new spot to lessen skin irritation.

***Treatment Period:*** The patch is usually used for up to 8-12 weeks.

***Side effects:*** Some people who use the patch get a rash on their body where the patch is placed. Skin rashes are usually mild and easily treated. Moving the patch to another area of the body helps.

***How to get it:*** Currently, the patch can be obtained in your pharmacy without a prescription. (Check with your health insurance to find out if the cost is covered.)

### ***Nicotine Gum***

***Directions for use:*** The gum must be chewed in a special way to make it work. It is chewed slowly until a "peppery" taste comes out. Then, the gum is placed between the cheek and gum. Each piece of gum should be used for about 30 minutes.

***Treatment Period:*** People often chew too few pieces of gum per day and for too few weeks to get the most benefits from using it. A fixed schedule (at least one piece every 1-2 hours for at least 1-3 months) may give the best results. Each week decrease your use by one piece per day.

***Side effects:*** Some people develop mild side effects such as hiccups, upset stomach, or jaw ache. Most of these side effects go away if the gum is used correctly.

*How to get it:* The gum is available without a doctor's prescription. To be safe, carefully read and follow directions inside the package. Also, you can talk to your health care provider about how to use it and for how long. (Check with your health insurance to find out if the cost is covered.) Remember there are two strengths, so if you are a heavy smoker (over 1 pack per day) use the 4 mg, otherwise use the 2 mg.

*If you have any side effects from the patch or gum, be sure to tell your health care provider right away.*

### **WHAT ABOUT BUPROPION (ZYBAN <sup>TM</sup>, Wellbutrin <sup>TM</sup>)?**

Bupropion is an atypical antidepressant for patients who do not wish to use nicotine replacement therapies or for those who have failed treatment with nicotine replacement. The medication serves to reduce the anxiety associated with smoking cessation, and thus works very differently from nicotine preparations. **It is recommended to begin the medication one week prior to quitting in the following manner:**

\*Bupropion SR or XL 150 mg one tablet each day for 3 - 7 days →

\*Bupropion SR 150 mg one tablet twice a day or Bupropion 300mg XL once a day for 4 - 7 days →

\*\*\* **QUIT DATE** \*\*\* →

\*Continue bupropion twice a day for 7 - 12 weeks →

\*Taper bupropion at to 150 mg per day for 3 to 5 days prior to discontinuing.

Bupropion can be safely used with nicotine preparations if used correctly. Common side effects include dry mouth, insomnia, and gastrointestinal disturbances. It should be avoided in patients with a history eating disorders, seizure disorders, heavy alcohol use, or head trauma. Less weight gain during the period after smoking cessation may be an observed benefit.

### **WHAT ABOUT VARENICLINE (CHANTIX <sup>TM</sup>)?**

Varenicline is a neural nicotinic receptor blocker. The efficacy of this medication believed to be the result of varenicline's activity at a sub-type of the nicotinic receptor where its binding produces agonist activity. The patient should set a quit date to stop smoking. Varenicline dosing should **start one week before this quit date**.

Varenicline should be taken after eating and with a full glass of water.

The recommended dose of Varenicline is 1 mg twice daily following a 1-week titration as follows:

Days 1 - 3:	0.5 mg once daily
Days 4 - 7:	0.5 mg twice daily
Day 8 - Week 10 - 12	1 mg twice daily

The major contraindication for varenicline is depression or a history of depression; **DO NOT TAKE** this medicine if you have had depression in your life. Also, the most common adverse reactions include nausea, sleep disturbance, constipation, flatulence, and vomiting. Nausea occurred in 30% of patients; 3% discontinued due to nausea.

You should stop taking Varenicline and contact your healthcare provider immediately if agitation, depressed mood, or changes in behavior that are not typical for the patient are observed, or if the patient develops suicidal ideation or suicidal behavior.

### ***SHOULD I GET COUNSELING?***

Counseling can help you learn how to live life as a nonsmoker. Brief counseling or advice from your health care advisor can help. Also, you may want to join a quit smoking program. Some studies of people who have quit show **the more counseling you have, the greater your chance for success**. Here is what to look for in a quit smoking program:

- \* Session length: at least 20-30 minutes long
- \* Number of sessions: at least 4-7 sessions
- \* Number of weeks: at least 2 weeks

Don't be afraid to talk about how you feel - fears of not being able to quit or problems with family or friends. Your family, friends, or health care provider can offer encouragement and support. Self-help materials and hotlines are also available. If you get the urge for a cigarette, call someone to help talk you out of it- preferably an ex-smoker. Make a list of people you can call to support you along with their phone numbers.

### ***HOW DO I HANDLE STRESS AND URGES TO SMOKE?***

Be aware of things that may cause you to want to smoke. For example:

- \* Being around other smokers
- \* Being under time pressure
- \* Getting into an argument
- \* Feeling sad or frustrated
- \* Drinking alcohol

Avoid difficult situations while you are trying to quit. Try to lower your stress level. Take time to do things you enjoy. Exercise, such as walking, jogging, or bicycling can also help. Make a list to write down events, feelings, or activities that make you want a cigarette. You may want to talk about them with your health care provider or support group, or with a friend. The key to handling an urge is to distract yourself from thoughts of smoking.

### ***HOW DO I GET STARTED?***

**Set a QUIT DATE.** The day before, throw away all your cigarettes and smoking-related items (i.e. ashtrays, lighters, etc.) Tell your family, friends, and coworkers that you are going to quit, and when. Ask them for support and understanding. Don't let family or friends smoke around you. Make and keep appointments with health care professionals, usually within 1 or 2 weeks after your quit date. Remember: **Stop smoking on your quit date...not even a single puff.**

### ***WILL I GAIN WEIGHT?***

- \* The weight gained is a minor health risk compared to the risks of smoking.
- \* By exercising, eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grain cereals and pasta, avoiding a lot of fats, and getting enough sleep you can reduce your chances of gaining weight.
- \* Also, nicotine gum and patches appear to help prevent or delay weight gain.

## ***HOW DO I AVOID RELAPSE?***

Most relapses occur within the first 3 months after quitting. Don't be discouraged if you start smoking again. Remember, most people try several times before they finally quit. Explore different ways to break habits. You may have to deal with some of the following triggers that may cause relapse:

**Alcohol.** Consider limiting or stopping alcohol use while you are quitting smoking.

**Other smokers at home.** Try to get your spouse or housemates to quit with you. Work out a plan to cope with others who smoke, and avoid being around them.

**Weight gain.** Tackle one problem at a time. Work on quitting smoking first. Consider using nicotine gum to delay weight gain. (You will not necessarily gain weight.)

**Negative mood or depression.** If these symptoms persist, talk to your health care provider. You may need treatment for depression.

**Severe withdrawal symptoms.** Your body will go through many changes when you quit smoking. You may have dry mouth, cough, or scratchy throat, and feel on edge. The patch or gum may help with cravings.

**Thoughts.** Get your mind off cigarettes. Exercise and do things you enjoy.

**Keep a list.** Keep a list of "slips" and near slips, what caused them, and what you can learn from them.

## ***YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING!***

### **Additional Resources**

You may want to contact these organizations for information on smoking and how to quit.

#### **TobaccoFreeCA.com**

1-800-NO-BUTTS (1-800-662-8887)

Spanish 1-800-45-NO-FUME (1-800-456-6386)

Mandarin and Cantonese (1-800-838-8917)

#### **National Cancer Institute**

Bethesda, MD 20894

(800) 4-CANCER (422-6237)

#### **American Heart Association**

7272 Greenville Avenue

Dallas, TX 75231

(800) AHA-USA1 (242-8721)

#### **For pregnant women:**

#### **American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists**

409 12th Street, SW

Washington, DC 20024

(202) 638-5577

#### **American Cancer Society**

1599 Clifton Road, NE

Atlanta, GA 30329

(404) 320-3333

#### **American Lung Association**

1740 Broadway, 14th Floor

New York, NY 10019

(212) 315-8700