

Varenicline

Varenicline (Champix®)

Tobacco contains a very powerful, addictive drug called nicotine. Your body becomes used to the effects of nicotine. When you go without it, quit, or cut back, your body and brain need to adjust. This adjustment is called nicotine withdrawal. Withdrawal can start as soon as 30 minutes after you last used tobacco. There is medicine that can help with withdrawal and increase your chances of quitting or reducing your tobacco use.

Your healthcare provider will help you decide if this product is the best one for you, what dose you need, how long you should take it, and if you should combine it with another tobacco cessation medicine.

How does it work?

Varenicline (Champix®) works 2 ways to increase your chances of quitting:

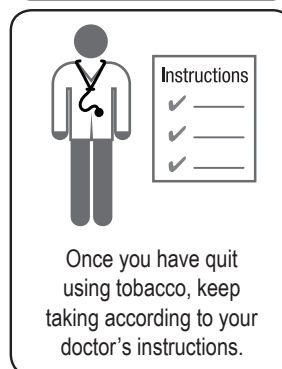
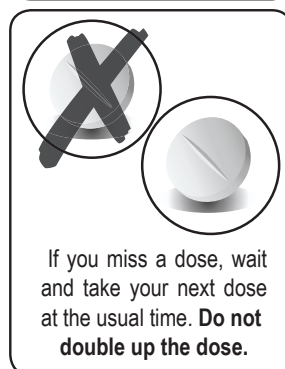
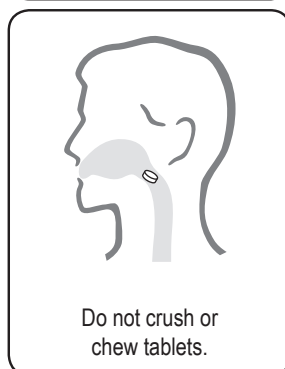
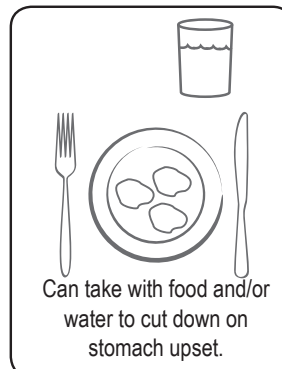
1. it makes using tobacco less satisfying, and
2. it reduces the cravings and other withdrawal symptoms.

You need a prescription for this medicine. If you have any other medical conditions, or are pregnant or breastfeeding, make sure you tell your doctor and your pharmacist before you start this or any other medicine.

Nicotine withdrawal can cause:

- tobacco craving
- irritability
- anxiety
- trouble concentrating
- restlessness
- sleeplessness
- depression
- increased appetite

How do I use it?



Your body may clear the caffeine in coffee, tea, pop, and energy drinks differently once you stop smoking.

You may need to cut down or watch how much caffeine you drink once you stop smoking.



The Gradual Quit Approach:

Begin varenicline with a goal of quitting by the end of 12 weeks of treatment.

During those 12 weeks gradually cut back your smoking with the goal of

- 50% reduction (or more) by week 4
- 75% reduction (or more) by week 8
- 100% reduction by week 12



Tobacco Reduction Program

1-866-710-QUIT (7848)
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What else should I know?

- Store the medicine at room temperature (permissible to 15-30° C), away from heat, moisture, and direct light.
- Keep out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not use varenicline at the same time as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) without a discussion with your doctor and/or pharmacist.
- Don't take this medicine if you are 17 or younger.

What should I watch for?

- Side effects:
 - Nausea and or vomiting: take with food and/or water.
 - Weight gain.
 - Trouble sleeping or unusual dreams.
 - Drowsiness: do not drive or use heavy machinery until you know how this medicine affects you.
 - Depressed mood, agitation, changes in behaviour, suicidal thoughts. If you experience any of these side effects, stop taking the medication and talk to your doctor right away. This medicine has not been proven to cause these symptoms.
 - Sudden onset of signs of stroke or heart attack such as severe dizziness, weakness, trouble speaking, vision problems, loss of sensation of limbs or face, clumsiness, severe headache, chest pain with left shoulder/jaw pain, constriction and chest tightness, and lots of sweating. Stop taking and see a doctor right away.
- Allergic reaction (for example: very bad itching, hives, swelling in your mouth, tight feeling in your chest, or trouble breathing). Stop taking and see a doctor right away.
- Speak to your pharmacist about how quitting might affect other medicine you take. Your body may respond to some medicine differently once you stop using tobacco.

Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any concerns about changes to your health, including depressed mood, while taking this medicine.

Some people have even experienced suicidal thoughts when trying to quit smoking without medication. Sometimes quitting smoking can lead to worsening of mental health problems that you already have, such as depression.

Before taking any quit-smoking treatment, tell your healthcare provider (doctor, pharmacist or nurse):

- if you have ever had depression or other mental health problems;
- about any concerning symptoms you had during other times you tried to quit smoking, with or without medication.

What else can I do?

Your chance of successfully quitting tobacco improves if you combine quit methods like medicine and supportive counselling.

AlbertaQuits is free, convenient, personalized support to quit smoking or spit tobacco.

AlbertaQuits

FREE | CONVENIENT | PERSONALIZED

albertaquits.ca

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