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Information from your Patient Aligned Care Team

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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING NICOTINE PATCH

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### How the Nicotine Patch Will Help You

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Nicotine patch therapy is used to help people stop smoking cigarettes. This therapy replaces nicotine in your body that you were getting from cigarettes so that you don't have withdrawal symptoms when you quit smoking.

### Instructions for Using THE NICOTINE PATCH

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1. Nicotine patches are applied directly to the skin. They are applied once a day, usually at the same time each day. Nicotine patches come in various strengths and may be used for various lengths of time. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your primary care provider (PCP) or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Use nicotine skin patches exactly as directed. Do not use more or less of them or use them more often than prescribed by your doctor.
2. Do not smoke any cigarettes after Midnight on your Quit Date. Then begin using nicotine patch therapy first thing in the morning on your Quit Date.
3. Apply the patch to a clean, dry, hairless area of skin on the upper chest, back, upper arm, or hip as directed by the package directions. Avoid areas of irritated, oily, scarred, or broken skin. Remove the patch from the package, peel off the protective strip, and immediately apply the patch to your skin. With the sticky side touching the skin, press the patch in place with the palm of your hand for about 10 seconds. Be sure the patch is held firmly in place, especially around the edges.
4. Wash your hands with water alone after applying the patch.
5. If the patch falls off or loosens, replace it with a new one.
6. You should wear the patch continuously for 16-24 hours, depending on the specific directions inside your nicotine patch package. The patch may be worn even while showering or bathing. Remove the patch carefully, and dispose of it by folding it in half with the sticky sides touching. After removing the used patch, apply the next patch to a different skin area to prevent skin irritation. Never wear two patches at once unless directed by your doctor to do so.

7. A switch to a lower strength patch may be considered after the first 2 to 4 weeks on the medication. A gradual reduction to lower strength patches is recommended to reduce nicotine-withdrawal symptoms.
8. Sometimes the nicotine patch can be used with other kinds of nicotine products (like the gum or the patch) to help relieve cravings. You can talk to your PCP about using the patch with the gum or lozenge as combination therapy.

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## Precautions

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Before using nicotine skin patches, tell your PCP and pharmacist if you are allergic to adhesive tape or any drugs. 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 nicotine skin patches, call your PCP immediately. Nicotine and nicotine skin patches may cause harm to the fetus.

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

- Skin irritation
- Trouble sleeping (insomnia)
- dizziness
- headache
- upset stomach
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- redness or swelling at the patch site

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).

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