

## Possible side effects of Champix

Champix has been associated with changes in mood or behaviour in some people. It is important to discontinue using Champix if changes in mood or behaviour are observed and consult your doctor for further advice.

Some of the more common Champix side effects can include:

- nausea (usually mild) - to reduce nausea, take with a full glass of water and with some food
- headache
- insomnia
- abnormal dreams
- dizziness
- feeling tired or fatigued
- increased appetite
- changes in taste
- changes in behaviour, thinking or mood.

It is important to consult your doctor if you are concerned about any side effects.

## How much does Champix cost?

The cost per prescription is subsidised by the Australian Government through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Each prescription costs around \$6.30 for holders of a (Centrelink) Health Care Card, otherwise the cost is around \$38.80 (CPI adjusted yearly) for other patients.

For more information about Champix, please read the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) available at [pfizer.com.au/products/champix](http://pfizer.com.au/products/champix).



# Champix.



Quitline support can double your chances of quitting.

For information and support:

- call **13 7848**
- chat online at [quitlinesa.org.au](http://quitlinesa.org.au)
- email [quitline@cancersa.org.au](mailto:quitline@cancersa.org.au)
- fax **08 8291 4280**

[quitlinesa.org.au](http://quitlinesa.org.au)



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Information  
for smokers.





**Champix is an oral medication that reduces cravings and the negative effects of nicotine withdrawal. Champix became available in Australia in 2008 and can be obtained on prescription from your doctor.**

Champix works by blocking the effects of nicotine in your body. There are receptors for nicotine in the brain. When cigarette smoke is inhaled, nicotine attaches to these receptors. This sends a message to a different part of the brain to release a chemical called dopamine. Dopamine gives a feeling of pleasure which only lasts for a short time. The body wants to repeat this feeling, reinforcing the need to keep smoking.

Based on research, it is believed that Champix works by activating these receptors and blocking nicotine from attaching to them. Champix does not contain nicotine and is not addictive.<sup>1</sup>

People using Champix often find they enjoy smoking a cigarette less and sometimes find smoking becomes distasteful.

## Reference

1. Champix (2017): <https://www.ebs.tga.gov.au/ebs/picmi/picmirepository.nsf/pdf?OpenAgent&id=CP-2010-CMI-06101-3>

## Important recommendations and information about Champix

- It is not recommended in pregnancy or for women who are breast feeding.
- It is not recommended for under 18 year olds.
- If people have kidney problems, fits or convulsions, use insulin, asthma medications, blood thinners or have a history of mental illness it is important to discuss the use of Champix with their doctor.
- There have been some reports of Champix affecting mood and behaviour; this includes depression and thoughts of self-harm or harming others. That is why it is important for people to tell the doctor if there is a history of mental illness before starting to take Champix.
- It is important to use caution when driving and operating machinery until an individual knows how quitting and/or Champix may affect them.

## Using Champix

Champix is a 12-week or 24-week course of medication, depending on your doctor's advice and your quitting progress. The initial script covers four weeks of treatment, then it is important to return to your doctor for a follow up script for another eight weeks of medication.

Days one to three	0.5 mg once daily	White tablet
Days four to seven	0.5 mg twice daily	White tablet
Day eight to end of treatment (12 weeks)	1 mg twice daily	Blue tablet

Take Champix with a full glass of water. Some people find it better to take Champix with food.

It is recommended that you begin taking Champix medication while you are still smoking and then as Champix builds up in the body most people find they can reduce the number of cigarettes they smoke. It is then advised to have a go at quitting smoking between day eight and day 14.

Quitting smoking can take a little longer for some people so don't be discouraged if you're not ready to quit by day 14. Just work towards reducing your daily smoking and then have a go at quitting when you feel ready.

Many people who smoke have developed habits and routines around their smoking such as smoking with a cup of tea or coffee, smoking after meals or during breaks. Some emotions can also be triggers for people's smoking. Feeling stressed, angry, upset or even happy can be a trigger for smoking. Champix assists with the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal; however, most people find it helpful to use some strategies to manage their smoking triggers.

Champix is a useful aid in treating nicotine addiction, but motivation to quit smoking is still the most important ingredient for success. Getting some Quitline support can also increase your chances of successfully quitting.