



NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

This document informs Under 10% Project Partners about nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and what resources are available for workers through the Project, including:

1. Information about NRT, including effectiveness and products available
2. Subsidised NRT available through the Under 10% Project
3. Links to further information

Note: The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment. Always seek the advice of a physician or other qualified health provider, such as a pharmacist, with any health issue.

1. Information about NRT

NRT aims to reduce the withdrawal symptoms associated with nicotine dependence by replacing some of the nicotine obtained from cigarettes. This nicotine is referred to as therapeutic nicotine, as it is not associated with the harmful constituents found in tobacco smoke. NRT can support people who smoke to focus on other aspects or behaviours of their smoking rather than the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.

EFFECTIVENESS OF NRT

A November 2012 Cochrane Collaboration review found that all forms of NRT made it more likely that a person's attempt to quit smoking would succeed. The chances of stopping smoking were increased by 50 to 70%. This review found that using a combination of NRT products gave better results than just using one product, especially for heavy smokers.

NRT AND COUNSELLING

For many people, reducing or ceasing smoking can be a major life change that often involves making several attempts over time to change. NRT assists with the physical dependence to nicotine while smoking counselling, such as the Quitline, can help with the behavioural and other aspects. Research has shown that people can achieve the best outcomes when NRT is combined with ongoing counselling and support.

NRT AND DEPENDENCY

There have been concerns about the possibility of people becoming dependent on NRT products in the same way they can to tobacco smoking. Whilst there is evidence that some people will continue use of NRT for longer than is recommended, there is no evidence of true dependence, for example pleasure or satisfaction connected with taking the NRT, difficulty in ceasing using NRT or occurrence of withdrawal symptoms. Nicotine does have the potential to cause harm, however, it is much less harmful than smoking tobacco.

WHAT TYPES OF NRT PRODUCTS ARE AVAILABLE?

- **Skin patches:** Patches give the user a sustained release of nicotine throughout the day. There are 21mg, 14mg, 7mg doses that are delivered over a 24 hour period and 15mg, 10mg and 5mg doses delivered over a 16 hour period.
- **Nicotine gum:** Gum can be used anytime a person feels like smoking. It is not like ordinary chewing gum and needs to be chewed differently to get the desired effect. Gum comes in two strengths 4mg and 2mg and in different flavours.
- **Lozenges:** Lozenges come in two types regular and mini and are designed to dissolve in the mouth. Lozenges come in two strengths, regular in 4mg and 2mg and mini in 4mg and 1.5mg.
- **Inhaler:** The user sucks on the inhaler and the nicotine is absorbed in the mouth and throat. Each cartridge holds 4mg of nicotine.
- **Sublingual tablet:** This is a small tablet that dissolves under the tongue and is available in 2mg dosage.
- **Spray:** This spray is used in the mouth, sprayed into the side of the cheek or under the tongue, avoiding the lips. It is available in 1 mg dosage.

For dosage and other information please refer to a Pharmacist or General Practitioner.

2. What NRT is available through the Under 10% Project?

Workers from Under 10% Project Partner organisations are eligible to access subsidised NRT to help manage their tobacco consumption at work at no cost to the individual.

An initial course will be provided to participating workers up to a maximum of \$300. If an individual needs further support a second course may be obtained at no cost to the individual upon consultation with ATODA. The initial course can incorporate combination therapy.

All participants are actively encouraged to engage with their health professionals, including their General Practitioner and / or Pharmacist, prior to beginning NRT.

Download the [Under 10% NRT Registration Form](#) here or see [Resource Sheet 8](#).

3. Further information

WEBSITES

Quit Coach

This website is run by the Cancer Council Victoria. The QuitCoach asks you questions, and based on your answers, provides you with a personalised guide on how to quit smoking. It can also be useful for smokers who are interested in learning more about their habit and its possible consequences.

www.quitcoach.org.au

iCanQuit

This website is managed by the Cancer institute NSW. The website has a quit guide, information on health and willpower and workplace training. It also shares people' s experiences and stories. The website also incorporates a service called My Journey which helps you track your progress, can tell you how much money you are saving and allows you to join a community of people to share your experiences.

www.icanquit.com.au/quit-guide/methods-to-quit/nicotine-replacement-therapy

Quit

This is a joint initiative between The Cancer Council Victoria, The Victorian Department of Health, The National Heart Foundation and The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth). This website has information on reasons for quitting, how to prepare to quit, staying a non smoker and how to overcome setbacks. It also has a link to the Quit Victoria resource and media centre which has information for employers who are supporting staff to quit.

www.quit.org.au

Quit Now

This is an Australian Government website ran by the Department of Health and Ageing. The website gives advice on why and how to quit. It has information on how to overcome setbacks and start quitting again.

It has links so you can find help in the ACT. information on the quitline, and other tools and resources.

www.quitnow.gov.au

Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Tobacco Control

This centre is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and is based at the University of Melbourne. The Centre's goal is to aid in the growth of knowledge about tobacco control in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through projects that focus on information sharing, networking, training and resource development. The website has information on Indigenous smoking issues, facts and figures, it has strategies to tackle quitting, publications, resources and training links.

www.ceitc.org.au

PAMPHLETS AND INFORMATION SHEETS

Quit SA: Nicotine Replacement Therapy (Feb 2011)

This information sheet provides details about nicotine replacement therapy and its effects on the body, what products are available, the approved ways of using these products and a brief two question test to see if you need to use nicotine replacement therapy.

www.quitsa.org.au/cms_resources/NRT%20-%20Feb%202011.pdf

NSW Health: Products to help you quit smoking (Feb 2008)

This pamphlet outlines the variety of products available to help in making a quit smoking attempt. This pamphlet covers the types of products, how products work, how to use them, and potential withdrawal symptoms.

www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2008/products_to_quit.html

Quit Victoria – Stopping smoking: Nicotine gum (Sept 2012)

This fact sheet written by Quit Victoria has information on the main points about NRT, whether nicotine gum is right for you, how it works, on different types of gum, what strength should be used, what you need to tell the GP or pharmacist and whether you can use the gum if you are pregnant. It also has information on when to start using the gum and how much to use. It also gives some information on using the gum in combination with other NRT.

www.quit.org.au/downloads/FS_Nicotine_gum_Sep_2012_EN_final.pdf

Quit Victoria – Stopping smoking: The Nicotine Inhalator (Jun 2012)

This fact sheet written by Quit Victoria has information on the main points about NRT, whether nicotine inhalator is right for you, how it works, what you need to tell the GP or pharmacist and whether you can use

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if you are pregnant. It also has information on when to start using the inhalator, how much to use and problems in using the inhalator. It also gives some information on using the inhalator in combination with other NRT.

www.quit.org.au/downloads/Background%20Briefs/FS_Nicotine_inhalator_Jun_2013_EN_final.pdf

Quit Victoria – Stopping smoking: Nicotine Lozenge (Sept 2012)

This fact sheet written by Quit Victoria has information on the main points about NRT, whether nicotine lozenge is right for you, how it works, on different types of lozenge, what strength should be used, what you need to tell the GP or pharmacist and whether you can use the lozenge if you are pregnant. It also has information on when to start using the lozenges and how much to use. It also gives some information on using the lozenges in combination with other NRT.

www.quit.org.au/downloads/FS_Nicotine_lozenges_Sep_2012_final.pdf

Quit Victoria – Stopping smoking: Nicotine Patches (Oct 2012)

This fact sheet written by Quit Victoria has information on the main points about NRT, whether the patch is right for you, how it works and how well it works, on different types of patches, what strength should be used, what you need to tell the General Practitioner or pharmacist and whether you can use the patch in a number of situations (i.e. if you are pregnant).

www.quit.org.au/downloads/FS_Nicotine_patches_Oct_2012_EN_final.pdf

Note: tobacco related reports and research items are available from the Australia's National Drugs Sector Information Service (NDSIS) <http://ndsis.adca.org.au>.

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REFERENCES

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