

Varenicline: Simple dosing guide

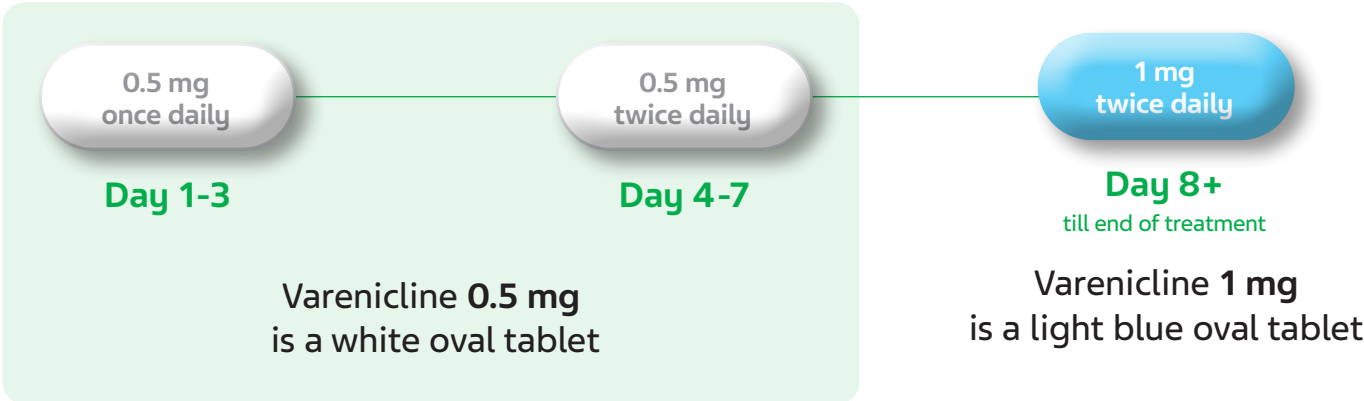
Stopping smoking can be difficult.

Varenicline is a nicotine-free medicine that reduces the reward of smoking and the craving to smoke.¹

- Varenicline treatment is a simple 12-week course of non-addictive tablets
- Tablets are swallowed whole with water, ideally, at the same time each day
- When taking two tablets in the same day, take one in the morning and one in the evening

It’s important to know that the **varenicline dose increases over a typical 12-week course**.¹ If you feel you require further quit-support during this time, talk to your health professional.

Three-step increase in varenicline dose:



Dosing timetable:

When you begin taking varenicline, set a smoking stop day within week 2

	Week 1							Week 2						
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg
	X	X	X	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	0.5 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg	1 mg

Repeat for weeks 3-12

Do you have any questions about taking varenicline? Here are a few common ones.



Varenicline with other stop-smoking aids or medication?

Some people successfully quit by taking varenicline on its own, while others benefit from additional support and advice.² Talk to your health professional before using varenicline with any other stop-smoking therapies to find the right option for you. Also let them know about any other medicines you are taking.¹



Varenicline and when to quit smoking?

You don’t need to stop smoking as soon as you start varenicline. It’s usually recommended to set a quit date during the second week of treatment, when cravings often begin to ease.^{1,2} Some people choose to quit later in the 12-week course and that can still be effective.¹ What’s important is finding a quit date that feels realistic and achievable for you.



Varenicline and drinking alcohol?

It’s not known if varenicline increases the effect of alcohol on the body. There’s a possibility that you may experience more of the side effects of alcohol.^{1,3} Perhaps consider reducing alcohol intake when taking varenicline, or stopping completely during the 12-week course.³



Missing a varenicline dose?

If you forget a varenicline tablet, take it as soon as you remember, unless it’s 3 hours or less until your next scheduled tablet. In this case leave out the missed dose and take your next tablet at the usual time.^{1,4} If you repeatedly forget to take your tablets, set an alarm to remind you.⁴

- When taking varenicline, you can eat normally³
- Varenicline does not affect any type of contraception³
- Varenicline is not recommended if you are pregnant and not usually recommended if breast-feeding.⁵ Speak to your doctor for further advice

It can be helpful to know potential side effects of varenicline, although not everybody gets them. The most common include feeling sick, difficulty sleeping, abnormal dreams, headache and the common cold.¹

If you get any side effects that are serious or hard to manage, speak to your doctor. They may suggest lowering your dose.¹

For further information, always refer to the varenicline product information leaflet that comes with the tablets.

Reporting of side effects: If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at: www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine. Adverse events should also be reported to Teva UK Limited online <https://products.tevauk.com/reporting-side-effects>, or by phone **0207 540 7117**, or email uk.safety@tevauk.com.

References:
1. Varenicline, Patient Information Leaflet. Brown & Burk UK Ltd.
2. NHS UK. <https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/varenicline/about-varenicline/> Last accessed 12 June 2025.
3. NHS UK. <http://www.nhs.uk/medicines/varenicline/common-questions-about-varenicline/> Last accessed 30 April 2025.
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5. NHS UK <https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/varenicline/pregnancy-breastfeeding-and-fertility-while-taking-varenicline/> Last accessed 30 April 2025