



California State Board of Pharmacy

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NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY NOW AVAILABLE WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION
Pharmacists Can Furnish Nicotine Replacement Therapy for Smoking Cessation

SACRAMENTO -- The California State Board of Pharmacy announces that regulations are now in effect for pharmacists to furnish nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), to assist patients in smoking cessation. The regulation became effective January 25, 2016.

Pharmacists undergo lengthy education in drug therapy. Additionally, pharmacists dispensing the NRT must complete two hours of approved continuing education and ongoing biennial training on NRT.

To provide these services, pharmacists must ask specific questions about a patient's:

- current tobacco use and previous attempts to quit;
- whether she is pregnant or plans to become pregnant;
- heart attack within the last two weeks;
- history of palpitations, irregular heartbeats, or diagnosed with arrhythmia;
- frequent chest pain or diagnosed with unstable angina;
- nasal allergies; and
- diagnosed with temporal mandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction.

Based on the patient's answers and the pharmacist's professional judgment, the pharmacist may: furnish the NRT; provide the NRT with cautions; and/or refer the patient to a health care professional.

In 2014, nearly 17 out of every 100 US adults smoke cigarettes - - equating to about 40 million adults in the US, according to the CDC. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the US, accounting for 480,000 deaths every year. Over 16 million Americans live with smoking-related diseases.

Pharmacists obtained authority to provide these services pursuant to SB 493 (Hernandez), which authorizes the furnishing of NRT pursuant to a state protocol developed by the California State Board of Pharmacy and Medical Board of California.

"Quitting smoking is difficult to do, but important to patient health. Pharmacists can now offer greater assistance to individuals who have decided to quit smoking," said California State Board of Pharmacy Executive Officer Virginia Herold.

Click here to view the regulation: http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/laws_regs/1746_2_oaa.pdf

The CA State Board of Pharmacy protects and promotes the health and safety of California consumers by pursuing the highest quality of pharmacist care and the appropriate use of pharmaceuticals through education, communication, licensing, legislation, regulation and enforcement. For more information on the Board of Pharmacy, go to <http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/>

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