



LET'S HELP OUR PATIENTS QUIT TOBACCO FOR GOOD.

TELL THEM ABOUT NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY.

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) is safe, effective, and the most commonly used family of quit tobacco medications. NRT products contain only purified nicotine and none of the other toxins or carcinogens found in tobacco. That way, your patients can safely reduce their dependence on nicotine.

Help your patients maximize their chances of staying quit. Discuss what might be the best NRT for them. Points to consider are their experiences with medications in the past; how much they currently smoke, dip, or chew; and any other medical conditions they have.

Here's what you can say to your patients to encourage them to use NRT:

- **NRT works.** When used as directed, NRT can double your chances of quitting for good.
- **NRT helps with tough cravings.** The worst withdrawal symptoms usually last from only a few days to a couple of weeks. NRT can help make these symptoms less intense.
- **Combining NRT improves your chances of staying quit.** NRT products can be used safely together. Try a long-acting patch with short-acting lozenges or gum to fight off cravings.
- **It's OK if you slip up.** It is safe to continue using an NRT product even if you slip and smoke one or two cigarettes. Staying on NRT increases your chances of getting back on track for quitting.
- **NRT is safe.** Research shows that NRT is safe and effective for almost all adults. Pregnant women and people with serious health issues should talk with their doctor before starting NRT.
- **NRT is easy to get.** Your VA healthcare provider can prescribe an NRT medication, and you can fill it through your VA pharmacy. NRT products are also available without a prescription from your local pharmacy.
- **NRT is designed to prevent addiction.** NRT products deliver far less nicotine than cigarettes or smokeless tobacco products do, and they deliver nicotine at a much slower rate. That makes them less addictive. Most people find it easy to taper down and get off nicotine medicines after a few months.
- **NRT won't do it all for you.** Nicotine medicines are proven to increase your chances of quitting, but they won't completely take away the urge to smoke. For best results, carefully follow the directions for using NRT medication. Make sure to use a high enough dose, and use the medicine for the recommended time (approximately three to six months).
- **Combining NRT with counseling gives you the best chances of staying quit.** Talk with your VA healthcare provider about individual or group counseling options. Call the VA quitline, Monday through Friday, to speak with a Quit VET counselor. Dial 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838). You can also sign up for the SmokefreeVET Text program to get encouraging and informative messages via text. Text VET to 47848 or go to [Smokefree.gov/vet](https://www.smokefree.gov/vet).

