

# Starting Suboxone (Buprenorphine) with Microdosing

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## WHAT IS MICRODOSING?

- **Microdosing** means taking a medication or substance at very small doses. Microdosing with Suboxone is a way to start Suboxone safely even if you are still taking other opioids.
- By starting Suboxone at a very low dose and increasing slowly, the Suboxone doesn't "fight" with the other opioids in your system and won't make you sick, even if you're still using.
- Once the Suboxone gets to about 12 mg, you should start to notice some improvement in withdrawal symptoms.

## HOW DO I START SUBOXONE?

- You don't need to wait a specific period of time after taking other opioids to start Suboxone using microdosing. You can start it anytime, as long as you follow the microdosing instructions carefully.
- Many pharmacies will provide Suboxone in a blister pack for microdosing so that all of your doses are prepared for you in advance.
- Most microdosing starts with ¼ of a tablet on the first day and increases from there every day.
- Some prescribers recommend taking Suboxone once a day and some recommend twice a day. Both approaches work, but **DO NOT** take Suboxone faster than prescribed or it could make you feel sick. An example schedule is given below, but you should follow whatever instructions your provider gives you.

## DOSING SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

- Day 1** ¼ tablet (0.5 mg) one time only
- Day 2** ¼ tablet (0.5 mg) twice a day
- Day 3** ½ tablet (1 mg) twice a day
- Day 4** 1 tablet (2 mg) twice a day
- Day 5** 1½ tablets (3 mg) twice a day
- Day 6** 2 tablets (4 mg) twice a day
- Day 7** 6 tablets (12 mg) all at once in the morning

## WHEN WILL MY SUBOXONE WORK?

- As your Suboxone dose gets higher, you should start to notice your withdrawal symptoms starting to ease up between doses of your regular opioid. This usually happens when you reach a dose of about 8–12 mg, which should be around Day 7.
- As this happens, you can decrease and hopefully stop your other opioid.
- You should have a follow-up appointment by Day 7 so that your prescriber can adjust your dose to a level that works for you. Most people feel balanced between 16–24 mg/day.

## WHAT IF I MISS A DOSE?

- If you miss **between one and three doses**, restart from the dose that you missed. Take your doses in order and do not skip any.
- If you miss **more than three doses**, you should talk to your health care provider to get instructions on what to do.

## HOW DO I TAKE SUBOXONE?

1. Before taking Suboxone, drink some water to moisten your mouth.  
This will help the tablet dissolve.
2. Put the tablet(s) under your tongue.
3. Don't eat or drink anything until the Suboxone has dissolved completely; this can take 7–10 minutes.
4. **DO NOT SWALLOW** the Suboxone! It gets into your body by dissolving under your tongue and doesn't work if it's swallowed.



**DO NOT USE** Suboxone at the same time as alcohol or benzos (like Valium, Ativan, or Xanax).

### REMINDER

**It is important that you see your health care provider or visit a rapid access addiction medicine (RAAM) clinic within a few days of starting Suboxone to report how you are feeling and have your dose assessed.**

***If your symptoms get worse after taking Suboxone or before seeing your health care provider, go to the emergency department!***

### FOLLOW UP:

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clinic Address:** \_\_\_\_\_