

Livewell Stop Smoking FAQs

What is Champix?

Champix is a medication (tablets) you take in order to block the signal of nicotine reaching the receptors in the brain. It works by reducing your cravings for a cigarette. It also reduces the affects you feel if you do have a cigarette. You set a date to stop smoking (must be within 14 days) and start taking tablets one or two weeks before this date. This is a prescription medication only available through Livewell.

Treatment normally lasts for 12 weeks. Champix is only available on prescription and is not available if you are under 18, pregnant/planning to get pregnant or if you have some pre-existing conditions. Please discuss your suitability for Champix with your Livewell advisor, GP or a healthcare professional.

If you and your advisor decide this is the route to take then there are a few things you may need to know.

- 1) Normally your Livewell advisor will need to send off a prescription request to your GP surgery. **This normally takes around 7 days to process so please bear that in mind when deciding your quit date.**
- 2) After 7 days you will need to contact your GP surgery to check that your prescription has been processed and to arrange to collect your prescription. You should contact the surgery 48 hrs after your advisor has sent the request and to make sure they chase it up.
- 3) You will need to stay in touch with your Livewell advisor on a weekly basis in order that they can re-order your prescription and also provide continuing support. Please note that only **two weeks supply** of Champix can be authorised through a single prescription.
- 4) Failing to give your Livewell advisor enough notice to organise your Champix request and not keeping in touch with your advisor could result in you being discharged from the programme.
- 5) You need to take the tablets for **12 weeks** in order to get the most from the medication and have the best chances of success.
- 6) **You cannot smoke beyond 14 days** whilst taking Champix as the dosage has already peaked in your body and you will get no further benefit from it. You may also be taken off the programme by your advisor if you fail to follow the directions for using it.
- 7) You should not be using Champix with Nicotine Replacement Therapy (gums/patches/mouth spray) or other nicotine variants.
- 8) **Your GP normally requires 7 days** to process your follow on prescriptions. If you are late to inform your advisor then you will need to liaise with your GP surgery yourself as this is your responsibility. Livewell may assist in the process but we cannot do this on your behalf.
- 9) Multiple attempts in any one year are not permitted and this will be down to the individual advisor. If you are unsure you should check with your advisor.
- 10) Champix should **NOT be prescribed longer than 12 weeks** unless the GP decides to prescribe it. This would be at the GP's discretion and you would need to discuss that with your doctor.
- 11) There may be some instances where your Livewell advisor is unable to send off a prescription request to your GP such as having or had certain health problems. If you are unsure please call your advisor and they will be able to give you further information. In some cases we may refer you back to your GP where they will make the decision to prescribe to you or not. In this case your GP's decision is final.



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12) You are only **permitted 1 attempt of Champix** each calendar year. Please bear this in mind before you start your quit attempt.

What is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)?

NRT gives you some of the nicotine that you would have received from cigarettes, but without all the harmful stuff like tar, cyanide and carbon monoxide. NRT has been used by millions of smokers to help them stop. A full course of treatment lasts for 8 weeks, but because NRT is so much safer than smoking, it can be used for longer periods if it helps you to not smoke. However, this needs to be discussed and agreed with your advisor.

Which NRT is right for me?

All licensed nicotine-containing products are effective treatments to help you stop smoking, but you may wish to seek advice from your Livewell advisor, pharmacy team or GP to help you decide which is right for you. No single NRT product is better than any other and there are a number of options. As NRT gives you a lower dose of nicotine than you get from cigarettes, many people use the patch to give a background dose of nicotine and one of the other products to top this up.

Also remember that a full course of NRT can last for 8 weeks (depending on the type you are using) so it is important you stick with it! However, if one type of NRT doesn't work for you, or if you experience any problems or have any questions, talk to your advisor.

For your own personal safety, it is imperative that you follow your advisor's NRT instructions. If you fail to follow the instructions given to you, you may be asked to leave the programme.

Nicotine patches

Nicotine patches work well for most regular smokers and can be worn round the clock (24-hour patches). They work by releasing nicotine directly into the bloodstream through the skin.

The 24-hour patch may cause some sleep disturbance but is helpful for people who have strong cravings during the early morning.

Patches also come in different strengths. Whichever strength you start on, you should aim to gradually reduce the dosage over time before stopping the use of patches completely, this is normally between 8 and 12 weeks. Livewell can only prescribe for 8 weeks maximum and dual therapy is given at your advisor's discretion for the first 2 weeks only for all NRT.

Patches are useful for those who are concerned about discretion (they can be worn easily beneath clothing) or dislike the taste of the oral products. They release a steady amount of nicotine. They may cause skin irritation for some people. Sometimes people may also have very vivid dreams. In worst cases if your patch strength is too high or you smoke and use the patches you may experience a nicotine overdose which may cause dizziness, sweating and other unpleasant side effects. If this happens you will need to speak to your advisor ASAP.

Nicotine gum

Gum is available in two strengths: 2mg and 4mg. The 4mg gum is most appropriate for smokers who smoke more than 20 cigarettes a day, or who are strongly addicted to nicotine. However, most people can only tolerate the lower dosage. If you are unsure, please speak to your advisor.

When you use nicotine gum, the nicotine is absorbed through the lining of your mouth. When you first quit you can chew about one piece of gum every hour. To release the nicotine from the gum, chew until the taste becomes strong or hot. After this you can rest the gum inside your cheek. Once the taste or heat fades you will need to chew again to release more nicotine. Discard the gum once the taste from chewing has faded (after 20 to 30 minutes).

Gradually you can begin to cut down on the amount of gum you use. Try chewing for shorter periods, using smaller pieces of the lower-dose gum or alternating with a non-nicotine gum.

Gum can be helpful because it provides short bursts of nicotine. However, some people dislike the taste and habitual users of ordinary chewing gum may find it difficult to get used to having to 'park' the gum in their mouth. As with any of the oral products you should not drink any fluids 15 mins before or after a piece of gum otherwise you experience hiccups, heartburn, and chest pains. If you suffer from acid reflux then any oral product may make this worse. If in doubt speak to your advisor.

Lozenges

Lozenges are placed in the mouth and dissolve slowly to release nicotine. They take about 20 to 30 minutes to dissolve.

Nicotine lozenges work in a similar way to nicotine gum. To release the nicotine from the lozenge, suck until the taste becomes strong or hot. After this you can rest the lozenge inside your cheek - once the taste fades you will need to suck again to release more nicotine. Suck until the lozenge has completely dissolved - each one should last 20 to 30 minutes.

You should use lozenges for about 8 to 12 weeks. For weeks 4 to 6 you could have one lozenge every one to two hours. You could then reduce your intake to one lozenge every two to four hours, finally reducing to once every four to eight hours in the last two weeks of treatment.

Lozenges are helpful because they provide short bursts of nicotine. Lozenges should not be used by people with mouth ulcers.

Mouth spray

The QuickMist mouth spray is a great way to get instant relief from nicotine cravings. The spray delivers a minty nicotine hit within sixty seconds of use, meaning you can stay in control of your cravings.

The spray comes in a small bottle and is handy to keep in a pocket or handbag for those sudden cravings. It contains enough for around 150 doses of nicotine. Livewell normally supplies this in a dual pack.

To use the spray simply spray under the tongue or the inside of your cheek. Do not inhale the spray or spray the back of your throat. Do not drink anything immediately after using the mouth spray (waiting 15 minutes is usually OK).

If you have asthma, be careful with your first few sprays as it can cause you to catch your breath.

It is recommended that if you want to try using mouth spray that you use it as part of an 8-week programme.

You can use it alongside other products but you can also use it as and when you need it to satisfy those cravings.

The speed of the delivery from a spray makes it popular with users. A cigarette starts to deliver nicotine within seven seconds of smoking – the spray delivers nicotine in less than sixty seconds.

What are E-cigarettes?

An e-cigarette is an electronic device that delivers nicotine in a vapour. This allows you to inhale nicotine without most of the harmful effects of smoking, as the vapour contains no tar or carbon monoxide.

Based on the current evidence, vaping is likely to be at least 95% less harmful than smoking as it doesn't contain carbon monoxide or tar, two of the most harmful elements in tobacco smoke.

In the UK e-cigarettes are tightly regulated, with minimum standards of safety and quality, packaging and labelling requirements, a ban on advertising in print, broadcast and online media, and a minimum age of sale of 18.

Research has found that e-cigarettes can help you give up smoking. As with other approaches, they're most effective if used in conjunction with support from a Livewell stop smoking advisor.

At present, there is no e-cigarette product licensed as a medicine and available for prescription on the NHS. That means that Livewell cannot prescribe any form of e-cigarette but can support clients who use one as a way to quit.

For now, if you want to use an e-cigarette to help you quit, you'll have to buy one. Costs of e-cigarettes can vary, but generally they're much cheaper than cigarettes. Livewell recommends choosing a supplier, which is a member of the Independent British Vape Trade Association - <https://www.ibvta.org.uk/about-us/members>

What else does Livewell offer to support my quit attempt?

Free Livewell activities

Keeping active and healthy can help you keep on track with your quit attempt. We offer a whole host of free activities for our stop smoking clients and their buddy. Increasing your physical activity can also have huge health benefits including lowering your blood pressure and your risk of certain diseases. We deliver activities across the city in community buildings, leisure centres and parks, which take place at a variety of times including evenings and Saturday mornings.

Our friendly activities include Boxwell, Circuits, Legs Bums and Tums, Bootcamp, Cycling, led walks and gender-specific activities such as Clubbercise for women and walking football for men.

For clients that have certain medical conditions or those that haven't been active for a while, we offer a personalised prescription of activities to ensure that clients safely achieve their goals. For a full list of activities, visit our Client Information page, click on the Livewell activity programme and get booked on. Remember, to check back often as we add new sessions and make seasonal changes.

Leisure membership

Once you are 8 weeks smoke free and you have completed your Commitment Card (see below), you can be considered for a free membership upgrade at Council leisure centres to access the gym or non Livewell classes. You will be asked to provide a Carbon Monoxide reading periodically (usually every 3 months). If your reading is over the non-smoking threshold then your membership will be cancelled without any notice. If in doubt, please discuss with your advisor.

Lose Weight Feel Great course

We understand that keeping weight under control when quitting can be tricky. That's why we offer free places on our popular Lose Weight Feel Great 8-week course to all our smoking clients. This practical and fun course is made up of weekly one-hour sessions focusing on key topics relevant to losing weight and keeping it off for good! Content is based around nutrition, healthy eating, physical activity and behaviour. Look at the Client Activity Programme on the Livewell Client Info page for course dates, times and venues or email livewell@derby.gov.uk

Stop Smoking Drop-ins

Clients can get regular support and pick up NRT products at our Stop Smoking Drop-ins at venues across the city. Our friendly team is on hand for a chat offering lots of practical advice, quitting tips and crave-beating encouragement to help you stay focussed and quit for good. A list of Drop-ins is available on our Client Info page.

We also offer a range of Health Hub drop-ins where you can get weighed and ask any questions about your fitness, healthy eating or general wellbeing. Details of these can be found in our Client Activity Programme on the Livewell Client Info page.

I've been given a Commitment Card but what is it for?

Your Commitment Card can support you to reach your health goals sooner. If like most people, you like a challenge and to be rewarded for your hard work, then this card - along with being 8 weeks smoke free - will help you monitor your progress and achieve a membership upgrade of either gym or group exercise.

Simply attend 10 Livewell sessions and record them on your card. Sessions included in the challenge are:

- Lose Weight Feel Great (one session recorded for each class attended)
- Any Livewell activity class (including health walks)
- Health Hub or Stop Smoking Drop-ins

Hand in your completed card at a Stop Smoking or Health Hub Drop-in or at an appointment with your advisor. Our team will check the sessions and upgrade your membership with either gym or group exercise. The quicker you do the challenge, the sooner you get your upgrade! Please note that swimming and other non-Livewell activities are not included and cannot count towards your 10 activities.

Livewell social media

Our social media community is growing every day and our clients tell us they love the motivation they get from our posts and indeed the shared content from other clients. It's a really good way to keep motivated and stay on track so we highly recommend you join our Facebook and/or Twitter page. As we post daily updates, events, programme changes and cancellations, it's also the best way to keep up to date with Livewell news as it happens. And evidence shows that when changing lifestyle behaviours like stopping smoking, the more people you tell, the more likely you are to succeed so make sure you post, like and share as much as possible!

Contact Information

Livewell website – <http://www.livewellderby.co.uk>

For programme information and to apply/register to lose weight, stop smoking or get an NHS Health Check.

Client Information page – <http://www.livewellderby.co.uk/client-info>

For client resources, activity programmes, Stop Smoking Drop-ins, recipes, Wellness membership.

Livewell NHS Health Check page - http://www.livewellderby.co.uk/episodes/join/health_check

To book a 30 minute Health Check appointment (for ages 40 – 74).

Livewell Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/livewellderby>

For client success stories, up to date news, motivation, tips and advice.

Livewell Twitter - <https://twitter.com/livewellderby>

For client success stories, up to date news, motivation, tips and advice.

Livewell Customer Contact Team – 01332 641254 or livewell@derby.gov.uk

For general enquiries about Livewell or if you can't reach your advisor.