



GETTING STARTED ON BUPRENORPHINE: *High Dose Initiation Method* for New Patients

Patient Name _____ Provider Name _____ Date _____

The High Dose initiation method involves discontinuing use of opioids, waiting until you experience severe withdrawal, and then taking a large initial dose of buprenorphine on DAY 1. After this, you will take your regular, daily maintenance dose on DAY 2 and each day thereafter.

This method may be right for you if:

- You are dependent on fentanyl
- You are *not* currently using methadone (High Dose initiation is not recommended if you have recently taken methadone)
- You and your provider agree this method is most appropriate for your situation

Wait for severe withdrawal, including at least two of the following signs, before following the DAY 1 dosing method below.

- Large pupils
- Goosebumps
- Runny nose & tearing
- Sweating
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Yawning

Severe withdrawal often occurs between 6-36 hours after last fentanyl use. If you feel your withdrawal is “not that bad”, it is likely too soon to start taking buprenorphine. Starting too soon puts you at risk of feeling worse for a short period of time.

DAY 1 DOSING METHOD FOR FENTANYL USERS

STEP 1

Wait for severe withdrawal, including at least two of the signs listed above.

STEP 2

Take 16 mg (2 strips or tablets) of buprenorphine and wait 1 hour.

STEP 3

Take another 8 mg (1 strip or tablet) of buprenorphine and wait 1 hour.

STEP 4

If needed, take another 8mg (1 strip or tablet) of buprenorphine.

DO NOT REPEAT! The maximum total dose for DAY 1 is 32mg (4 strips or tablets).

Additional Prescriptions (circle all that apply)

You have also been prescribed medication for overdose and withdrawal symptoms.

Medications for most patients:

Narcan (<i>naloxone</i>) in case of overdose (see instructions on last page)	Clonidine for restlessness, hot flashes, shakiness, tremor, sweating, goosebumps, runny nose, tearing	Vistaril (<i>hydroxyzine</i>) for anxiety	Zofran (<i>ondansetron</i>) for nausea	Neurontin (<i>gabapentin</i>) for restlessness, anxiety, sleep disturbance
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Additional medications for some patients with targeted symptoms:

Bentyl (<i>dicyclomine</i>) for abdominal cramping	Advil/Motrin (<i>ibuprofen</i>) for muscles aches, joint pain, and headache	Remeron (<i>mirtazapine</i>) for insomnia
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DAILY DOSE (DAY 2 AND ONWARD)

Daily Dose: Take _____ mg (_____ strips or tablets) once daily

This is the maintenance dose that you will take every day while receiving medication assisted treatment at Ideal Option.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**Prescription Pick-Up**

Your prescription should be sent to the pharmacy shortly after your appointment. If your prescription is not ready for pick-up within a few hours, please call 1-877-522-1275 (press option #1, then #3).

Next Visits

Please schedule your virtual, New Patient Next Day Follow-Up appointment for (date): _____

Please schedule your next in-clinic visit (date): _____

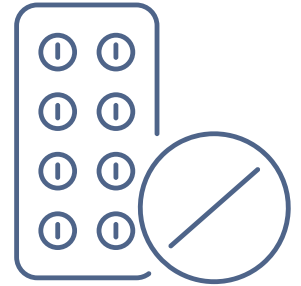
Nurse Care Manager

Your New Patient Next Day Follow-Up appointment will likely address many of your concerns or questions related to dosing and/or withdrawal symptoms. However, feel free to reach out to a nurse at any time by calling 1-877-522-1275 (press #1, then #6).

BUPRENORPHINE INITIATION

Buprenorphine (Suboxone®, Subutex®, Zubsolv®) is a safe and effective medication that will help you stop using opioids like fentanyl, heroin, and pain pills.






The first phase of treatment with buprenorphine is called “initiation” and can last up to 7 days or more. When doing initiation at home, it’s important to get the timing and dose of buprenorphine right so you don’t enter precipitated withdrawal, a severe form of withdrawal that can happen quickly if you start taking buprenorphine too soon. **Precipitated withdrawal is very unlikely to occur with High Dose initiation if you wait until severe withdrawal with at least 2 objective signs of withdrawal.**



HOW TO TAKE BUPRENORPHINE




BEFORE

For **30 MINUTES BEFORE** dosing,
DO NOT:

-  Brush your teeth
-  Drink coffee
-  Drink cloudy liquids like milk or coffee creamer
-  Eat yogurt
-  Use tobacco or vaping products




These may reduce or block absorption of your medication.

DOSING


-  Drink a few sips of warm water before taking your medication.
-  Place the strip or tablet under your tongue. If your dose requires two strips/tablets, place one on each side under the tongue. Do not place more than two strips/tablets in your mouth at a time.
-  **DO NOT** drink, eat, smoke, or vape during this time.
-  **DO NOT** spit out or swallow any saliva while the medication is dissolving.
-  When the medication is completely dissolved, spit out any accumulated saliva.
-  If your dose requires more than two strips or tablets, complete dosing with the first two strips/tabs, and then repeat the steps above for any additional medication.
-  After spitting, take a large sip of water, swish it around your teeth and gums, and swallow.

AFTER

After dosing, it’s OK to:

-  Drink any liquids
-  Eat any foods
-  Use tobacco or vaping products

After dosing, **WAIT 1 HOUR,** and then:

-  Brush your teeth to remove any traces of the medication.

REMINDERS

- **Don't combine opioids with other substances.** The use of opioids, including buprenorphine, with alcohol or sedatives such as benzodiazepines (Xanax, Ativan, Valium), nerve pain medications (Lyrica, Gabapentin), and prescription sleep medications (Ambien, Lunesta) may increase the risk of respiratory depression, which can be fatal.
- **Avoid other opioids.** When using the high dose initiation method, any other medication or substances that contain opioids should be avoided, unless approved by your provider.
- **Check before starting new medications.** Speak with your provider before starting any new medication while taking buprenorphine.
- **Safe storage is critical.** Store your prescriptions away from other people, especially children, preferably in a secure location such as a lockbox or safe. We cannot replace lost or stolen medication.
- **Use Narcan or Kloxxado in the event of an overdose.** First, call 911. Then, gently insert the tip of the nozzle into one nostril until your fingers on either side of the nozzle are against the bottom of the person's nose. Press the plunger firmly to give the dose of the nasal spray. Remove the nasal spray from the nostril after giving the dose. Repeat every 2-3 minutes until the person responds.
- **Protect your teeth.** Buprenorphine may cause tooth decay. After the medicine has completely dissolved, spit out any accumulated saliva. Then, take a large sip of water, swish it around your teeth and gums, and swallow. Wait one hour before brushing your teeth.
- **Community resources.** Ask the front desk for information on recovery support services in your local community.

