

Cytisine offers effective option for smoking cessation

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The plant-based drug cytisine offers an effective alternative for smokers trying to quit who experience troubling side effects with other smoking cessation treatments, a study published Tuesday by JAMA found.

Nearly 12 percent of those who used the drug, marketed as Tabex and as part of other smoking cessation products, for a 25-day treatment period were not smoking six months later, the data showed.

Although more than 70 percent of those taking cytisine reported side effects related to treatment — including sleep disturbances and “abnormal” dreams — the majority of them were mild.

“Our study findings add to the evidence that cytisine is an effective smoking cessation aid,” study co-author Ryan Courtney told UPI in an email.

The trial “found that, overall, cytisine was associated with significantly fewer adverse events compared [with] varenicline,” which is marketed as Chantix, said Courtney, a senior lecturer at the University of New South Wales in Australia.

Just under 11 percent of the smokers who used cytisine reported experiencing nausea as a result of treatment, compared with more than 27 percent of those on varenicline, the data showed.

“Nausea is often a key reason cited for smokers discontinuing [smoking cessation] treatment,” Courtney said.