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## Anti-Smoking Drug Linked To Behavior Problems

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Monday, Feb 04, 2008 - 05:52 PM Updated: 06:33 PM



By Julie Henry, NBC17  
Health & Fitness  
Reporter

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CHAPEL HILL, N.C. --  
Chantix, a popular  
smoking cessation drug,  
is under scrutiny  
following a public health  
advisory from the U.S.  
Food and Drug  
Administration.

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The drug, which was approved in the U.S. in May 2006, was the first prescription medication to target nicotine receptors in the brain, reducing and often eliminating the desire to smoke in patients who are taking it.

Dr. Adam Goldstein, Professor of Medicine and director of UNC School of Medicine's Tobacco Prevention and Evaluation Program, says Chantix has become popular because of word of mouth among smokers.

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“It’s really important that patients understand that the drug has tremendous benefits to many of them,” he said. “For many of them, they’ve tried to quit multiple times without success using all other available agents.”

Other anti-smoking medications include nicotine replacement, which can come in gum, patch or inhaled form, and antidepressants, which are often used in combination with nicotine replacement.

Goldstein said that of the 50 patients in his program who have been prescribed Chantix, only two have stopped because of side effects that included nausea and bad dreams.

“I think for the great majority of patients it is one of the things they need to consider using, using though with caution and being informed by their providers that there could be some adverse side effects,” he said. “However, let’s be honest, almost every medication that we use in medicine has some adverse side effects.”

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