

“Dose-Appropriate” Nicotine Replacement (NRT) for Legacy Health: 2015



Appropriate treatment of nicotine withdrawal requires both “basal” and “as-needed” (PRN) nicotine replacement (NRT). Basal NRT requires 24-hours to achieve steady-state so short-acting nicotine (PRN) is initially required. Basal NRT dosing roughly approximates the number of ‘cigarettes smoked per day’ (CPD) or “packs per day” (PPD). PRN NRT dosing is based upon time to first cigarette of the day (TTFC). For smokeless tobacco users, NRT dosage: cans/pouches per week and ‘Time to First Dip’ (TFD).

Basal Dose: 24-hour Nicotine Patch (Long-Acting Transdermal Nicotine)

- 1 Initial Basal Dose -Smokers
 - Greater than 40 CPD (**greater than 2 PPD**): 42 mg patch daily (two 21 mg patches)
 - 21-40 CPD (**1-2 PPD**): 35 mg patch daily (21 mg patch + 14 mg patch)
 - 16-20 CPD (**¾ to 1 PPD**): 28 mg patch daily (21 mg patch + 7 mg patch)
 - 10-15 CPD (**½ to ¾ PPD**): 21 mg patch daily
 - Less than 10 CPD (**less than ½ PPD**): 14 mg patch daily
- 2 Initial Basal Dose -Smokeless tobacco user
 - Greater than 3 cans or pouches per week: 42 mg patch dose daily
 - 1-3 cans or pouches of tobacco per week: 21 mg patch daily
 - Less than 1 can or pouch of tobacco per week: 14 mg patch daily
- 3 Tapering Basal Dose:
 - Taper nicotine patch dose downward in 7-14 mg increments every 2 weeks based on patient’s report of withdrawal symptoms, urges, and comfort.

PRN Dose: Short-Acting Nicotine Lozenge or Inhaler (to be used with the nicotine patch)

- 4 Initial PRN Dose: Nicotine Lozenge
 - Greater than 20 CPD (Greater than 3 cans/week) or TTFC (or TFD) Less than 30 min
 - (i) 4 mg lozenge Q 1-2 hours PRN nicotine withdrawal symptoms
 - Less than 20 CPD (Less than 3 cans/wk) or TTFC (or TFD) Greater than 30 min
 - (i) 2 mg lozenge Q 1-2 hours PRN nicotine withdrawal symptoms
 - Limit Lozenge use to less than 20/day.
- 5 Initial PRN Dose: Nicotine Inhaler (for patients who cannot use a lozenge: e.g. NPO orders)
 - Inhale deeply into the back of the throat or short puffs
 - Best effect is with short frequent puffing for 20 minutes
 - Limit to 16 cartridges per day
- 6 Tapering PRN Dose:
 - Individuals can self-taper as needed to control cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

Special Population: OB PROTOCOL: pregnant and nursing women:

- Only use 2 mg nicotine lozenge or the Nicotine inhaler every 1-2 hours PRN.

NICOTINE WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOM SCALE

1. NOTICE Behavior: Rate *Behavior* over last 24 hrs

0=none, 1=slight, 2=mild, 3=moderate, 4=severe

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Angry/irritable/frustrated | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Anxious/tense | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Depressed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Restless/Impatient | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

2. ASK about Symptoms: over past 24 hrs

0=none, 1=slight, 2=mild, 3=moderate, 4=severe

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Angry/irritable/frustrated | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Anxious, nervous | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Depressed mood, sad | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Desire/craving to smoke | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Difficulty concentrating | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Increased appetite | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Insomnia/poor sleep | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Restless | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Impatient | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

3. DOSE: Use Above NRT Dosing for ANY acute withdrawal symptoms (scale 1 to 4, slight to severe).

DECREASING OR DISCONTINUING NRT

NRT (patch or lozenge) can cause side effects.

1. Palpitations/chest pains
2. Nausea/vomiting
3. Heartburn/indigestion
4. Skin irritations (patch)
5. Mouth/throat soreness (oral NRT)
6. Mouth ulcers (oral NRT)
7. Hiccoughs

If any above symptoms occur and are unexplained by the current medical condition (particularly nausea), this may be due to over-replacement of nicotine

- Hold Patch and PRN dose for 8 hours, then restart at ½ dose if needed.
- If continued symptom after 8 hours, unlikely due to nicotine replacement therapy
- If symptoms recur after restarting at lower dose, discontinue the NRT protocol