

Varenicline

Also known as Chantix® (no generic available)

Why choose varenicline?

- Varenicline is used to help you quit smoking.
- It makes you more comfortable while you are quitting because it reduces the cravings and withdrawal that you feel when you stop smoking.
- Research studies show that varenicline is the most effective medicine for quitting smoking.

How do I use varenicline?

- Most people begin taking varenicline one week *before* their quit date. Some begin more than one week before the quit date; talk with your pharmacist.
- The dose you will take is lower at the beginning of treatment, then it increases to the full dosage.
- Take the tablet with a full glass of water after you eat a meal.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember; if it is too close to your next dose, wait and take your next scheduled dose and return to your normal schedule.

Usual dosing schedule:

Treatment day	Dose
Days 1 – 3	Take 1 white (0.5 mg) tablet each day.
Days 4 – 7	Take 1 white (0.5 mg) tablet in the morning and 1 in the evening each day.
Day 8 – end of treatment	Take 1 blue (1 mg) tablet in the morning and 1 in the evening.

How long is the treatment?

- It is recommended that you take this medicine for 12 weeks.
- If you feel that you need to be on the medicine longer, talk with your pharmacist.

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What are the side effects of varenicline?

More common:

- Nausea (taking with food and water will help to prevent this side effect)
- Problems with sleeping (insomnia, abnormal dreams)

Less common:

- Headache
- Constipation and flatulence (gas)
- Changes in taste
- Changes in mood or behavior

The information on this sheet does not cover all possible side effects; others may occur.

Please report any problems to your pharmacist.

What else do I need to know?

- This medicine may cause changes in your mood or behavior—if you or a family member notice any changes that are not normal for you, stop taking varenicline and contact your doctor or pharmacist right away.
- Let your pharmacist know if you are less than 18 years old, pregnant or breastfeeding, or have kidney disease.
- Caffeine interacts with tobacco smoke—be sure to reduce your caffeine (coffee, tea, soda) intake by half when you quit smoking, and do not drink anything with caffeine after lunchtime so you are able to sleep well at night.
- Be sure to read all of the information that the pharmacy provides to you when you fill your prescription—call your pharmacist if you have questions.

You have a better chance of quitting for good if you also seek counseling. Talk with your pharmacist and/or call your state's tobacco quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

