

BUPRENORPHINE SELF START

SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR A SUCCESSFUL INITIATION

When did you last use opioids?



- Keep track of the **day** and **time** you last used opioids.
- Plan a break between your last opioid use and first dose of buprenorphine to avoid precipitated withdrawal.

Take a break



The opioid you're using impacts when you can start buprenorphine:

- **Fentanyl** OR if you aren't sure if fentanyl is in your supply: wait **at least 24 hours**
- **Short-acting opioids** (like heroin, oxycontin, morphine): wait **12-16 hours**
- If you take **60 mg or less of methadone daily**: wait **48-72 hours**
- If you take **more than 60 mg of methadone daily**: talk to your healthcare provider for guidance

What are your four worst withdrawal symptoms?



Withdrawal symptoms indicate opioids are leaving your body. Generally having 4 or more withdrawal symptoms is a sign you're ready to start buprenorphine.

- ▶ Yawning
- ▶ Restlessness
- ▶ Anxiety or irritability
- ▶ Body aches
- ▶ Enlarged pupils
- ▶ Runny nose or tearing eyes
- ▶ Goosebumps
- ▶ Sweating or chills
- ▶ Twitching, tremors, or shaking
- ▶ Stomach cramps, diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting

Before you start...



1. Ask your healthcare provider for **medications for opioid withdrawal symptoms**.
2. Have the **clinic phone number** if you need to contact your healthcare team.

You are ready to start buprenorphine when you...

1. Have taken a long enough break from using opioids **AND**
2. Have at least four or more withdrawal symptoms.

How to start buprenorphine...

- Step 1:** Take a low dose (2 mg) to see how you feel and wait 30 minutes.
Step 2: If after 30 minutes you feel...



THE SAME OR BETTER

Continue taking 2-4 mg every 2-4 hours until your withdrawal symptoms are managed **OR** you reach your prescribed total daily dose.



WORSE

If you feel worse, you may have taken buprenorphine too soon and are in precipitated withdrawal. Take your withdrawal meds and wait 2-4 hrs before your next buprenorphine dose. If needed, call your healthcare team or go to the nearest ER.