

Varenicline (Chantix)

Physician Fact Sheet

WHAT is Varenicline (Chantix)?

- ❖ The first FDA-approved nicotine receptor-agonist therapy
- ❖ A non-nicotine smoking cessation treatment in pill form
- ❖ A first-line therapy for smoking cessation

HOW does Varenicline (Chantix) work?

- ❖ Varenicline is a non-nicotine product that binds to nicotine receptors in the brain, releasing dopamine
- ❖ Dopamine release reproduces some of the pleasurable effects of smoking and reduces the craving for cigarettes
- ❖ Improves outcomes for long-term smoking cessation

Patient selection

- Ready to make commitment
- Prefers non-nicotine replacement
- Prefers pill

Contraindication

- Kidney failure

Guide for use

- Begin varenicline 1 week before targeted quit date:
 - 0.5 mg once daily for 3 days then,
 - 0.5 mg twice daily for days 4-7, then
 - 1 mg twice daily for 12 weeks
- If successful in complete smoking cessation, continue for a second 12-week course

Precautions

- Headache, nausea, and vomiting more likely if combined with transdermal nicotine

Potential side effects

- Nausea
- Abnormal dreams
- Vomiting
- Weight gain

Additional resources to enhance cessation

- Identify and manage triggers
- Use positive self-talk
- Set a quit date
- Refer to American Lung Association and American Cancer Society behavioral programs
- Schedule follow-up visit

Bupropion (ZYBAN)

Physician Fact Sheet

WHAT is Bupropion (Zyban)?

- ❖ FDA-approved non-nicotine therapy
- ❖ A smoking cessation treatment in pill form
- ❖ First-line therapy for smoking cessation

HOW does Bupropion (Zyban) work?

- ❖ Appears to affect noradrenergic and dopaminergic pathways in the brain, particularly the mesolimbic dopaminergic "reward" pathway
- ❖ Reduces nicotine withdrawal symptoms and craving after smoking cessation
- ❖ Improves outcomes for long-term cessation
- ❖ Appears to limit weight gain during cessation efforts

Patient selection

- Ready to make commitment
- Prefers non-nicotine therapy
- Prefers pill to other forms of delivery
- Has failed on nicotine replacement
- Is concerned about weight gain

Contraindication

- Seizure disorder or predisposition to seizures
- Bulimia or anorexia
- Already taking bupropion

Guide for use

- Begin bupropion 1-2 weeks before quit date
 - 150 mg daily for 3 days
 - 150 mg twice daily for 7-12 weeks
- Maintain at least 8 hours between doses
- Can combine with nicotine replacement for maximal benefit

Precautions

- Pregnancy/ breast feeding
- History of psychosis
- Tics or abnormal involuntary bodily movements
- Liver dysfunction
- Uncontrolled hypertension

Potential side effects

- Tremor
- Increased blood pressure
- Dry mouth
- Headache
- Insomnia (can manage by taking second dose earlier in the day)
- Rash
- Seizure, if predisposed

Additional resources to enhance cessation

- Identify and manage triggers; *avoid, alter, or substitute* for triggers
- Use positive *self-talk*
- Set a quit date
- Refer to American Lung Association and American Cancer Society behavioral programs
- Schedule follow-up visit