



Success of Nicotine Replacement Products Called Into Question

January 19, 2012 by *Patrick A. Malone*

Because the effects of nicotine are deadly, because cigarettes are so addictive (some research indicates it's **harder to kick nicotine than it is heroin**), any and all efforts should be made to quit smoking.

In trying to wean themselves off of “cancer sticks,” many people turn to nicotine replacement in the form of patches that deliver minute amounts of the chemical compound over time, or via chewing gum, inhalers or nasal spray. But a study released last week indicates that these measures aren't what they're cracked up to be.

As **widely reported**, a study of 787 adults who had quit smoking within the previous two years showed that nearly more than 3 in 10 had relapsed. Subjects who had used nicotine patches, gum, inhalers or nasal sprays were just as likely to relapse as those who had quit without them.

Published in the journal **Tobacco Control**, the findings contradict the results of several randomized clinical trials conducted before the FDA approved the nicotine replacement products. In those trials, subjects using the replacement products were as much as three times more likely than those who didn't to kick the smoking habit.

Patrick A. Malone
Patrick Malone & Associates, P.C.
1331 H Street N.W.
Suite 902
Washington, DC 20005

pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com
www.patrickmalonelaw.com
202-742-1500
202-742-1515 (fax)

“This may indicate that some heavily dependent smokers perceive NRT [nicotine replacement therapy] as a sort of ‘magic’ pill, and upon realizing it is not, they find themselves without support in their quitting efforts, doomed to failure,” the researchers wrote.

As you might expect, the product manufacturers found fault with the study. They claimed that most of the adults in the study who used nicotine replacement products failed to use them for the recommended eight weeks.

If you’re among the Americans who collectively spend more than \$1.5 billion on nicotine replacements every year and still can’t stop smoking, the researchers say it might be a function of time—you have a better chance of staying clean if you’re smoke-free for at least six months. And professional counseling is helpful too, although there’s no guarantee of success.

The one guarantee is that those who do quit smoking feel better, and almost every part of their bodies will show its appreciation for taking away the poison.

Patrick A. Malone
Patrick Malone & Associates, P.C.
1331 H Street N.W.
Suite 902
Washington, DC 20005

pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com
www.patrickmalonelaw.com
202-742-1500
202-742-1515 (fax)