



FOR IMMEDIATE FREE RELEASE  
Tuesday, November 2, 2010  
[PDF Copy of Article](#)

Contact: John R. Polito  
[john@whyquit.com](mailto:john@whyquit.com)  
(843) 797-3234

## GlaxoSmithKline Continues Defrauding Smokers

by [John R. Polito](#), Nicotine Cessation Educator

Imagine corporate greed so great that it's willing to lie in attempting to destroy all remaining smoker confidence in their own natural quitting instincts, to quit smoking cold turkey.

On October 28, 2010, the day following an announcement that GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) had agreed to pay a [\\$750 million fine](#) in a fraud case, GSK's Consumer Healthcare division issued a [press release](#) asserting that, "NRT products offer a step-down therapy that **doubles** a smoker's **chances** of quitting **versus cold turkey**."

It's time to stop being afraid and simply say it. Through and through, GSK's statement is a fraudulent marketing misrepresentation.

Truth is, NRT (nicotine replacement therapy) has failed to prevail over cold turkey quitters in nearly every long-term quitting method survey conducted to date. GSK knows that just last year cold turkey quitters defeated NRT quitters in a [survey](#) conducted by four GSK consultants.

More recently, a 2010 United Kingdom (UK) National Health System (NHS) stop smoking program services report found that even as early as 4 weeks into quitting, when NRT quitters still have nicotine circulating in their bloodstreams, and weeks of additional NRT use remaining before needing to adjust to its



### The English smoking treatment services: one-year outcomes

NRT only - 15.2%

Bupropion only - 14.4%

NRT + Bupropion - 7.4%

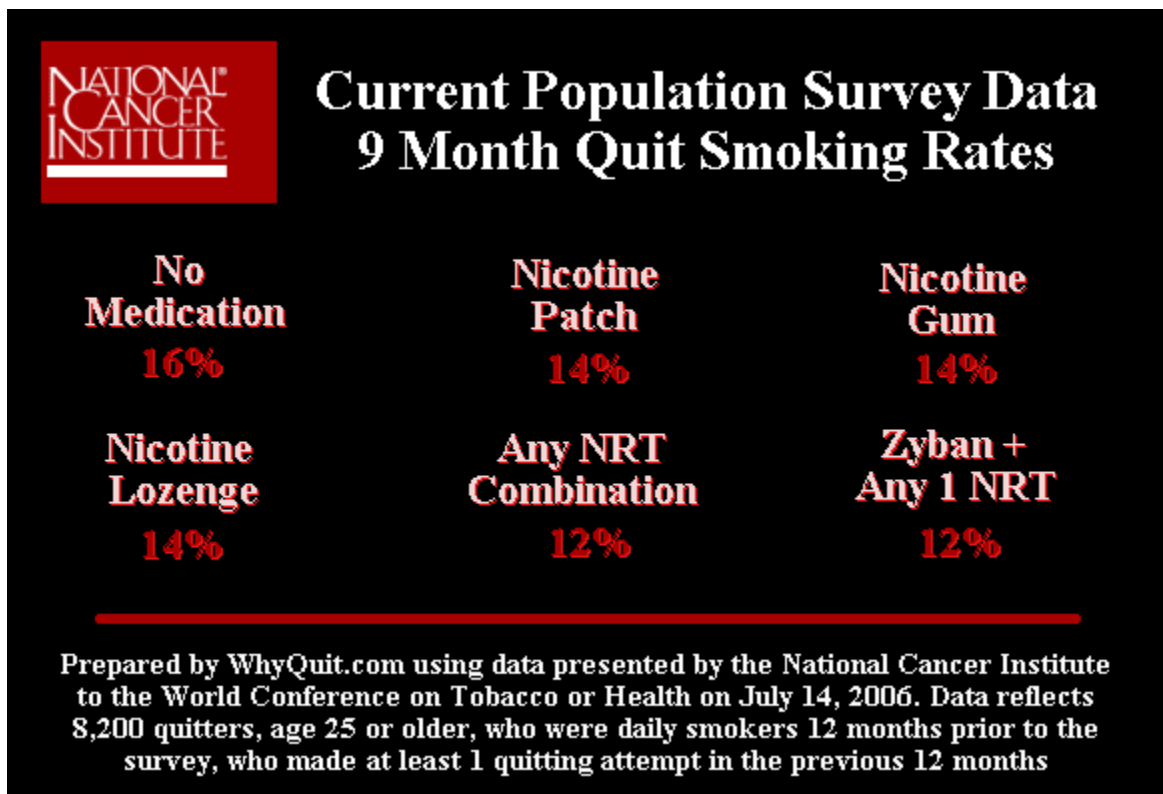
No medication - 25.5%

*Addiction*, 100 (Suppl. 2), Pages 59-69, April 2005

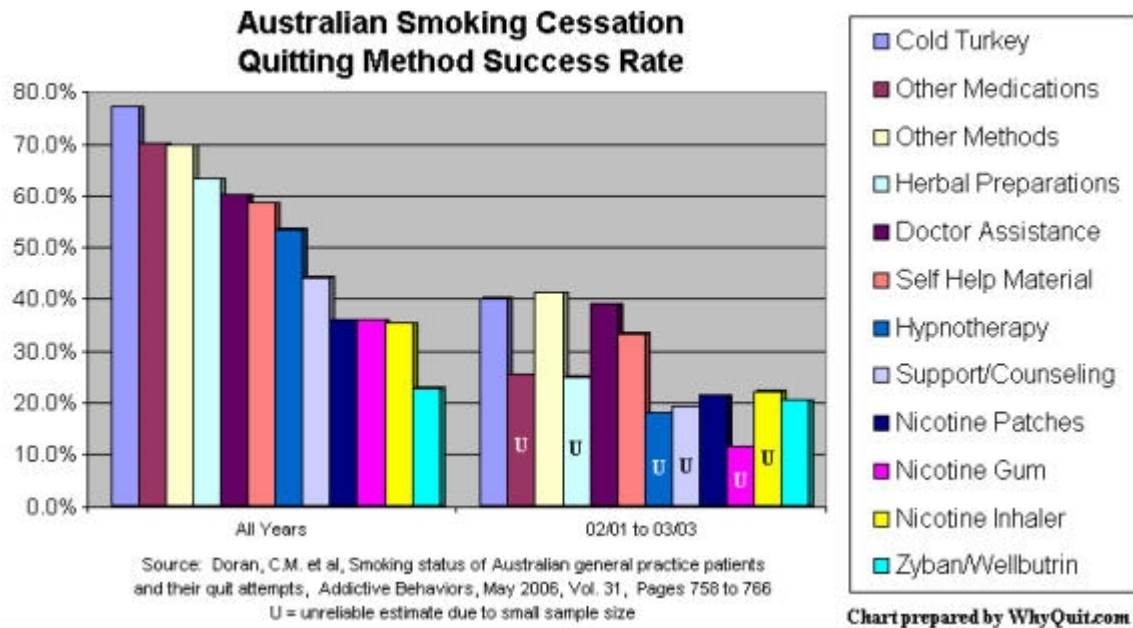
absence, that those quitting without NRT were actually doing slightly better ([see page 59](#)).

The only study of long-term UK NHS quitting program rates was published in 2005 and analyzed success at one-year. It found that at one-year 25.5% quitting cold turkey were still not smoking versus 15.2% of NRT quitters and 14.4% of Zyban (bupropion) quitters ([see bottom of Table 6](#)).

The only official U.S. government quitting method survey was conducted by the National Cancer Institute and featured in a front page [Wall Street Journal article](#) on February 8, 2007. It followed 8,200 smokers and found that after 9 months cold turkey quitters narrowly prevailed over quitters using the nicotine gum, nicotine lozenge, nicotine patch and Zyban.



Cold turkey quitters clobbered NRT and Zyban quitters in a [2006 Australian](#) quitting method survey, and an older survey published in the [September 2002](#) edition of the Journal of the American Medical Association concluded that "NRT appears no longer effective in increasing long-term successful cessation in California smokers."



While true that NRT prevails over placebo inside clinical trials, GSK is well aware that cold turkey isn't placebo, and that placebo isn't a real quitting method. Further, GSK knows that the placebo quitter's withdrawal expectations are the exact opposite of the cold turkey quitter's.

Unlike cold turkey, where the quitter fully expects to meet, greet and defeat withdrawal, the placebo group within clinical trials joined the study seeking weeks or months of free replacement nicotine that they hoped would diminish withdrawal's intensity. Instead, they were randomly assigned to inert placebo look-a-likes.

**Conclusion: "NRT appears no longer effective in increasing long-term successful cessation in California smokers."**

*Journal of the American Medical Association, Volume 288, Number 10, Pages 1260-1264, Sept. 11, 2002*

So why do FDA approved quit smoking products prevail over placebo inside clinical trials yet fall flat on their face when going head-to-head against real cold turkey quitters? While placebo controls are the gold standard in most study areas, researchers have known since the very [first nicotine gum studies](#) that you cannot blind or hide full-blown withdrawal from experienced quitters who've become experts at knowing exactly how it feels.

Imagine having tried quitting four times previously and then joining an NRT clinical study hoping to receive six months worth of free GlaxoSmithKline nicotine lozenges. Now imagine your frustration upon once again recognizing full-blown withdrawal, and realizing that you'd been given placebo lozenges instead. It's why drug addiction clinical trials measure frustrated and fulfilled expectations, not product efficacy and worth.

Although [research](#) has alerted the pharmaceutical industry to the fact that placebo-controlled quitting studies are not blind, it hasn't stopped heavy industry reliance upon them. In fact, the most disturbing placebo quitting sham research yet, the NicVax clinical trials, are now nearing completion.

An indispensable ingredient of sham clinical trial quitting research is inclusion of high quality counseling or support, as researchers know that 100 minutes of program contact time can triple success rates.

Most recently, the Pfizer studies that gained Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of Chantix involved a record number of counseling/support sessions, twenty-five. Truth is, not even the FDA knows the effectiveness of Chantix as a stand-alone quitting aid, the manner in which it will be used by nearly all users, as there is no such study.

But counseling and support isn't offered in a manner designed to benefit placebo quitters: daily counseling/support through peak withdrawal on the 3rd day, with intense focus upon their first two weeks. Instead, sessions are usually only once a week with content focus primarily upon proper quitting product use, not on how to survive without chemical stimulation of brain dopamine pathways.

While GSK clinical trials are engineered for success, out here in the real-world the emperor has no clothes. What GSK has not and will not reveal to smokers is that this year cold turkey will generate far more long-term ex-smokers than all other quitting methods combined. In fact, GSK has spent untold millions attempting to deceive smokers into believing that only super heroes are able to quit cold turkey.

Truth is, although the data in the above American Cancer Society quitting method chart is clearly a bit dated, that out here in the real-world cold turkey remains king.

**Table 13. Meta-analysis: Efficacy of and estimated abstinence rates for total amount of contact time (n = 35 studies)**

Total amount of contact time	Number of arms	Estimated odds ratio (95% C.I.)	Estimated abstinence rate (95% C.I.)
No minutes	16	1.0	11.0
1-3 minutes	12	1.4 (1.1, 1.8)	14.4 (11.3, 17.5)
4-30 minutes	20	1.9 (1.5, 2.3)	18.8 (15.6, 22.0)
31-90 minutes	16	3.0 (2.3, 3.8)	26.5 (21.5, 31.4)
91-300 minutes	16	3.2 (2.3, 4.6)	28.4 (21.3, 35.5)
>300 minutes	15	2.8 (2.0, 3.9)	25.5 (19.2, 31.7)

**Source: June 2000 Clinical Practice Guideline, Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence, Chapter 5, Evidence. Stop smoking rates from long-term studies of at least 5 months. Chantix studies involved up to 25 counseling sessions, each a maximum of 10 minutes in length, or 250 minutes maximum.**

**Table 3. Percent of Current and Former US Adult Smokers\* Using Recommended Cessation Methods**

	Current Smokers (%)*	Former Smokers (%)*
Followed recommended therapy (drug therapy and/or counseling)	15.1	6.8
Quit "cold turkey" or slowly decreased amount smoked	82.4	91.4
Other	2.5	2.1

\*Weighted percents are age-adjusted; data for the analyses were derived from the National Health Interview Survey, 2000, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Source: American Cancer Society's "Cancer Facts and Figures 2003" report, Table 3, Page 25**

---

I, [John R. Polito](#), am solely responsible for the content of this article.  
Any errors brought to my attention will be immediately corrected.

## Related Reading

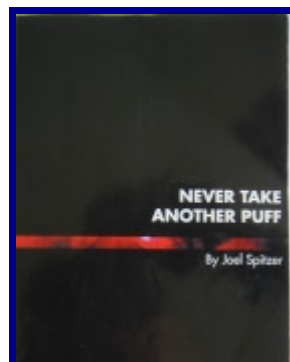
- Polito JR [Little communication in failed war against smoking](#), August 8, 2010
- Polito JR [Addiction to Smoking Nicotine a Mental Illness and Disease](#), April 12, 2010
- Polito JR [Smokefree.gov really Buymeds.now](#), March 24, 2010
- Nitzkin, JL [American Association of Public Health Physicians Calls for End to Cold Turkey Discrimination](#), March 21, 2010
- Polito JR [CDC Ignores Cold Turkey Quitters](#), March 11, 2010
- Siegel M [New Study Shows That Even Extended Nicotine Replacement Therapy is Extremely Ineffective; Unaided Quitting Rates are Far Better](#), March 4, 2010
- Siegel M [Four Members of FDA Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee Have Received Pharmaceutical Money; Influence of Industry on FDA Grows](#), March 2, 2010
- Siegel M [GlaxoSmithKline Given a Seat on FDA Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee](#), March 1, 2010
- Chapman S and MacKenzie R [The Global Research Neglect of Unassisted Smoking Cessation: Causes and Consequences](#), PLOS Medicine, February 2010
- Chapman S [Smoking Racket](#), ABC.net, February 10, 2010
- Polito JR [Five facts Chantix ads keep hidden](#), WhyQuit, December 29, 2009
- Polito JR [UW-CTRI's Holiday Health Media Manipulation](#), WhyQuit, December 16, 2009
- Polito JR [Petition for Honest Quit Smoking Studies](#), WhyQuit, December 2, 2009
- Polito JR [University of Wisconsin: World's Pharm Nicotine Sales Center](#), WhyQuit, November 12, 2009
- Polito JR [Free quit smoking ebook's 2 millionth download](#), WhyQuit, October 12, 2009
- Polito JR [ALA's Not-On-Tobacco school quit smoking program not effective](#), WhyQuit, September 7, 2009
- Polito JR [Tobacco control integrity champ demands review of U.S. cessation policy](#), WhyQuit, July 18, 2009
- Siegel M [IN MY VIEW: Effectiveness of Nicotine Replacement Therapy Needs to Be Re-Examined](#), July 17, 2009
- Polito JR [Nicotine patch inventor fudges patch study findings](#), WhyQuit, July 12, 2009
- Polito JR [Cold turkey trounces pharmacology in GlaxoSmithKline quitting study](#), WhyQuit, July 9, 2009
- Siegel M [Pharmaceutical Money-Related Bias in Smoking Cessation Research is Now Readily Apparent; New Article Demonstrates How This Bias Pushes Medication](#), July 8, 2009
- Siegel M [Initial National Expert Panel on Smoking Cessation Also Had Severe Conflicts of Interest with Big Pharma; Repeating the Mistake: Inexcusable](#), The Rest of the Story, April 7, 2009



- Siegel M [New Study Shows that Nicotine Replacement Therapy is Ineffective for Gradual Smoking Cessation, But Concludes the Opposite](#), The Rest of the Story, January 13, 2009
- Polito JR [Have smokers been hoodwinked and bamboozled by placebos?](#), WhyQuit, Nov. 14, 2008
- Polito JR [Smoking cessation trials](#), Canadian Medical Association Journal, February 29, 2008
- Polito JR [Pfizer's Chantix Continues Killing Quitters](#), WhyQuit, October 22, 2008
- Polito JR [Chantix and Champix mental health safety assurances contrary to evidence](#), WhyQuit, May 21, 2008 2008
- Polito JR [U.S. quit smoking policy integrity drowns in pharmaceutical influence](#), WhyQuit, May 13, 2008 2008
- Siegel M [Press Release on Smoking Cessation Guidelines Fails to Disclose Financial Conflict of Interest of Expert Panelists](#), The Rest of the Story, May 12, 2008
- Siegel M [NIH Expert Panel Recommends Smoking Cessation Pharmaceuticals for Every Smoking Patient; Panel Chair and 8 Members Have Financial Ties to Big Pharma](#), The Rest of the Story, May 8, 2008
- Polito JR [Does updated tobacco treatment "Guideline" reflect sham science?](#), WhyQuit, May 5, 2008
- Polito JR [FDA Chantix Handling Betrayed Public Health](#), WhyQuit, February 29, 2008
- Siegel M [Is Receiving a Placebo the Same Thing as Trying to Quit Cold Turkey? The Limitations of NRT Clinical Trials](#), The Rest of the Story, March 16, 2007
- Polito JR [Flawed research equates placebo to cold turkey](#), WhyQuit, March 12, 2007
- Millstone K [Nixing the patch: Smokers quit cold turkey](#), Columbia University, March 7, 2007
- Siegel M [Wall Street Journal Article Highlights Financial Conflicts of Interest of Chair of Federal Smoking Cessation Guidelines Panel](#), The Rest of the Story, February 8, 2007
- Helliker, K [NICOTINE FIX - Behind Antismoking Policy, Influence of Drug Industry](#), Wall Street Journal, February 8, 2007
- Siegel M [Financial Ties Between Head of Smoking Cessation Guideline Panels and Big Pharma Run Deep](#), The Rest of the Story, January 25, 2007

---

## Have you read our free quitting e-books?



## Read both and experience the **"POWER" of knowledge!**

(Click each book's image to learn more about it before downloading)

---

### Learn More About Stopping Smoking

- [WhyQuit.com](#) - the Internet's oldest forum devoted to the art, science and psychology of cold turkey quitting, the quitting method used by 80-90% of all successful long-term ex-smokers.
- ["Never Take Another Puff"](#) - a free 149 page quit smoking book in PDF format by Joel Spitzer of Chicago, the Internet's leading authority on cold turkey quitting and nicotine dependency recovery. Joel's free book is an insightful collection of almost 100 short quitting articles on almost every cessation topic imaginable.
- ["Freedom from Nicotine - The Journey Home"](#) - this link is to the free 240 page PDF version John R. Polito's new nicotine dependency recovery book. WhyQuit's 1999 founder and a former 30-year heavy smoker, John provides a comprehensive yet easy to follow road-map to freedom from nicotine.
- [Joel's Library](#) - Joel's Library is home to more than 100 original short articles by Joel Spitzer on every quitting topic imaginable, home to 64 video quitting lessons and home to daily lesson guides that walk new quitters through the first two weeks.
- [Nicotine Addiction 101](#) - WhyQuit's guide to nicotine dependency.
- [Freedom](#) - the Internet's only 100% nicotine-free peer messageboard support forum. Explore hundreds of thousands of archived member posts.
- [Nicotine Cessation Topic Index](#) - an alphabetical subject matter index to hundreds of nicotine cessation support group discussions at [Freedom](#).
- [50 Quitting Tips](#) - A short summary of quit smoking tips



[WhyQuit.Com](#) | [Joel's Library](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Link to Us](#) | [What's New?](#)

Written and last updated on November 2, 2010 by [John R. Polito](#).