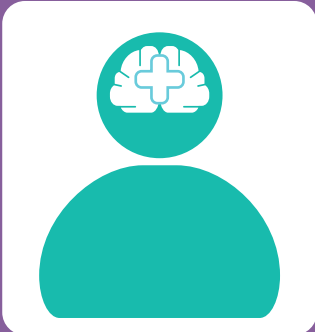


SMOKING AND MENTAL HEALTH



Smoking could be having a negative impact on your mental health and wellbeing. We are aware of the physical harms of smoking but smoking also affects stress, anxiety, and depression.

Quitting smoking can boost your mental health and improve mood. Evidence shows the beneficial effect of **stopping smoking** on symptoms of anxiety and depression can **equal** that of taking antidepressants.

QUITTING SMOKING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE STRESSFUL

People with mental health problems are likely to feel much calmer and more positive, and have a better quality of life, after giving up smoking.

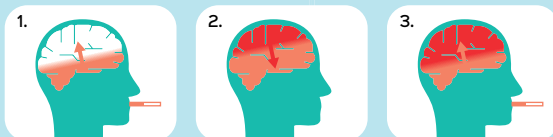
SMOKING AND ANXIETY & STRESS

Many view smoking as a way of coping with anxiety or stress, however smoking:

- Increases feelings of anxiety and stress
- Doesn't address the root causes of anxiety and stress

This is because smoking causes chemical changes in the body.

1. When someone smokes, nicotine is released into the body causing the brain to release dopamine which produces instant feelings of pleasure.
2. Within minutes these temporary feelings of pleasure give way to irritability, anxiety, and stress. These feelings are caused by withdrawal from nicotine and are only relieved by more nicotine.
3. Withdrawal symptoms can compound anxiety and stress in people already experiencing these conditions. Smoking can make feelings of anxiety and stress worse.



SMOKING AND DEPRESSION

Research shows:

- Smoking can increase your risk of depression
- People who have depression are more likely to smoke
- Nicotine withdrawal can worsen feelings of depression



Smoking delivers a pleasurable sensation through nicotine, leading many to believe it helps them cope with depression. However, depression is a symptom of nicotine withdrawal so smoking can make existing depressive feelings worse.

Smokers who quit for 6 weeks or more are happier and experience less anxiety and depression than those who carry on smoking.

SMOKING AND MENTAL HEALTH MEDICATION

Smoking can make some medication used to manage mental health conditions less effective, which means smokers may need higher doses of medicines. Higher doses can lead to more side effects.

Speak with your healthcare provider to assess the impact smoking has on your mental health medication.

SMOKING AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

ADHD - There is a significant link between ADHD and higher rates of smoking. There is also strong evidence to indicate maternal smoking during pregnancy is a risk factor for ADHD in children.

Studies suggest people with ADHD use nicotine to improve attention and cognitive performance. However, tobacco is not a safe way of managing ADHD symptoms.

Schizophrenia - Smoking can change the way our body deals with certain drugs used to manage schizophrenia. As a result, people who smoke may need higher doses with increased risk of more side effects.

It's important to speak with your doctor if you have schizophrenia and are thinking of stopping smoking. For example, if you are taking Clozapine, you should have your medication dosage checked by a doctor before quitting.

Bipolar disorder - The relationship between bipolar disorder and smoking is not clear. However, much like with other mental health conditions, smoking is not a safe and effective way of managing this disorder.



NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT)

Using nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) does not appear to have any effect on mental health medications. For more about NRT and which types you may prefer when quitting smoking, see the other side of this leaflet.

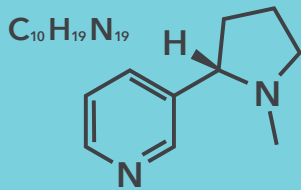
Other stop-smoking medications and mental health

Other stop smoking medications are effective and well tolerated by people with mental health conditions.

Stop-smoking medications work by reducing nicotine withdrawal symptoms or by reducing cravings. If you are interested in using stop smoking medications, please consult with your healthcare provider.

WHAT IS NRT?

The main reason that people smoke is because they are addicted to nicotine.



Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is a range of medication that helps reduce unpleasant withdrawal effects, like bad moods and cravings, by providing you with nicotine, without the tar, carbon monoxide, and other poisonous chemicals present in tobacco, making it far safer than smoking.



Other medications are available as alternatives to NRT and can be very effective. These medications require a prescription. Please speak to your NHS Smoking Advisor, GP, or Pharmacist.

BEAT THE CRAVINGS WITH NRT

SKIN

Nicotine Patches: Nicotine is slowly and steadily absorbed into the bloodstream through the skin. There are 16hr and 24hr patches. 24hr patches are for those who feel the urge to smoke within 30mins of waking or wake in the night to smoke.

- + Easy to use and very effective when used with other, quick releasing forms of NRT.
- Possible itching, burning or tingling when first applied, and disrupted sleep if worn at night.



NOSE

Nasal Spray: A fast-acting mist, sprayed up the nose where nicotine is absorbed through the lining of the nostrils.

- + A great alternative for anyone unable to use, or who dislikes using NRTs that go in the mouth.
- Possible runny nose, nose irritation, coughing, sneezing, eye irritation.

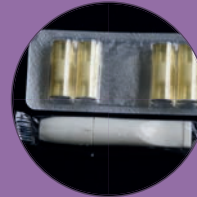


MOUTH

These forms of NRT provide fast relief from cravings by allowing nicotine to be absorbed through the lining of the mouth.

Inhalators: Small, discreet and held like a cigarette, with one dose lasting around 40 minutes.

- + A good substitute for the hand to mouth action of smoking.
- Possible sore throat, dry mouth, headache, nausea, and hiccups. Lower nicotine absorption per inhalation, compared to a cigarette.



Gum: Chewed then rested between the gums and cheek (over 30 minutes).

- + Available in mint or fruit flavour (dependant on strength).
- Possible indigestion, dry mouth, unpleasant taste, and increased salivation.



Microtabs: Tablets placed under the tongue, dissolving in 15-20 minutes. Not to be chewed or swallowed.

- + Quick and discreet craving relief.
- Possible sore throat, dry mouth, unpleasant taste, mouth irritation, hiccups, and indigestion.



Lozenges / Mini Lozenges: Placed between the gum and the cheek, dissolving within 15-20 minutes. Not to be chewed or swallowed.

- + Quick and discreet craving relief. Mini lozenges are available in mint or fruit flavour.
- Possible indigestion, dry mouth, unpleasant taste, and increased salivation.



Mouth Spray: A fast-acting mist, sprayed to the inside of the cheek.

- + Rapid relief from cravings – acting in 60 seconds. Available in mint or berry flavour.
- Possible mouth irritation, sore throat, hiccups, nausea, indigestion, bad taste, and increased salivation.



Using a combination of NRT types is the best way to combat cravings & withdrawal and quit smoking completely!



"Nicotine patches and inhalators worked for me! The patches sorted out my cravings and the inhalator kept my hands busy and my mind off smoking a cigarette. I've quit for good!" - Debbie, from Abercynon.

"I'm using gum and the lozenges. No one can tell I'm trying to quit, and they taste ok too. I'm one week in and I am feeling confident." - Andy, from Ruthin.

