

# Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRT) for Maternity Inpatients

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Your doctor has recommended that you use Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) to assist you in your attempt to stop smoking in pregnancy. Please read this leaflet carefully.

## What is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)?

NRT is a type of medication that aids people to stop smoking by fulfilling your brain's craving for nicotine. Common brands of NRT are Nicorette®; Nicotinell®; NiQuitin®; NicAssist®.

## How does NRT work?

NRT is a way of getting nicotine into your bloodstream without you smoking. It acts as a substitute for the nicotine you usually get from cigarettes. It helps to prevent unpleasant cravings and withdrawal symptoms that can occur when you are stopping smoking. Getting nicotine from NRT is less harmful than from cigarettes, as the products do not contain the chemicals that cigarettes do. Many different types of product are available - gums, patches, tablets, sprays, inhalators and lozenges. They can all be effective, so choose the one that suits you best. Nicotine products do not 'make' you stop smoking. You will still need to want to succeed to break the smoking habit.

## Can NRT be used in pregnancy?

Yes, it is safe to use NRT in pregnancy. Using NRT is safer than smoking because it doesn't contain poisons such as tar or carbon monoxide, but does provide you with some nicotine to help you manage any withdrawal cravings once you have stopped smoking. NRT can help you successfully stop smoking in pregnancy and reduce the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, poor growth and development, birth defects, premature birth, birth complications and much more.

## How do I use NRT?

There are many forms of NRT. At James Paget Hospital, we can offer you nicotine patches and an inhalator. Your midwife, nurse or doctor will assess your suitability to use patches and the inhalator based on your medical history, and discuss with you what dose to use and how to use it.

Nicotine patches are applied first thing in the morning and only one patch is used per day. Patches should be applied to clean, dry, hairless and intact skin, and you should change the position of the patch each day. In pregnancy, the patch should be removed at night and a new one applied the next morning. This will give you a long-acting dose of nicotine throughout the day.

The inhalator can be used when you get cravings throughout the day and resembles a cigarette. Nicotine cartridges are inserted into a plastic holder, and inhaled in an action similar to smoking. You should use the inhalator whenever you feel the urge to smoke, or whenever you would normally expect to have cravings to smoke. You can use a maximum of 6 x 15mg cartridges per day, and each cartridge should last for 8 x five minute sessions.

Maximum effectiveness of NRT is achieved when using a combination of long-acting and quick-acting NRT, therefore you will usually be prescribed both the nicotine patch and the inhalator.

## Are there any side effects to NRT?

Some of the most common side effects to NRT include nausea, indigestion, palpitations, throat irritation and skin irritation. If you experience ANY side effects when using NRT you should discuss this with a medical professional as soon as possible.

## Where can I get more support?

Your midwife, nurse or doctor will refer you to the local stop smoking service for free support to help you successfully stop. A specialist trained advisor will contact you to discuss what support is available to you, including access to longer-term NRT. You are three times more likely to stop smoking in pregnancy with specialist support compared with going it alone.

## Important contacts:



### SmokeFree Norfolk

Local Stop Smoking Service for clients living in Norfolk

☎ 0800 0854 113

🌐 <http://www.smokefreenorfolk.nhs.uk/>



### OneLife Suffolk

Lifestyle services, including Stop Smoking Service for clients living in Suffolk

☎ 01473 718 193

🌐 <https://onelifesuffolk.co.uk/>



### NHS Smokefree

Available online, via App and on the phone

☎ 0300 123 1044

🌐 <https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/support>

## Further help and advice...

If you have any further questions please telephone your community midwife (07:00-19:30 Monday to Friday) or Ward 11, 01493 452011, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

### Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240