

NICOTINE FACT SHEET

- 1 Nicotine is the primary active ingredient in cigarettes that reinforces individual smoking behavior. However, it is other constituents of tobacco and not nicotine that cause widespread mortality and morbidity. [a]
- 2 If used appropriate, NRTs [Nicotine Replacement Therapies] are comparatively safe products. They emit no tar or carbon monoxide and they produce lower blood nicotine levels than cigarettes. [b]
- 3 NRT has been found consistently to double a smoker's chances of quitting. [c]
- 4 Tobacco products and NRT products are substantially different – not only in their components, but also in their effectiveness as nicotine delivery devices and the way in which they are sold. [b]
- 5 Exposure to nicotine with NRT use is generally no greater than the exposure during cigarette smoking, and because NRT products do not contain the toxic chemicals found in cigarettes, the benefits of nicotine maintenance therapy almost certainly outweigh the risks of NRT. [b]
- 6 Controlled clinical trials of NRT in smokers with documented cardiovascular disease have found no evidence that NRT products are harmful, even if used for as long as 5 years. [b]
- 7 Tobacco products are designed to encourage long-term nicotine maintenance with maximum consumer utility. NRT products, on the other hand, are produced to assist nicotine-dependent smokers who want to quit. [b]
- 8 Smoking results in rapid peak nicotine levels. Nicotine from cigarettes is quickly absorbed via the lungs of smokers and reaches the brain within seconds. NRT products, on the other hand, are designed to deliver more gradual increases in blood levels of nicotine without the peaks and valleys associated with cigarettes. [d]
- 9 Nicotine is not a carcinogen. While new studies indicate that nicotine may have a "permissive effect" on the growth of cancer cells, the short-term use of NRT is viewed as far safer than continued smoking and helpful in aiding smokers in their attempts to quit. [e]
- 10 Among the public, knowledge about NRT is poor, and misinformation about nicotine is widespread. Even health professionals commonly confuse the effects of nicotine with the effects of its main delivery vehicle, the cigarette. [b]

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