

# What you need to know about taking buprenorphine - “Bu-pre-nor-feen” (Also may be called “Bupe”; *Suboxone*®, *Subutex*®, *Sublocade*®)

## Day 1: Have you used opioids like heroin or pain pills within the last 10 days? YES

If yes, you need to wait until opioids are partly out of your body before taking buprenorphine.

You will know when your body is ready by checking **timing and feelings**.

### Timing

- Wait at least 12 hours since you last took **heroin or pain pills**
- Wait at least 48-72 hours since you last took **methadone**



**Feelings of withdrawal:** You should have **at least 3** of these:

- ✓ Shaking or tremors
- ✓ Feeling anxious or cranky
- ✓ Chills or sweating
- ✓ Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
- ✓ Runny nose and eyes
- ✓ Joint and body aches
- ✓ Heavy yawning, goosebumps, enlarged pupils

## Day 1: Have you used opioids within the last 10 days? NO

If **NO**, then buprenorphine can help stop cravings. You can start buprenorphine after seeing a prescriber.

### Here's how buprenorphine works:

Buprenorphine comes in pills/tablets, strips/films and a long-acting injection.

1. Wet your mouth with a sip of water before taking the pills or strips; this helps buprenorphine dissolve faster.



2. Put the pill or strip **under your tongue**.

3. Keep it there for **at least 4 minutes for strips and 6 minutes for pills**.<sup>1</sup>

4. After medicine is completely dissolved, take a large sip of water, swish gently around teeth and gums, and swallow water. Then, do not eat or drink for 30 minutes & wait at least 1 hour before brushing teeth to avoid damage to teeth.

5. Follow up with provider to see if buprenorphine dose needs to be changed.

- ❖ Buprenorphine gets into your body through the lining of your mouth, most of it gets into your body within 4 to 6 minutes after you put it in your mouth.
  - It does **not** work if you swallow it immediately; swallowing buprenorphine will not help with cravings, withdrawal feelings, or get you high.
  - Do not give your strip or pill to someone else after it has been in your mouth for more than 4 to 6 minutes. It won't work. Most of the medicine is gone.
  - Do not swallow the pill or strip. It won't work.
  - Do not swallow a pill or strip that somebody else has had in their mouth or swallowed. It won't work.
  - Snorting and injecting buprenorphine causes withdrawal.

<sup>1</sup>Lintzeris N. et al. A Randomised Controlled Trial of Sublingual Buprenorphine-Naloxone Film Versus Tablets in the Management of Opioid Dependence. Drug Alcohol

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*This information is intended to be used with guidance from your prescriber. This document – Patient Guide to Buprenorphine for Carceral Settings– does not substitute for instructions from your prescriber and other medical guidance. This document represents evidence-based clinical treatment and standards of care from SAMHSA, ASAM and other validated data-based treatment guidelines.*