

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS

How To Take Buprenorphine At Home



General Guidelines

- If possible, **have a family member or trusted friend with you** during your first dose to help monitor how you're feeling and assist if needed.
- **Avoid alcohol and sedative medications like benzodiazepines** (e.g., Xanax) while taking buprenorphine.
- **Wait until you experience severe withdrawal symptoms before taking your first dose.** Waiting for these severe symptoms ensures that buprenorphine will work effectively. These symptoms include:
 - Intense muscle pain
 - Severe anxiety
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Rapid heartbeat

Warning: Precipitated Withdrawal

Taking buprenorphine too soon after using opioids like heroin, fentanyl, or pain pills can cause precipitated withdrawal—a sudden worsening of symptoms within 30-60 minutes. Unlike common side effects, these symptoms are severe and require medical attention. precipitated withdrawal symptoms include:

- Intense muscle pain or cramping
- Severe nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Sweating, chills, or worsening goosebumps
- Sudden anxiety, agitation, or feeling very unwell
- Enlarged pupils, uncontrollable shaking, or fast heartbeat

If you experience these symptoms after your first dose, **call your doctor immediately.**

Common Side Effects

You may experience side effects after your first dose. These are normal and should improve as your body adjusts to the medication. They include:

- Headache
- Mild dizziness
- Numbness or tingling
- Drowsiness or trouble sleeping (insomnia)
- Stomach pain, vomiting, or constipation
- Redness, pain, or numbness in your mouth
- Feeling “drunk” or intoxicated
- Trouble concentrating

Starting Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)

The goal of MOUD is to reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms quickly. Follow these instructions closely to avoid worsening symptoms.

Before You Begin

- **A step-by-step guide** is provided on the reverse side to help you start your medication.
- **Start with Step 1** if you are NOT currently using buprenorphine.
- **If you are currently using buprenorphine**, skip Step 1 and go directly to Step 2.

Keep out of reach of children. If a child consumes this medication or you begin to feel worse or have adverse reactions, visit your local hospital emergency department or call Poison Control toll-free at (800) 222-1222.

Step-by-Step Guide for Taking Buprenorphine

1

Start here if you are **NOT** currently using buprenorphine.
If you are currently using buprenorphine, skip this step and start on Step 2.

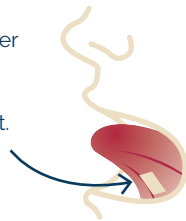


- **Do NOT take buprenorphine if your symptoms are mild or just starting.**
- **Wait until you have multiple severe withdrawal symptoms**, such as:
 - Achy joints or bones
 - Fast heartbeat
 - Anxiety or irritability
 - Flu-like symptoms (runny nose, watery eyes)
 - Nausea, diarrhea, or vomiting
 - Uncontrollable shaking
 - Yawning
 - Loss of appetite

2

First Dose: Take an 8 mg buprenorphine film or tablet.

Place under
tongue.
Do not
swallow it.



- **Take everything out of your mouth** (gum, food, drinks).
- **Wet your mouth with water**, then swallow or spit it out.
- **Place the 8 mg film or tablet under your tongue and let it dissolve.**
 - Do not suck on or swallow the film/tablet. If you swallow it, it will not work.
 - Do not eat, drink, or talk for 3-5 minutes while it dissolves.
 - You may spit out your saliva once the medicine is fully dissolved.

3

Wait 30-60 Minutes.

If you are still feeling withdrawal symptoms take another 4 mg.

4 mg is 1/2 of an 8 mg film OR 4 mg is 1/2 of an 8 mg tablet



- **Check how you feel after 30-60 minutes:**
 - **If you feel better**, do not take more medication.
 - **If you still have symptoms**, take 4 mg more (half a film or tablet).
 - **If your symptoms get worse quickly** after the first dose, you may be experiencing precipitated withdrawal. Call your doctor immediately.
- **Do not exceed 16 mg total on Days 1-3.**

4

Keep Track of Your Daily Dose.



- **Make a note of your total daily dosage:**
 - I took 8 mgs (1 whole film or tablet) in total today.
 - I took 12 mgs (1 and 1/2 films or tablets) in total today.
 - I took 16 mgs (2 whole films or tablets) in total today.
- **If you still have withdrawal symptoms after 16 mg in 24 hours**, please call your doctor to discuss a higher dose.

5

Day 2 Onward.



- **Take the same amount you took in total on Day 1** as your daily dose.
- **If you still feel moderate to severe symptoms after 30-60 minutes**, take another 4 mg.
- **Do not exceed 16 mg total per day** without speaking to your doctor.
- **Plan to see your provider within the next ___ days.**