

Varenicline patient information

What is varenicline?

Varenicline is a medicine that is used to help you stop smoking. It works by blocking the effects of nicotine in the brain and reducing your urge to smoke. It will also make smoking less pleasurable.

How should I take varenicline?

1. Start taking varenicline for a total of 12 weeks (start with the 4-week initiation pack, followed by the two 4-week continuation packs as per the pharmacy instructions).
 2. Choose a quit date when you will stop smoking between days 8 and 35 of starting varenicline (make a note of this date. You can write this date on the carton of the Initiation Pack as a reminder). Make sure that you try to stop smoking on your quit date. If you slip-up and smoke, try again.
- Swallow tablets whole with a full glass of water.
 - Take varenicline with food (to prevent stomach upset).

What should I do if I forget to take a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as possible. If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at the right time. Do **not** take two doses at the same time.

Side effects of varenicline

Side effect	What should I do?
Indigestion, nausea (feeling sick), stomach upset	These are quite common when you first start taking varenicline. Try taking varenicline with food.
Drowsiness, tiredness, weakness	These are quite common when you first start taking varenicline. Be careful when driving or using tools until you know how this medicine will affect you. Limit alcohol. Tell your doctor if troublesome.
Headache	Tell your doctor if troublesome.
Difficulty sleeping, sleep disturbances, abnormal dreams	Tell your doctor if troublesome.
Agitation, feeling anxious, mood changes, depression	Tell your doctor immediately if you get any of these side effects.

Other information

- Tell your doctor if you have kidney, heart or a mental health problem, or if you have ever had a seizure.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding.