

Day 1 Starting Suboxone® (buprenorphine/naloxone)

Are you in withdrawal? Before starting Suboxone® (buprenorphine/naloxone) you need to be in withdrawal (dope-sick). Use the 'SOWS' withdrawal scale on the back page to determine how bad your withdrawal is. Wait until your withdrawal score is 17 or more to begin.



- Do not take with alcohol or sedatives.
- Do not take more than 12 mg total on Day 1.
- Do not inject. You will be dope-sick if you inject.

My doctor/nurse practitioner and I agree on this treatment plan.

Contact Information

Patient Name _____

Provider Name _____

Provider Number _____

1st Dose

Take your 1st dose



- **Keep medication under your tongue until fully dissolved** (this can take up to 10 min) **or it will not work.** Do not chew or swallow.
- Do not eat, drink, or swallow while it is dissolving.
- Contact your provider to let them know you took your 1st dose.

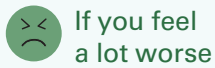
My dose:

_____ mg

= _____ tablets

Time: _____

It usually takes 20-45 min for the medication to start to work. Wait 1-3 hours before your 2nd dose.



Contact your provider if your symptoms feel a LOT WORSE. This happens when you start before you are in enough withdrawal and is called "precipitated" withdrawal. Talk to your provider about managing symptoms and next steps.

Notes

2nd Dose

1-3 hours after 1st dose

How do you feel?



Still feeling withdrawal (dope-sick) symptoms



Take a 2nd dose (keep under tongue until fully dissolved).



My dose:

_____ mg

= _____ tablets

Time: _____



Better



Check in with yourself later.

3rd Dose

1-3 hours after 2nd dose or later in evening

How do you feel?



Still feeling withdrawal (dope-sick) symptoms



Take a 3rd dose (keep under tongue until fully dissolved).



My dose:

_____ mg

= _____ tablets

Time: _____



Better



Check in with yourself later, you may not need another dose.

Most people feel much better by the end of the first day.

Contact your provider if you are still feeling bad withdrawal or feel like using and have taken the daily max of 12 mg.

How many doses did you take today?

	1 st Dose	2 nd Dose	3 rd Dose	Total
Amount	mg	mg	mg	mg

The total for Day 1 is your starting dose for Day 2. Whether you started treatment at home or in the clinic, most providers will ask you to start Day 2 with a clinic visit. Take this sheet with you to your next appointment.

Next appointment info: Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Additional Information for Starting Suboxone® (buprenorphine/naloxone)

Knowing when to start

Suboxone® (also known by generic name buprenorphine/naloxone) helps you manage opioid withdrawal symptoms and cravings.

You need to be in withdrawal (dope-sick) to start or your symptoms will get a lot worse – the more in withdrawal you are the better.

You know your symptoms. Wait until you are in moderate to severe withdrawal (dope-sick) before you begin. You can use the SOWS scale (below) to help you see if you are in enough withdrawal to start. You can also check your SOWS score throughout the day. You should feel better and see your SOWS withdrawal scores decrease throughout the day. If your SOWS withdrawal score increases and your symptoms get worse, contact your provider.

Subjective Opiate Withdrawal Scale (SOWS)¹

Please score each of the statements according to how you feel right now on a scale of 1 to 4. Add up all your scores to get your total SOWS withdrawal score.

Scale: 0= Not at all 1= A little 2= Moderately 3= Quite a bit 4= Extremely

Time:						
Symptoms:	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
 I feel anxious						
 I feel like yawning						
 I am perspiring						
 My eyes are teary						
 My nose is running						
 I have goosebumps						
 I am shaking						
 I have hot flushes						
 I have cold flushes						
 My bones and muscles ache						
 I feel restless						
 I feel nauseous						
 I feel like vomiting						
 My muscles twitch						
 I have stomach cramps						
 I feel like using now						
My SOWS score (total score):						

If your SOWS withdrawal score is **17 or more** → You are ready to start, follow the instructions on page 1.

If your SOWS withdrawal score is **less than 17** → Check your score again in 1-3 hours.

¹ Handelsman L et al. Am J Drug Alcohol Abuse.1987.

Notes: