



What you need to know about...

Over-the-Counter Medication: Nicotine Lozenge (Commit®)



Nicotine Lozenge

Type: Short-acting medicine
Brand: Commit®, no generics
Cost: About \$7 per day, \$210 per month

How do nicotine lozenges work?

- The nicotine lozenge helps users stop smoking by taking the edge off cigarette cravings without providing the other harmful substances found in cigarettes.
- The nicotine lozenge comes in the form of hard candy, and releases nicotine as the lozenge slowly dissolves in the mouth.
- This medication is available in 2mg and 4mg strengths. People who typically have a cigarette within 30 minutes of waking up should use the 4mg dose; while those who wait more than 30 minutes to have a cigarette should take the 2mg dose.
- The recommended period for use is 12 weeks. A health care provider may suggest shorter or longer treatments for individuals depending on needs. Follow his or her instructions.

What are the directions for use?

- Suck on the lozenge until it is fully dissolved, about 20-30 minutes. Do not bite or chew as this will reduce the dose of nicotine and result in indigestion and/or heartburn.
- Avoid food and acidic drinks before and during use.
- Do not use more than one lozenge at a time.
- Users can consume at least nine lozenges, but no more than 20 per day.
- Gradually reduce the number of lozenges taken daily over a 12 week period until you are nicotine-free.
- Do not smoke during use.

What are the advantages?

- Nicotine lozenges are easy to use and available over the counter.
- This medication can be used discreetly.

What are the disadvantages?

- Nicotine lozenges are costly, and there are no generic forms available on the market.

What are the side-effects?

- Some users have experienced soreness of teeth/gums, indigestion, irritated throat, trouble sleeping, nausea, hiccups, heartburn, gas, headache and coughing.
- Nicotine lozenges may stick to dentures or other dental work.

What precautions are associated with the nicotine lozenge?

- The FDA classified the nicotine lozenge as a category "D" drug (high risk to the fetus) for use during pregnancy. Pregnant women who smoke should discuss using the nicotine lozenge with their health care provider.

These are a few of the most common side-effects and interactions. If you have questions or have problems when using this medicine, contact your doctor/pharmacist.

Adapted from Asthma and COPD Center of the University of Chicago, and from Pharmacological Product Guide: FDA-Approved Medications, The Regents of the University of California, August 2009.