

Naltrexone (Revia)

Mechanism of action: Blocks mu opioid receptors

What it does: Reduces alcohol craving, reduces number of drinking days

Common side effects²: Nausea, vomiting in first few days of use

Serious side effects²: Liver failure, opioid withdrawal, blockade of pain medication

Special notes: You can't get high from naltrexone. Available as long-acting injection (Vivitrol).

Increases risk of fatal opioid overdose when you stop taking it.

Naloxone (Narcan)

Mechanism of action: Briefly blocks opioid receptors

What it does: Temporarily restarts breathing after opioid overdose

Common side effects²: Withdrawal symptoms

Serious side effects²: Heart attack, seizures, severe agitation after resuscitation

Special notes: For rescue only. DOES NOT TREAT OPIOID USE DISORDER.

Tobacco use disorder

Nicotine replacement (NRT)

Mechanism of action: Provides a less harmful source of nicotine

What it does: Doubles your chances of quitting smoking. Reduces craving for tobacco products.

Common side effects²: Anxiety, insomnia, skin reaction (patch)

Serious side effects²: Can make it harder to quit smoking if you use tobacco products while on NRT

Special notes: Available as patch, gum, lozenge, or vapor.

Bupropion (Zyban)

Mechanism of action: Inhibits norepinephrine and dopamine reuptake

What it does: Doubles your chance of quitting smoking. Reduces craving for tobacco products.

Common side effects²: Anxiety, agitation, insomnia in first few days of use

Serious side effects²: Seizures in individuals with pre-existing seizure risk

Special notes: Also used as an antidepressant (Wellbutrin)

Varenicline (Chantix)

Mechanism of action: Partially blocks and partially activates nicotine receptors

What it does: Doubles your chances of quitting smoking. Reduces craving for tobacco products.

Common side effects²: Nausea, vomiting, sedation, headache, vivid dreams

Serious side effects²: Suicidal and homicidal ideation

Special notes: Safe for most patients as long as they do not have suicidal or homicidal thoughts

1. Medications for alcohol use disorder may be combined for increased effectiveness.
2. This is not a complete list of side effects. Talk to your doctor before starting any medication.
3. Medications for tobacco use disorder may be combined for increased effectiveness.

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