If any or all of the following apply to you, medications may help you beat the tobacco habit:

- Tried several times without success
- Smoke 1/2 pack per day or more
- Bothered by cravings for nicotine

**Nicotine Gum (Nicorette or generic)**

An over-the-counter medicine to replace nicotine in the body

- The gum may be mostly for those who smoke or chew at irregular intervals, are concerned about weight gain after stopping smoking and who want something that requires activity. The gum may be used with a nicotine skin patch. Ask your healthcare provider first.
- The gum comes in doses of 2mg or 4mg per piece. Use the 2-mg pieces unless you smoke over one pack per day.
- Taking at least nine pieces/day for the first 6 weeks increases the chances of success, but do not use more than 24 pieces per day.
- Stop use of nicotine gum after 12 weeks (your doctor may approve use for up to 6 months).
- Read the directions carefully and learn the correct "chewing technique."
- Chew until a peppery taste is released. “Park” the gum between your cheek and gum. Use both sides of your mouth.
- Don’t eat or drink for 15 minutes before and during use of the gum as it interferes with nicotine absorption. It is OK to have sips of water if you are thirsty.
- If you have heart problems, chronic medical problems or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, check with your healthcare provider first before using the gum.
- Dispose of gum in wrapper away from pets or children.

**Nicotine Patch (Nicoderm CQ or generic)**

An over-the-counter medicine to replace nicotine in the body

- Research shows the patch has a higher success rate than the gum.
- The patch comes in three strengths. If you smoke 10 cigarettes per day or more it is recommended that you start with the 21-mg patch for 4 to 6 weeks. Then decrease to the 14-mg patch for 2 weeks. Finally use the 7-mg patch for 2 more weeks. If you smoke less than one pack per day, start with the 14-mg patch strength.
- Apply the patch to a dry, nonhairy area of skin on the upper arm, back or chest (above the level of the heart). Each morning remove the old patch and apply a new patch. Rotate the site and do not go back to the same site for 7 days. Do not apply more than one patch at a time.
- About 50 percent of patch users may develop some mild skin reactions like redness and itching. Wash with a cool rinse. Stop the patch and ask your healthcare practitioner if the skin reaction is severe. Don’t use the patch if you are allergic to tape.
- If you have vivid dreams or sleep disruptions, try removing the patch at bedtime.
- Wash your hands after applying the patch and dispose of it properly. Nicotine is toxic to small children and animals. Do not cut the patches.
- Consult your healthcare provider if you have chronic medical problems, heart problems or are pregnant or breastfeeding, or have skin problems.
- Stop using after 8 to 10 weeks.
**Nicotine Nasal Spray (Nicotrol NS)**
An over-the-counter medicine to replace nicotine in the body
- The nasal spray may be helpful because it doesn’t just reduce the craving for nicotine; it actually mimics the pleasurable effects of nicotine.
- The spray often has significant side effects with initial use. It produces a peppery sensation in the nose and may cause tearing, sneezing and a burning sensation. Because it may cause watery eyes, do not plan to drive or operate heavy machinery immediately after use.
- Prime the bottle as directed. Tilt head back slightly. Spray once in each nostril. Do not inhale. Do not blow your nose for 2 to 3 minutes.
- Do not use the spray more than five times in an hour OR 40 times in 24 hours.
- Do not use the spray for more than 3–6 months. Because nicotine is addictive, it is possible to become dependent on the nasal spray. It is important to only use it for as long as needed to overcome your tobacco habit.
- You should not use the spray if you have asthma, nasal allergies, nasal polyps or sinusitis.
- Consult your healthcare provider if you have medical problems, heart problems or are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Dispose of with child-resistant cap in place and out of access by pets or children.

**Bupropion (Zyban or Wellbutrin SR)**
A prescription medicine to decrease craving for nicotine
- Like Wellbutrin for depression, Zyban is thought to work on dopamine and norepinephrine receptors in the brain to decrease nicotine craving and withdrawal symptoms. Because of the way this medication works, it is important to start the pills 10 to 14 days before you plan to quit, so plan ahead. Pills are taken for 7–12 weeks but may be up to 6 months.
- Do not use if you are already on Wellbutrin for depression (because Wellbutrin and Zyban contain the same medication).
- Can be used alone or in conjunction with the nicotine patch if blood pressure is monitored.

**Varenicline (Chantix)**
A prescription medicine to decrease craving for nicotine
- Blocks nicotine from attaching to nicotine receptors in the brain, which decreases cravings for cigarettes.
- Dose: 0.5 mg every day for 3 days; then 0.5 mg twice daily for 4 days, then 1 mg twice daily. Should start 1 week prior to quit date. Dose should be decreased to 0.5 mg twice daily in renal dysfunction. It requires a prescription, but is currently not covered by all insurance companies, so ask your doctor for cost information before starting.
- Manufacturers offer a free “Get Quit™” online support system and toll-free support hotline for people taking Chantix.
- Side effects occasionally may include nausea, trouble sleeping, constipation, gas, vomiting or changes in dreams. Taking with food can decrease side effects. Do not take with other smoking cessation medicines. Report any changes in mood to your healthcare provider right away.
- Consult your healthcare provider if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have a history of physical or mental illness.