



Laborers'

TOOLS

FOR HEALTH ↓

How to Use Your Nicotine Patches

- 1 Stop smoking completely before you start using your patches.
- 2 The best time of day to put on a patch is first thing in the morning. Doing it at the same time every day will help you remember. If you can't put it on first thing in the morning, select another set time each day.
- 3 Use scissors to open the pouch on the dotted line. Don't take a patch out of the pouch until you're ready to use it, because it will lose its strength.
- 4 Take out the patch and throw the pouch away. The sticky, silver side of the patch is covered with a clear plastic liner. The liner has a slit down the center to help you peel back one half of the liner at a time (similar to an adhesive bandage). Pull it off, one side at a time. Hold the patch by the edges and try not to touch the silver part of the patch. Put the liner pieces in the disposal slot in the disposal tray.
- 5 Immediately press the patch to your skin, either on your upper arm or hip. The skin area should be clean, dry, and non-hairy. Don't put the patch over areas of the skin that are burned, broken out, cut, oily, or irritated. Make sure the skin doesn't have any lotion, moisturizer, or sunscreen on it.
- 6 Press the patch to your skin with the heel of your hand for at least 10 seconds. Be sure its edges are firmly stuck to the skin.
- 7 Wash your hands as soon as you are done applying the patch. The nicotine from the patch can irritate your eyes and nose.
- 8 After 16 or 24 hours, take the patch off. Fold it in half so the silver side sticks to itself and put it in the disposal slot in the disposal tray. This is very important, because it keeps the patch out of reach of children and pets.
- 9 Wash your hands after removing the patch.

Questions and Answers About Using Nicotine Patches

Q How do nicotine patches work?

A When you wear the patch, the nicotine goes directly from the patch, through your skin, and into your bloodstream. It replaces the nicotine that you would normally inhale while smoking, by giving you just enough to lessen withdrawal symptoms and allow you to function as you learn to live without cigarettes. It helps fight the cravings for nicotine that many smokers have when they quit.

Q Does the patch stop working after I take it off?

A No, not immediately. After you take off the patch, the nicotine on your skin will still be entering your bloodstream for several hours.

Q Can I smoke at all while I wear the patch?

A No. Never use the patch while continuing to smoke cigarettes or cigars, chew tobacco, use snuff, or use any other product that contains nicotine. This can cause a nicotine overdose.

Q Can the patch get wet?

A Yes. The patch sticks very tightly to the skin. You can keep it on and it will still work if you shower, bathe, exercise, swim, or use a hot tub.

Q What if the patch comes off?

A If the patch falls off, fold it in half and put it in the disposal slot in the disposal tray. Put a new patch on a different skin area that is clean, dry, and non-hairy.

Q What if the patch irritates my skin?

A It's normal for the patch to cause itching, burning, or tingling in some people when it's first put on. This should go away within an hour. If you do get a rash or the skin under the patch gets red or very swollen, call your doctor.

Q Where should I store my patches?

A Keep your patches in a safe place that reaches no higher than 86° F (30° C). The patches are sensitive to heat. Remember that depending on where you live and the time of year, the inside of your car can reach temperatures much higher than 86° F.

Q Can I use the patch if I take other medicines?

A If you take other medicines regularly, you'll need to speak to your doctor before beginning to use the patch.