

Buprenorphine/Naloxone (Suboxone®) Information

Buprenorphine is an opioid. This means it is related to drugs and medications like oxycodone, morphine, fentanyl, and heroin. It is used to treat opioid addiction. It may also be used to treat chronic pain.

Suboxone is buprenorphine co-formulated with a small amount naloxone. Naloxone is an opioid blocking agent that is only active if the drug is not taken by mouth. Suboxone comes in a film or tablet form, which is placed under the tongue until it dissolves.

In order to start Suboxone, you must not be taking other opioids.

If you are taking other opioids when you start Suboxone, you may experience precipitated withdrawal syndrome. Symptoms of withdrawal can include nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, abdominal pain, anxiety, and severe body aches. Your physician will explain how to start the medication to avoid this.

At your physician appointment, you will be asked to sign a consent form. The consent form outlines expectations, including:

- Keeping all doctor and counselor appointments
- Acting in a courteous manner in the office
- Not selling, sharing, or giving medications to other individuals
- Taking the medication exactly as prescribed
- Storing the medication safely and securely
- Not getting opioids from other physicians or pharmacies
- Not using any sedatives while taking buprenorphine, especially benzodiazepines (drugs like Xanax, Valium, and Klonopin) and alcohol

Suboxone and other drugs alone are usually not sufficient to treat addiction. You will agree to participate in counseling and/or patient education and relapse prevention programs as recommended.

Side effects to buprenorphine can include constipation, nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, dizziness, headache, liver inflammation, anxiety, shortness of breath, chest tightness, itching, rash, and allergic reactions.