

# Use of stop-smoking medications in the United States before and after the introduction of varenicline

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## **Abstract**

**AIMS:** To evaluate trends in use of stop-smoking medications (SSMs) before and after varenicline (Chantix™) was introduced to the market-place in the United States, and to determine whether varenicline reached segments of the population unlikely to use other SSMs.

**DESIGN:** Cohort survey.

**SETTING:** United States.

**PARTICIPANTS:** A nationally representative sample of adult smokers in the United States interviewed as part of the International Tobacco Control Four Country Survey between 2004 and 2011. Primary analyses used cross-sectional data from 1737 smokers who attempted to quit (~450 per wave).

**MEASUREMENTS:** Reporting an attempt to quit smoking; use of each of the following types of SSMs for the purpose of quitting smoking: nicotine gum, nicotine patch, other nicotine replacement therapy, bupropion and varenicline.

**FINDINGS:** There was a significant increase in the rate of use of any SSM among quit attempters across the study period [odds ratio (OR) = 1.15, 95% confidence interval (CI) = 1.10-1.21 per year]. This increase was largest after varenicline was introduced (OR = 1.16, 95% CI = 1.07-1.26 per year); however, there was a decline in nicotine patch use during this time (OR = 0.87, 95% CI = 0.76-0.99 per year). Varenicline users were generally similar to users of other SSMs but differed from those who did not use any SSMs, in that they tended to be older (OR = 5.46, P = 0.024), to be white (OR = 2.33, P = 0.002), to have high incomes (OR = 1.85, P = 0.005), to have high nicotine dependence prior to quitting (OR = 2.40, P = 0.001) and to have used medication in the past (OR = 3.29, P < 0.001).

**CONCLUSIONS:** The introduction of varenicline in the United States coincided with a net increase in attempts to quit smoking and, among these, a net increase in use of stop-smoking medications. The demographic profile of varenicline users is similar to the profile of those who use other stop-smoking medications and different from the profile of those who attempt to quit without any medication.

## **Recommended Citation**

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