New Zealand Formulary
PATIENT INFORMATION

NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT)

nik-oh-teen

What does it do?

Nicotine replacement therapy (patch, gum, lozenge, inhaler or spray) is used to relieve *nicotine* (smoking) withdrawal symptoms and help you to stop smoking.

Before you start

- Tell your health professional if you have heart or skin problems, or diabetes.
- Tell your health professional if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you use it?

Use *nicotine replacement therapy* as directed.
Use as part of a quit smoking plan from a health professional.

What if you forget a dose?

Patch:
Remove the old patch, apply a new patch as soon as possible and continue as directed.

Gum, lozenge, inhaler or spray:
Should an occasional dose be missed it need not be taken later.

Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Fast or irregular heartbeat	Tell your doctor
Patch - skin rash, redness or itch where patch has been applied, strange dreams Gum, lozenge, inhaler or spray – more saliva than usual, sore mouth or throat, stomach upset, hiccups, burping	Tell your health professional if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- If you are still using *nicotine replacement therapy* after 3 months, discuss with your health professional.
- You might experience withdrawal symptoms when you quit smoking. These may include trouble sleeping, headache, eating more, or feeling restless, anxious or dizzy.
- Avoid acidic drinks (e.g. coffee, tea, soft drinks) 15 minutes before using *nicotine* gum, lozenge, inhaler or spray. These drinks may stop *nicotine* working properly.
- Do not tear or cut *nicotine* patches.
- Some procedures (e.g. MRI scan) may overheat the patch and burn your skin. Discuss with your health professional before your procedure.
- Dispose of *nicotine* patches by folding the patch in half with the sticky sides together. Make sure to dispose of it out of the reach of children.