

**COMPLETE OR REVIEW ALLERGY STATUS PRIOR TO WRITING ORDERS**

**NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY** Page 1 of 2

(Items with tick boxes must be selected to be ordered)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

RN  
Initials

**See reverse for guidance on use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).**

Special Considerations:

- Use of NRT is justified in patients with acute coronary syndrome or stroke within the past 14 days if the patient is at risk of resuming smoking or is experiencing severe withdrawal symptoms
- Remind patient to stop smoking when NRT initiated
- Pregnant or lactating patients need to have risks/benefits explained (see reverse) – nicotine gum or inhaler recommended on a PRN basis; patch should be removed at night. Risks/benefits explained by \_\_\_\_\_
- Combination NRT therapy (patch + gum \*OR\* patch + inhaler) is recommended for high or moderate nicotine dependence

**Step 1. SELECT LEVEL OF NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** Patient's score on nicotine dependency test on reverse: \_\_\_\_\_

- HIGH NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** (more than 20 cigarettes/day \*OR\* score of 5-6 points on nicotine dependency test)
- MODERATE NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** (10 to 20 cigarettes/day \*OR\* score of 3-4 on nicotine dependency test)
- LOW NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** (smoking less than 10 cigarettes/day) \*OR\* score of 0-2 on nicotine dependency test

**Step 2. CONTINUOUS NICOTINE REPLACEMENT**

**HIGH NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** (also select one PRN nicotine replacement below)

- Nicotine patch 21 mg daily (Apply to clean, dry site daily; remove at HS if insomnia develops) \*OR\*
- If cannot use patch, chew Nicotine Gum 4 mg Q2H

**MODERATE NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** (also select one PRN nicotine replacement below)

- Nicotine patch 14 mg daily (Apply to clean, dry site daily; remove at HS if insomnia develops) \*OR\*
- If cannot use patch, chew Nicotine Gum 2 mg Q2H

**LOW NICOTINE DEPENDENCE** (Go to step 3 if only PRN therapy required)

- Nicotine patch 7 mg daily (Apply to clean, dry site daily; remove at HS if insomnia develops)

**Step 3. PRN NICOTINE REPLACEMENT** (use *in combination* with continuous NRT to treat cravings in patients with high or moderate nicotine dependence)

- NICOTINE GUM PRN**
  - 4 mg - Chew 1 piece PRN for cigarette craving to maximum of 20 pieces in 24H (high nicotine dependence) \*OR\*
  - 2 mg - Chew 1 piece PRN for cigarette craving to maximum of 20 pieces in 24H (moderate or low nicotine dependence)

Bite gum once or twice, then "park it" between cheek and gum. Wait a minute then repeat. Keep in mouth until peppery taste gone.
- NICOTINE INHALER PRN** to a maximum of 6 to 12 cartridges per day; one cartridge lasts up to 20 minutes of continuous puffing

**Monitoring and Dose Titration**

- 1) Increase dose
  - After 24 to 48 hours - assess need to increase dose of nicotine patch
  - Increase by 7 mg x 2 doses if withdrawal symptoms (eg. ↓ HR, irritability, headaches) or craving persists (needs physician order)
- 2) Decrease dose or discontinue (consult physician)
  - If new or worsening ischemia, new dysthythmias, nausea, vomiting, sweating, tremor (consult physician)
  - Taper patch to next lower dose after 6 weeks of therapy (needs physician order)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician Signature  
NRT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name/PIC  
Rev. Mar-08

**To support abstinence while in hospital and to promote smoking cessation on discharge**

VCH and PCH are smoke free premises. Some patients who smoke may require assistance during their stay to prevent or treat nicotine withdrawal. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT): nicotine patch, gum or inhaler is available to help improve patient comfort and support abstinence. NRT by any delivery system has been shown to double the smoking cessation rate. On discharge NRT is available through community pharmacies without a prescription.

**Pregnancy:** Nicotine will pass into fetus and breast milk. There is a probable relationship between nicotine and spontaneous abortion, low birthweight and neonatal neurotoxicity. However, it is safer than smoking per se which exposes mother and baby to other toxins. NRT is recommended if a woman smokes greater than 10 cigarettes per day who is unable to quit with counselling alone. <http://www.rcp.gov.bc.ca/guidelines.htm>

<b>Assess Level of Nicotine Dependence (Brief Fagerström test)</b>	
<b>1. How soon after waking do you have your first cigarette?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Within 5 MIN (3 points) <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 30 MIN (2 points) <input type="checkbox"/> 31- 60 MIN (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> More than 1 hour (0 points)
<b>2. How many cigarettes, on average do you smoke per day?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 31 or more (3 points) <input type="checkbox"/> 21-30 (2 points) <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> 10 or less (0 points)
<b>3. Assign Score:</b> Score = _____	5-6 points = high nicotine dependence 3-4 points = moderate nicotine dependence 0-2 points = low nicotine dependence
<b>4. Ask the patient if they feel they need assistance with smoking abstinence in hospital (may not be needed if low nicotine dependence)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>Nicotine Replacement Therapy Options – review patient choice and whether combination NRT needed</b>				
<b>Nicotine Patch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easiest to use</li> <li>Continuous Delivery</li> <li>Useful to use with PRN gum</li> <li>Remove at night if causes insomnia and reapply in AM</li> </ul>	<b>Nicotine Gum</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Useful adjunct to patch for PRN use (if can chew; no dentures)</li> <li>Must use correct technique (not like normal gum)</li> <li>Alternative to patch; can use regularly Q2H if patch unsuitable</li> </ul>	<b>Nicotine Inhaler</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most expensive</li> <li>Useful adjunct to patch for PRN use</li> <li>Mimics hand to mouth ritual</li> <li>~8 to 10 puffs of 1 cartridge = 1 cigarette</li> <li>1 cartridge delivers 4 mg nicotine and can replace 4 cigarettes</li> </ul>	<b>Behavioural Therapy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify triggers</li> <li>Review coping mechanisms</li> </ul>	<b>Provide Information</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“On the Road to Quitting” brochure or similar</li> <li>Provide patient teaching sheets on NRT product (VCH website*)</li> </ul>
<b>Adverse Effects</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May cause insomnia (if develops, remove patch at night and reapply in AM)</li> <li>Skin rash (ensure sites rotated daily)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can cause jaw pain (if develops, review correct technique)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can cause throat irritation</li> </ul>		

\*[http://vhnet/programs\\_services/pharmacy\\_va/patient\\_counselling/drug\\_monographs/page\\_4101.htm](http://vhnet/programs_services/pharmacy_va/patient_counselling/drug_monographs/page_4101.htm)

<b>Promote Smoking Cessation</b>	
<b>On Admission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ask</b> patient about smoking habit</li> <li><b>Advise</b> patient to quit</li> <li><b>Assess</b> patient's need for NRT, readiness to quit, etc.</li> <li><b>Assist</b> by providing NRT and other supports</li> <li><b>Arrange</b> appropriate follow-up and provide patient teaching sheets* for NRT therapy</li> </ul>	<b>At Discharge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Assist</b> by ensuring patient has teaching sheets* for NRT product used in hospital</li> <li><b>Provide</b> self help materials</li> <li><b>Arrange</b> further support by referring patient to Quitnow or other smoking cessation resource <a href="http://www.quitnow.ca">www.quitnow.ca</a> or 1-877-455-2233</li> </ul>