



Busting myths

About nicotine replacement therapy

If you want to quit smoking, you've probably heard about nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). It helps to lower the feelings of withdrawal by giving you a small amount of nicotine — without the harmful chemicals in a cigarette — so you don't crave smoking as much. Here are some common myths and the truth about NRT:

Myth: Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) doesn't help you quit smoking.

Truth: Your chances of quitting smoking are two times better when using nicotine replacement therapy.



NRT has helped many smokers to quit. Make sure you follow the directions and try it for the recommended time. If you've already tried NRT, it might be time to give it another chance. You also have other options to help you quit smoking, such as counseling and online programs.

Myth: I won't have any cravings for smoking or feelings of withdrawal if I do NRT.

Truth: You might still feel withdrawal or crave cigarettes even if you use nicotine replacement therapy.



The first one or two weeks after you quit smoking are usually the hardest. If you use NRT, withdrawal signs are usually not as strong. You can also check with your doctor or pharmacist about using different products if you continue to have withdrawal after starting NRT.

Myth: If I'm doing one type of NRT, I can't use other products to help me quit smoking.

Truth: It's safe to use more than one type of NRT.



For example, you can combine the patch, which takes longer to work, with gum, which acts faster. This approach has helped some people to deal with withdrawal and cravings.

Myth: Some people shouldn't try nicotine replacement therapy.

Truth: People have been using NRT for more than 30 years and extensive research has concluded that it's safe and works for most adults who want to stop smoking.



Most people don't need to talk to their doctor before starting nicotine replacement therapy. However, if you're pregnant, a teen or have a serious health issue such as heart problems or lung disease, you should check with your doctor before doing NRT.



Follow directions carefully when trying NRT so you can get the best result.



If you slip and have one or two cigarettes, it's safe to keep using NRT and it can still help you to quit smoking.

Sources:
Smokefree.gov website, *Using Nicotine Replacement Therapy* (accessed June 2018): [smokefree.gov/tools-tips/how-to-quit/using-nicotine-replacement-therapy](https://www.smokefree.gov/tools-tips/how-to-quit/using-nicotine-replacement-therapy).
Smokefree.gov website, *Busting NRT Myths* (accessed June 2018): [smokefree.gov/tools-tips/how-to-quit/busting-nrt-myths](https://www.smokefree.gov/tools-tips/how-to-quit/busting-nrt-myths).

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