A Practical Guide to Using Nicotine Pouches

Nicotine pouches have become a popular choice for people who want a tobacco-free nicotine experience. They are small, discreet, and easy to use, but if you are new to them, you might have questions about how they work and what to expect. This guide walks through the basics of using nicotine pouches, from choosing the right strength to proper placement and disposal.

What Are Nicotine Pouches?

Nicotine pouches are small, pre-portioned sachets that contain nicotine, plant fibres, flavourings, and a few other ingredients. Unlike snus, which is a moist tobacco product, nicotine pouches contain no tobacco leaf. They are designed to be placed between your gum and upper lip, where the nicotine is absorbed through the lining of your mouth. Because there is no smoke or vapour, they can be used in many places where smoking or vaping is not allowed.

The pouches come in a range of strengths, flavours, and formats. Some are slim and dry, others are larger and more moist. The variety can feel overwhelming at first, but the basic principle of use is the same across all brands.

Getting Started: Choosing Your First Pouch

If you are new to nicotine pouches, the most important decision is the nicotine strength. Pouches are typically labelled in milligrams per gram (mg/g) or simply in categories such as normal, strong, and extra strong. For someone who has never used nicotine, or who is a very light smoker or vaper, a low strength around 4 mg/g to 8 mg/g is a sensible starting point. Higher strengths, such as 12 mg/g and above, are intended for people who already have a significant nicotine tolerance.



Flavour is a personal choice. Common options include mint, citrus, berry, and coffee. If you are unsure, a straightforward peppermint or spearmint is a safe first choice because the flavour is clean and familiar.

How to Use Nicotine Pouches: Step by Step

Understanding **how to use nicotine pouches** correctly makes the experience more comfortable and effective. Here is the basic process:

1. **Wash your hands.** Clean hands prevent dirt or bacteria from getting into your mouth.
2. **Take one pouch from the can.** Most cans have a compartment in the lid to store used pouches. Some brands sell them in a plastic can with a small opening; simply pinch

one out.

3. **Place the pouch under your upper lip.** Slide it gently between your gum and lip, on either the left or right side. It should sit comfortably without poking your gum. You do not need to push it far; just far enough that it stays in place.
4. **Leave it there.** The pouch will start to release nicotine within a minute or two. You may notice a mild tingling or warming sensation in your gum at first. This is normal and usually fades after a few minutes.
5. **Keep it in for 15 to 45 minutes.** The exact time depends on the strength of the pouch and your own sensitivity. When the flavour fades or you no longer feel the nicotine, it is time to take it out. Never leave a pouch in for more than an hour.
6. **Remove and dispose of the pouch.** Take it out of your mouth and place it in a bin or the used pouch compartment in the lid. Do not flush pouches down the toilet as they do not biodegrade quickly and can cause blockages.

The first few times you try a new brand or strength, pay attention to how your body responds. If you feel dizzy, nauseous, or get hiccups, remove the pouch right away and take a break. This is a sign that the strength is too high for you at that moment.

Common Questions and Practical Tips

Which side of the mouth should I use?

The side does not matter. Some people alternate sides to give their gums a rest. If you use the same spot every time, the gum there can become irritated over time. Switching between left and right helps prevent that.

Can I drink while using a pouch?

Yes, you can drink water, tea, coffee, or soft drinks with a pouch in place. Very hot drinks may cause the pouch to release nicotine faster, so go slowly. Avoid alcohol in the mouth at the same time, as it can increase the absorption rate and lead to a stronger hit than expected.

What about sleeping or exercising with a pouch?

Using a pouch when lying down or sleeping is not recommended because saliva flow slows down and the pouch may stay in contact with your gum for too long, increasing the risk of gum irritation. During exercise, a pouch can be fine, but stay hydrated and watch for any signs of lightheadedness.



Storing and Caring for Your Pouches

Nicotine pouches are best stored in a cool, dry place. Heat can cause the pouches to dry out and lose flavour, while moisture can make them clump together. Keep the can tightly sealed when you are not using it. If you buy in bulk, store the extra cans in a cupboard away from direct sunlight.

Most pouches have a best-before date printed on the can. Using them after that date is not dangerous, but the nicotine may have degraded and the flavour will be weaker.

What to Watch Out For

While nicotine pouches are generally considered a cleaner alternative to smoking, they are not risk-free. Nicotine itself is an addictive substance, and using pouches can cause a few side effects, especially when you are new. These include gum soreness, hiccups, a scratchy throat, or a slight increase in heart rate. Most of these go away as your body adjusts, but if they persist, consider switching to a lower strength.

Another thing to be aware of is the environment. Used pouches should always go in the bin. They are not compostable due to the synthetic fibres in the pouch material. Some brands are working on biodegradable options, but for now, responsible disposal matters.

Knowing When to Stop

Part of learning how to use nicotine pouches is knowing when to take a break. If you find yourself reaching for a pouch every hour, or if you feel restless without one, you might want to cut back. Setting a limit on how many pouches you use per day can help keep your consumption in check. Pay attention to your body and give yourself pouch-free windows, especially before bed.



Ultimately, nicotine pouches are a tool. Used thoughtfully, they can fit into a routine without taking over. The key is to start low, go slow, and treat them with the same caution you would any substance that affects your system.

Whether you are switching from another nicotine product or trying pouches for the first time, the steps above give you a solid foundation. Take your time to find the strength and flavour that work for you, and remember that comfort comes with practice.