

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBOXONE

What is Suboxone?

Suboxone is a brand name for a combination of the drugs *buprenorphine* (an opioid, also known as Subutex) and *naloxone* (also known as Narcan). It is a first-line medicine used to treat opioid use disorder/opiate addiction.

Suboxone helps to reduce cravings for opioids and reduce withdrawal symptoms. It also helps lower the risk of abusing or relapsing by using other opioids

It is put under the tongue or in the cheek. Suboxone lowers the chance of getting high if it is injected.

Who may benefit from Suboxone?

Suboxone is a medicine that is best used for people to *maintain* recovery from opioids, but can be used to start as well.

Suboxone is a good choice for people who need treatment for opioid use disorder, but can't go to daily methadone clinics, need to regularly visit their doctors' offices for other reasons, or don't like the tiring effects of methadone.

Suboxone also may help people who methadone is not a good option. Some examples are: older people, people taking sedating medicine, and people with alcohol use problems.

Who shouldn't have Suboxone?

You shouldn't take Suboxone if you have liver problems, alcohol use problems, or certain breathing problems.

Patients that are maintaining with methadone should not use Suboxone without carefully decreasing the dose to *less than* 30 mg daily. Using Suboxone and higher doses of methadone can risk withdrawal or relapse.

Not enough is known about Suboxone use in pregnant or breastfeeding women.

Where can I get Suboxone?

Suboxone can be prescribed at your doctor's office by a trained prescriber. Many patients find this easier than going to a methadone clinic.

How often do I need to get Suboxone?

A Suboxone program includes meetings with a counselor and your doctor. After a stage of daily prescriptions, you may be increased to every other day prescriptions, or up to a 30-day supply.

Suboxone can be taken *once daily, once every other day, or once every 2-3 days*, depending on the dose.

What are the side effects of Suboxone?

In people *currently* using opioids, Suboxone may cause withdrawal symptoms.

Common side effects are headaches, pain, and sweating.

Can I overdose on Suboxone?

Yes. However, the risk of overdosing on Suboxone is much *lower* than methadone, other prescription opiates, or heroin. Naloxone (an ingredient in Suboxone) helps to lower the risk of overdose.

How much does Suboxone cost?

It depends on your insurance. You may need to file for a prior authorization before starting Suboxone. Not all insurance providers cover Suboxone.

How long would I be taking Suboxone?

Some people take Suboxone for their whole lives. Other people take Suboxone for shorter periods.

Am I just getting addicted to another substance?

Suboxone has an opioid in it. This means Suboxone causes some opioid dependence.