

---

**Information from your Patient Aligned Care Team**

---

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING NICOTINE LOZENGES (COMMIT)**

---

### **How Nicotine Lozenges Will Help You**

---

The nicotine lozenge is used to help people stop smoking cigarettes. It acts as a substitute oral activity to satisfy your craving for tobacco. It also provides a source of nicotine that can reduce the withdrawal symptoms you may experience when smoking is stopped.

### **Instructions for Using This Medication**

---

1. The nicotine lozenge is dissolved in the mouth and should not be swallowed. Follow the directions on the label, and ask your Primary Care Provider (PCP) or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Use nicotine lozenges exactly as directed.
2. Begin using nicotine lozenge therapy after you stop smoking on your Quit Date. You should not smoke while you are using this medication, either before or after your Quit Date.
3. Treatment is usually started by using the 2-mg or 4mg lozenge. Heavy smokers (those who smoke the first cigarette of the day within 30 minutes of waking up in the morning OR those who smoke more than 25 cigarettes per day) should start by using the 4-mg lozenge.
4. If you are using this medication along with transdermal nicotine patch therapy, follow these instructions: Use 1 lozenge every 1 to 2 hours when you have cravings to smoke. The maximum number is 12 lozenges per day.

If you are using nicotine lozenges as your only form of nicotine replacement therapy, follow these instructions: Begin by using 1 lozenge every 2 hours while awake. Use additional lozenges as needed when you have cravings to smoke up to a maximum of 24 lozenges per day. Be sure to use the lozenge at regular times throughout the day, Most people will need to use about 9-10 lozenges a day when they first start.

5. Nicotine lozenges should be dissolves slowly (about 20 to 30 minutes). You may feel a slight tingling in your mouth. Occasionally move the lozenge from one side of your mouth to the other. Minimize swallowing and do not chew or swallow lozenge.

6. Do not dissolve the nicotine lozenge too fast, do not dissolve more than one lozenge at a time, and do not dissolve a lozenge too soon after another.
7. Avoid eating and drinking (especially acidic beverages such as coffee, juice, or soft drinks) for 15 minutes before using and while the lozenge is in your mouth to make sure all of the nicotine from the lozenge can get into your system.

Use frequently for 6 weeks. Then after you have gone 14 days in a row without strong cravings or withdrawal symptoms begin to slowly taper off. Don't worry if you continue to use some gum for many months. The important thing is to stay smoke free.

8. Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

---

## Precautions

---

Do not use the nicotine lozenge longer than 6 months without talking with your PCP.

Before using nicotine lozenges, tell your PCP and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking. Tell your PCP if you have or have ever had a heart attack, irregular heart rate, angina, ulcers, uncontrolled high blood pressure, overactive thyroid, pheochromocytoma, or a dental condition or disorder. Tell your PCP if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while using the nicotine lozenge, stop using it and call your PCP immediately. Nicotine and nicotine lozenges may cause harm to the fetus.

Although side effects from nicotine are not common, they can occur. Tell your PCP if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- mouth ulcers
- mouth irritation
- dizziness
- headache
- upset stomach
- nausea
- diarrhea
- gas
- heartburn
- hiccup
- cough

If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your PCP immediately:

- seizures
- heart rhythm disturbances
- difficulty breathing

The Center for Integrated Healthcare gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the VA Cooperative Studies Program #519 prepared by Miles McFall, Ph.D. and Andrew Saxon, M.D. for content.