

# Quitting Tobacco: How Medicines Can Help

Nicotine is a powerful drug. So when you stop smoking or using other nicotine products, your body goes through withdrawal.

You may feel nervous and cranky, and have strong cravings. Medicines can help you manage withdrawal.

And combining your desire to quit with the power of medicine may help make your tobacco-free life a reality. You can buy some medicines that contain nicotine without a prescription, like gum, lozenges, and patches.

Or your doctor can prescribe medicine that can help block the pleasure you get from smoking or from using other products that contain nicotine. That medicine can help with cravings.

Some people find that a combination of over-the-counter and prescription medicines works best. You just need to find what works best for you.

I tried to quit on my own before, cold turkey, and it didn't work. But I wasn't sure about using nicotine replacement medicine.

It seemed like I'd just be swapping one addiction for another. But my doctor said it gives you a controlled amount of nicotine so you can use less and less until you don't need it anymore.

That made sense to me. I used nicotine gum. At first I was chewing maybe 15 pieces a day, but in a couple of months, I was down to 1 or 2. And now I don't need it anymore

I've always kept my smoking out of the workplace, and I wanted to keep my quitting private too. So I asked my doctor to prescribe pills. They made smoking less satisfying, and that made it easier to quit.

My doctor said if I needed extra help, I could use nicotine replacement too. So I bought some lozenges to use whenever my cravings were intense. I did slip up a couple of times in the first few weeks.

I was so used to having a smoke to relax after a stressful day at work. And like they say, old habits die hard. I would never say quitting was easy. I definitely had some setbacks along the way. But a lot of things worth doing are hard. I'm so happy I was finally able to quit.

I always said I'd quit smoking when I had kids, and I did when I was pregnant. But I started again. Then one day I saw myself in a mirror, holding my baby with one hand and a cigarette with the other.

That did it for me. I bought a kit of nicotine patches. They look kind of like bandages.

I've been using the patches for 8 weeks so far, and they really seem to be helping with my cravings. Nicotine medicine is helping me to quit smoking so I can be the kind of mom I want to be. And if I can do it, anybody can.

Cravings are the main roadblock for many people who want to quit tobacco, but medicines can help you get past them. And with medicines, along with support from others, you'll be more likely to quit for good.

Why not put those odds in your favor?