

Champix® (Varenicline) Client Information

What is Champix?

Champix is a treatment designed specifically to help people stop smoking. The treatment is a 12 week course of tablets. It is an approved medication for smoking cessation and is only available on prescription from your GP or an authorised Pharmacist, who will assess your suitability.

How does Champix work?

Champix can help relieve the craving and withdrawal symptoms associated with stopping smoking. It also reduces the effects of nicotine and the enjoyment you feel from smoking tobacco.

Who can take Champix?

Champix is suitable for people who are motivated to quit smoking. It is NOT suitable for people under the age of 18 years, women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, or anyone who has end-stage renal disease. You should not take Champix if you are allergic to any of the ingredients.

How do I take Champix?

You start taking Champix before you quit smoking. This allows time for the drug to build up in your body. It also gives you time to prepare yourself for quitting. For the first 3 days you take a 0.5mg tablet once daily. From days 4 to 7 you take a 0.5mg tablet twice daily. Following that you remain on the treatment dose of 1mg twice daily for 12 weeks, one tablet in the morning and one in the evening.

Should I stop smoking as soon as I take Champix?

No. Before you start taking Champix you and your Stop Smoking Practitioner should decide on a date to stop smoking. This is usually around the second week of treatment (between day 8 and 14). Write the date down on the pack as a reminder to help to motivate you.

What side effects might I experience?

Giving up smoking with or without treatment can cause various symptoms including changes of mood (like feeling depressed, irritable or anxious), sleeplessness, difficulty concentrating and increased appetite.

The most common side effect for Champix is nausea. Other common side effects include headaches, difficulty sleeping and abnormal dreams. Taking Champix with a full glass of water can help reduce nausea and to reduce insomnia and disturbed dreams, take the second tablet early evening rather than bedtime. Champix may produce dizziness and sleepiness. You should refrain from driving, operating complex machinery or engage in potentially hazardous activities until you know whether this medication affects your ability to perform these activities.

If you are worried about any of the side effects, or they become serious, consult you GP, pharmacist NHS Direct or your Stop Smoking Practitioner.

Can I take Champix with my other medications?

Champix is not expected to affect the way other medications work or vice versa. Stopping smoking (with or without Champix) may alter the way other medications work (eg theophylline, warfarin and insulin) so dose adjustment may be necessary in some cases. You should be advised by your GP or pharmacist.

Zyban (Bupropion) Client Information

What is Zyban?

Zyban is a tablet that makes quitting smoking easier by reducing the urge to smoke, and by reducing withdrawal symptoms. It acts on the areas of the brain that are involved in addiction.

Zyban is licensed in the UK only as a stop smoking aid and is available on prescription.

How does Zyban work?

Treatment is usually started before you quit smoking. This allows time for the drug to build up in your body. It also gives you time to prepare yourself for quitting. The treatment lasts for 8 weeks.

Who can take Zyban?

Zyban is suitable for people who want to quit smoking. Zyban is NOT recommended for pregnant or breastfeeding women, nor currently for patients aged under 18 years. Zyban is NOT suitable for patients who have:

- ~ epilepsy or any history of seizures
- ~ current or previous eating disorders
- ~ abrupt withdrawal from alcohol / benzodiazepines
- ~ hypersensitivity to Zyban
- ~ known CNS tumour
- ~ recently taken MAOIs
- ~ severe hepatic cirrhosis
- ~ bipolar disorder

Zyban is not suitable for patients who have a history of epileptic fits, or who have a higher than average risk of having a fit (for example because of a previous head injury or brain operation).

How do I take Zyban?

For the first 6 days you take the tablet once a day. After that you take the tablet twice a day 8 hours apart. You may however, be advised by your doctor to keep to a once a day dose if you are aged over 70, or if you are experiencing side effects.

Should I stop smoking as soon as I take Zyban?

No. Before you start taking Zyban you and your Stop Smoking Practitioner should decide on a date to stop smoking. This is usually around the second week of treatment (between day 8 and 14). Write the date down on the pack as a reminder to help to motivate you.

What side effects might I experience?

Side effects are usually mild but can include a dry mouth, difficulty sleeping, and headaches. Zyban does not normally cause drowsiness but if it does, you should avoid driving or operating machinery.

It is recommended that whilst using Zyban alcohol consumption should either be minimised or avoided.

Can I take Zyban with my other medications?

Zyban has a potential to interact with other medicines. You should therefore make sure your doctor or pharmacist knows that you are taking Zyban before you start any new medication (both prescription and non-prescription)

It is recommended that Zyban is not to be used in combination with any NRT product