

## **PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**

### **NICOTINE PREPARATIONS**

#### **ABOUT your medicine**

Your doctor or pharmacist has just recommended for you a smoking cessation aid that contains nicotine. There are four types of nicotine-containing products in Singapore. They come in the form of nicotine patches, inhalers, mint lozenges and chewing gum. Nicotine patches, inhalers, mint lozenges and chewing gum can be obtained directly from a pharmacist without a doctor's prescription.

Nicotine is the one of the ingredients found in cigarettes. It is a substance that is responsible for causing the smoker to get addicted or "hooked on" to cigarettes. Removing nicotine from the smoker's body gives rise to withdrawal symptoms like craving, irritability, anxiety and sleep disturbances.

Nicotine-containing preparations are used as an aid to help people quit smoking. This form of treatment is known as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). The nicotine released from the preparation can help to relieve some of the unpleasant withdrawal symptoms as well as the urge for cigarettes that a smoker would frequently have when he or she is trying to quit smoking. NRT helps "wind off" the effects of nicotine in your body gradually by providing some of the nicotine that was previously inhaled from cigarette smoking. The nicotine preparations do not contain the other harmful substances like carbon monoxide and tar normally present in cigarettes.

It is important for this form of therapy to be supported by other activities such as counselling and psychosocial support in order for the smoking cessation programme to be a success.

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Keep all medication out of reach of children

Discard all medication that has expired or is no longer required

**HOW** should I use the medicine?

a) Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS patches

Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS patches come in three dosage strengths:

“21mg / 24hours” (Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 30)

“14mg / 24 hours” (Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 20)

“7mg / 24 hours” (Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 10)

Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 30 patches are indicated for those who smoke more than 20 cigarettes daily.

Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 20 patches are indicated for those who smoke up to 20 cigarettes daily.

Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 10 patches are used mainly for maintaining nicotine replacement therapy towards the end of the treatment duration.

NRT should be initiated with either Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 30 or Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 20 patches, depending on the number of cigarettes smoked daily. This dosage should then be gradually reduced.

Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 30 patches can be used for 4 - 12 weeks before switching to Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 20 patches for another 2 - 4 weeks. Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS 10 patches are to be used for the remaining 2 - 4 weeks.

Note: The above dosing regiment only serves as a guide. Actual administration of nicotine patches should be based on individual patient requirements.

The overall duration of NRT should not exceed 6 months.

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b) Nicorette<sup>®</sup> patches

Nicorette<sup>®</sup> patches come in three dosage strengths:

“15mg / 16 hours” patch

“10mg / 16 hours” patch

“5mg / 16 hours” patch

NRT should be initiated with either the “15mg/16hours” or “10mg/16 hours” patch, depending on the number of cigarettes smoked daily. This dosage should then be gradually reduced.

The “15mg/16 hours” patch can be used for 8 - 12 weeks before switching to the “10mg/16 hours” patch for another 2 weeks, and finally to the “5mg/16 hours” patch for the remaining 2 weeks.

Note: The above dosing regiment only serves as a guide. Actual administration of nicotine patches should be based on individual patient requirements.

The overall duration of NRT should not exceed 6 months. Some individuals may need a longer duration of NRT to avoid having to return to smoking.

Nicotine Patch – Usage Instructions

- After removing the protective film/ foil from the patch, place a patch to a clean, dry, intact (free from lotion, creams etc.) and preferably hairless area on the trunk, upper arm or hip.
- Press the patch firmly with the palm of your hand for about 10 seconds.

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- Wash your hands after applying the patch to avoid contaminating the eyes accidentally.
- Remove the patch after 24 hours (the next morning) for Nicotinell<sup>®</sup>TTS patches or after 16 hours (before you go to bed) for Nicorette<sup>®</sup> patches.
- Fold the used patch into half with the sticky sides together and throw away immediately to avoid accidental mishandling by children.
- Choose a different site of application on the skin for the next patch.
- If the patch falls off during the day, you may put on another new patch on a different skin area and remove it at the usual time you do so daily.

c) Nicorette<sup>®</sup> Inhaler

This type of nicotine preparation comes in cartridges containing 10mg of nicotine per cartridge.

The typical starting dose is 6 cartridges daily. It can be used any time you have the urge for a cigarette, or when you experience any nicotine withdrawal symptoms. It is not recommended for more than 12 cartridges to be used per day. For the 1<sup>st</sup> 8 weeks, 6 – 12 cartridges can be used per day after which it should be gradually reduced to 3 – 6 cartridges per day for another 2 weeks, and then to 3 cartridges to none per day for another 2 weeks. You should have stopped smoking by the end of the treatment duration.

You should NOT be smoking while undergoing NRT with nicotine inhalers. The recommended treatment duration is 3 months. Use beyond 6 months is not recommended.

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Nicotine Inhaler - Usage Instructions

After removing the mouthpiece and the sealed blister tray from the box, the mouthpiece is separated into two parts and the seal is removed from the tray.

1. One sealed cartridge is removed from the blister tray and inserted into the mouthpiece.
2. The seal on both ends of the cartridge is broken after re-assembling the mouthpiece.
3. Inhale from the mouthpiece to vaporize the nicotine for it to be absorbed in the mouth.
4. The nicotine content per cartridge can last for approximately 20 minutes of intensive and continuous usage with deep inhalations or continuous shallow puffing. The nicotine content can last longer with less intensive use.
5. After use, the cartridge is to be removed from the mouthpiece and disposed of properly.
6. The mouthpiece can be cleaned and stored in the box for further use.

d) Nicotinell<sup>®</sup> Mint Lozenges

Each nicotine lozenge contains 1mg of nicotine.

One lozenge can be sucked every 1 – 2 hours initially whenever you have the urge to smoke a cigarette. Most people would require 8 – 12 lozenges a day to overcome any urge to smoke. The maximum dose should not exceed 25 lozenges a day.

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The number of lozenges consumed per day must be gradually cut down after 3 months of usage. The treatment should be stopped when the dose of Nicotinell® Lozenges has been reduced to 1 – 2 lozenges a day. You should not use the lozenges for longer than 6 months. Do not smoke when you are using Nicotinell® Lozenges.

#### Nicotinell® Lozenges - Sucking Technique

1. Each lozenge should be sucked slowly until the taste becomes strong, after which the lozenge should be rested between the gum and cheek in the mouth.
2. The lozenge should be sucked again once the taste has faded.
3. The lozenges should not be chewed. It should be sucked whole for approximately 30 minutes.
4. Coffee, juices & fizzy drinks should not be taken 15 minutes before taking the lozenges as they may reduce the absorption of nicotine from the lozenges.

#### e) Nicotinell® Chewing Gum

Each nicotine chewing gum contains 2mg of nicotine.

One piece of gum can be chewed when the urge to smoke occurs. The usual dose per day is 8 to 12 pieces. The maximum dose per day is 25 pieces.

The number of pieces of gum chewed per day must be gradually cut down after 3 months of usage. You should not use the chewing gum for longer than 6 months. Do not smoke when you are using the chewing gum.

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What should I do if **I FORGET** a dose?

For the nicotine patches, you can still put on the patch at any time of the day and remove it at the usual time the next day for Nicotinell®TTS patches or before bedtime for the Nicorette® patches.

For the nicotine inhalers, lozenges & chewing gums, they can be administered at any time of the day whenever you have the urge to light a cigarette. You should never double any dose to make up for any missed doses in the day.

What should I do if a **PATCH FALLS OFF** during the day?

You may put on a new patch and remove it at the same time you do so daily.

What are the possible **SIDE-EFFECTS** of the medicine?

NRT can cause some side-effects similar to those associated with cigarette smoking. However, since substantially lower amounts of nicotine are present in nicotine preparations compared to those in cigarettes, the side-effects expected from NRT can be expected to be less marked. You may experience some of these side-effects:

Nervous System:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Insomnia

Gastrointestinal

- Nausea and vomiting
  - Heartburn
  - Indigestion
- } Especially for Nicotinell® Lozenges and Nicorette® Inhaler

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### Localised reactions

- Mild skin redness, itching or swelling (Especially for patches)
- Mouth & throat irritation } Especially for Nicotinell® Lozenges and Nicorette® Inhaler
- Nasal congestion }
- Sinusitis } Especially for Nicorette® Inhaler

### What **PRECAUTIONS** should I take?

#### Smoking:

You are advised not to smoke after nicotine replacement therapy has been started. Doing so may give rise to increased risk of adverse effects from the additive effects of nicotine in the body. On top of that, smoking on top of using the NRT also defeats the purpose of the NRT in helping you to slowly “wind off” the addictive effects of nicotine in your body.

#### Children:

NRT should not be administered to anyone below the age of 18 years without a doctor’s recommendation.

#### Medical Conditions:

You should inform your doctor or pharmacist of any history of allergies to nicotine or any of the components in nicotine preparations, or if you have other medical conditions such as:

- Chronic dermatological disorders such as dermatitis, urticaria (hives), psoriasis or any systemic skin diseases
- Cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases [e.g. angina (chest pain), history of a stroke, heart attack or heart disease, abnormal heart rhythm, high blood pressure, peripheral vascular diseases etc.]
- History of a peptic ulcer
- Diabetes mellitus
- Thyroid condition

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#### Medicines:

The dosages of some of your other concurrent medicines may need to change a change when you use nicotine replacement therapy. Therefore, inform your doctor and pharmacist when you are on NRT or on other medication.

#### Pregnancy and Lactation:

NRT should not be used during pregnancy and/or lactation, unless advised by your doctor for those who cannot stop smoking without nicotine substitution.

### What are the **SIGNS & SYMPTOMS of NICOTINE OVERDOSE?**

Nicotine overdose can occur if:

- you have very low pre-treatment nicotine intake
- you are using more than the recommended dosage or more than one type of nicotine replacement preparation
- you smoke while using the nicotine products

Symptoms of nicotine overdose include nausea, vomiting, increased salivation, abdominal cramping, perspiration, marked headaches and dizziness, visual and hearing disturbances and marked weakness. You should see a doctor at once if you encounter any of these symptoms.

#### How should **I STORE** the medicine?

Store the medicine in a dry place at room temperature, away from heat and direct light.

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