

## What is Varenicline (CHAMPIX)?

Varenicline is a prescription only tablet specifically designed and licensed to help smokers stop smoking. It is an alternative to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). It does not contain nicotine.

## How does it work?

- It reduces the smoker's craving for nicotine by binding to nicotine receptors in the brain and reduces the symptoms of withdrawal.
- It reduces the satisfaction a smoker receives when smoking a cigarette.

## How do I get Varenicline (CHAMPIX)?

People who are considering Varenicline as a medication to support their quit attempt will be given information and a suitability assessment. They will then be required to see their own GP who will assess their medical history and make a final decision on prescribing. Regular monitoring and support by a health professional and stop smoking advisor throughout the course of treatment is required.

## Who cannot use this medication?

Varenicline is a non-nicotine based product and is not recommended for use:

- in pregnant women;
- in nursing women;
- for those aged under 18 years of age
- for people with severe kidney problems
- for people with a history of epilepsy

*Varenicline should be used with caution for people with underlying psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder (manic depression).*



## How to use Varenicline

Varenicline is taken whilst you are still smoking and you will set a date to stop smoking between days 8 to 14.

It's recommended that you swallow the tablet whole with a glass of water at meal times to prevent nausea.

Days 1-3= 0.5mg once daily

Days 4-7= 0.5mg twice daily (eight hours between each tablet)

Days 8 to end of treatment= 1mg twice daily (eight hours between each tablet)

Total treatment duration is 12 weeks

Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten tablet.



Stopping smoking with or without medication may cause withdrawal symptoms such as changes in mood, sleeplessness, difficulty in concentration, changes in appetite and bowel movements.

**Always read the leaflet that comes with the product**

### Adverse effects can include:

- Nausea or feeling sick
- Unusual dreams/difficulty sleeping
- Headache
- Wind/upset stomach
- Taste disturbance/dry mouth
- Dizziness/drowsiness

You should not drive, operate machinery or engage in other potentially hazardous activities until you know whether this medication affects your ability to perform the activities.