

Can I switch from methadone to buprenorphine?

Yes, but first you need to cut down to a low dose of methadone (approximately 30mg). The specific dose of methadone may vary depending on your doctor and your health status.

Does bupe have side effects?

Side effects are different for different people. They are usually mild and can include constipation, nausea, headache and insomnia.

If you are taking other medications, talk to your doctor before starting bupe.

Some medications can interact poorly with bupe.

For more information call 311
or 1-800-LIFENET or visit
www.buprenorphine.samhsa.gov

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Buprenorphine

(Suboxone)

Bupe

A treatment option for people who use opioid painkillers and heroin

What is bupe?

Bupe is a medication to treat dependency on opioids, such as opioid painkillers and heroin. Bupe was approved by the FDA in 2002. Bupe is most commonly known as the brand name “Suboxone.”

What are the benefits of bupe?

- You can get bupe with a prescription from a doctor, fill it at a pharmacy, and take it from home every day just like other medication.
- You do not have to go to a program every day to get it.
- Bupe won't show up in most drug tests, meaning you can apply for jobs and housing programs without worrying about getting disqualified because of a dirty urine.
- Bupe helps you stop craving opioids and feeling withdrawal, so it is easier for you to carry on your daily activities.

Bupe does different things depending on when you last used opioids.

- If you are high or straight on opioids, bupe may put you into withdrawal.
- If you are in withdrawal, bupe will make you straight.

Buprenorphine treats opioid addiction by:

- Preventing withdrawal symptoms.
- Stopping cravings.
- Blocking the opioid high.

Can buprenorphine cause overdose?

It's difficult to overdose on buprenorphine by taking too much. However, it is dangerous to mix bupe with benzos, alcohol or sedating drugs. People who mix bupe with these drugs are putting themselves at risk of overdose

What is the process to get on bupe?

- **Find a doctor.** Not all doctors prescribe bupe. To find a doctor, call 311 or 1-800-LIFENET.
- **Intake.** At the intake appointment, your doctor and you will decide if you qualify to take bupe.
- **Induction.** During induction, you take your first dose of bupe. The doctor and you will find the dose that's right for you. You must be in mild withdrawal to start the induction.
- **Stabilization.** The goal of stabilization is to find the minimum dose necessary to keep you from feeling withdrawal and stop you from craving other opioids.
- **Maintenance.** During maintenance, you continue taking your assigned dose of bupe from home. Visit your doctor and get your prescription refilled every 2 weeks to 30 days. Once you are maintained on bupe, it can stay in your system for 24 to 72 hours.

Bupe only addresses the physical side of opioid addiction.

It is important to address the mental side of addiction at the same time. This could be through counseling, therapy, or support groups. Bupe may be more effective when paired with mental health treatment.

Will my health insurance pay for bupe?

Yes. Both Medicaid, Medicare and most private insurance pay for bupe. Check with your insurance carrier to make sure bupe is on your approved drug list.