

PATIENT INFORMATION: ER Suboxone Self Start Instructions

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Instructions for dosing up to eight (8) 2mg Suboxone tablets dispensed from ER

TAKING YOUR FIRST DOSE OF SUBOXONE:

1. Wait until you feel sick from withdrawal symptoms. The worse your withdrawal symptoms, the better the medicine will work.
2. **Failure to wait until you feel withdrawal symptoms will lead to the Suboxone making you feel much worse!**
3. To determine if you are ready to start Suboxone, use the SOWS scale tool (Self-Administered Opioid Withdrawal Scale) on page 2. Only start Suboxone if your score on this scale is **17** or higher.
4. **DO NOT TAKE SUBOXONE WITH ALCOHOL OR SEDATING MEDICATION LIKE ATIVAN OR VALIUM**

TAKING THE PILL:

1. Moisten your mouth with water.
2. Put one 1 or 2 tablets under your tongue. Keep it there until dissolved.
3. **If you swallow the pill it will not work.**
4. It will take 3-10 minutes for tablet to dissolve and be absorbed through your mouth (do not swallow it!).
5. Medication will take effect in 30-45 minutes, and will increase in effect for next 1-3 hours.
6. **If you feel worse: STOP!** You may have started Suboxone too soon after using opioids.
7. If you are better but still feeling sick after 1 hour you may take 1 or 2 additional tablets under your tongue.
8. After 2 hours if you are still feeling sick you may take 1 additional tablet under your tongue.
9. Follow up with the addictions clinic you were referred to in the next 24 hours (see referral information).

PATIENT INFORMATION:

Subjective Opiate Withdrawal Scale (SOWS)

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INSTRUCTIONS: On a scale from 0 to 4 score how you feel for each of the symptoms listed. Add the TOTAL for the column at the bottom. This is your SOWS Score. If your SOWS Score is 17 or greater you may start Suboxone. If your SOWS Score is less than 17 wait until symptoms worsen and score again.

SCORE: 0 = Not at all 1 = Minor 2 = Moderate 3 = Definitely 4 = Extremely

Symptoms	Time:	Repeated at:	Time 3:	Time 4:
I feel anxious				
I feel like yawning				
I am sweating				
My eyes are teary				
My nose is running				
I have goosebumps				
I am shaking				
I have hot flashes				
I have cold flashes				
My bones/muscles ache				
I feel restless				
I feel nauseous				
I feel like vomiting				
My muscles twitch				
I have stomach cramps				
I feel like using				
TOTAL				

IF YOUR SCORE IS 17 OR GREATER: You may begin Suboxone Therapy (Take first dose).

Dose 1: 1 or 2 tablets of 2mg Suboxone

After 1 Hour: If still feeling symptoms take 1 or 2 additional tablets

IF YOUR SCORE IS LESS THAN 17: Wait until symptoms worsen and score yourself again.