

What are nicotine patches?

- These are patches that stick to your skin providing a steady supply of nicotine throughout the day to prevent cravings and reduce the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.
- You may still get cravings but the patches take the edge off.

Are nicotine patches safe?

The smoke produced from burning tobacco contains about 4,000 ingredients, 70 of these are known to cause cancer.

Nicotine patches do not contain tobacco and are not burnt, so they are much safer than cigarettes.

Nicotine patches can cause some side effects – see next section:

Are there any side effects from using NRT patches?

- It may tingle or itch at first but this should stop after 15 to 20 minutes.
- Some people report persistent itching or skin irritation. If you have any problems with side effects, reduce your use or dose of patches or switch to a different nicotine replacement product.

How do you use nicotine patches?

- Put a patch on as soon as you wake up – you will need scissors to open the packet.
- Select a clean, dry, hairless, intact area of skin, such as the hip, upper arm or chest.
- Avoid areas of broken skin.
- Peel off the backing paper.
- Stick the patch onto the skin – hold in place for 10 to 20 seconds.
- Leave it on all day and all night.
- Remove after 24 hours, throw it away and then put a new patch on.

- Put the new patch on in a different place. This gives the skin a chance to recover as there may be some redness. Try to have 4 different places that you use for the patch.

How many nicotine patches should you use?

The patches last 24 hours.

The patches come in three strengths: 7mg, 14mg and 21mg – your team will recommend a patch for you.

If you smoke less than 20 cigarettes a day, you will start on a lower strength patch.

If you smoke more than 20 cigarettes a day, you will start on a higher strength patch.

What if you still have nicotine withdrawal symptoms?

Tell your team if the nicotine patches do not manage your cravings.

They will help you use a different strength patch or an additional nicotine replacement therapy product.

Can you smoke while using nicotine patches?

Yes, it is safe for you to smoke while using nicotine patches.

When you are ready to cut down or quit, increase the strength of nicotine patches you use and reduce your tobacco use.

How long should you use the nicotine patches for?

Keep using the patches for 6 to 8 weeks, or as instructed by your team, tobacco dependency advisor or pharmacist.

What else should you know about using patches?

The patch will take about half an hour to reach its full effect.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help. If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.

Now's the time

**Ask a member of staff about the Tobacco Dependency Team
and find out more about what support is available to you.**

PATIENT INFORMATION

NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT) PATCHES

Tobacco Dependency Team

