

## Your First Visit

SUBOXONE® (buprenorphine HCl/naloxone HCl dihydrate) sublingual tablet

When preparing for your first office visit, there are a couple of logistical issues you may want to consider.

- You may not want to return to work after your visit—this is very normal, so just plan accordingly
- Because SUBOXONE can cause drowsiness and slow reaction times, particularly during the first few weeks of treatment, driving yourself home after the first visit is generally not recommended, so you may want to make arrangements for a ride home

It is very important to arrive for your first visit already experiencing mild to moderate opioid withdrawal symptoms. If you are in withdrawal, buprenorphine will help lessen the symptoms. However, if you are *not* in withdrawal, buprenorphine will “override” the opioids already in your system, which will *cause* severe withdrawal symptoms.

The following guidelines are provided to **ensure you are in withdrawal for the visit**. (If this concerns you, it may help to schedule your first visit in the morning: some patients find it easiest to skip what would normally be their first dose of the day.)

- No methadone or long-acting painkillers for at least 24 hours
- No heroin or short-acting painkillers for at least 4 to 6 hours

Bring **ALL** medication bottles with you to your first appointment.

Before you can be seen by the doctor, all of your paperwork must be completed, so bring all your completed forms with you or arrive about 30 minutes early. In addition, you will need to pay the doctor’s fees prior to treatment.

Urine drug screening is a regular feature of SUBOXONE therapy, because it provides physicians with important insights into your health and your treatment. Your 1st visit and each visit thereafter will include urine drug screening, and may also entail blood work. If you haven’t had a recent physical exam, your doctor may require one. To help ensure that SUBOXONE is the best treatment option for you, your doctor will perform a substance dependence assessment and mental status evaluation. Lastly, you and your doctor will discuss SUBOXONE and your expectations of treatment.

After this portion of your visit is completed, your doctor will give you a SUBOXONE prescription. You fill the prescription at the pharmacy. Your doctor may ask you to keep a record of any medications you take at home to control withdrawal symptoms. You will also receive instructions on how to contact your doctor in an emergency, as well as additional information about treatment.

### CHECKLIST FOR FIRST VISIT:

- Arrive experiencing mild to moderate **opioid withdrawal** symptoms
- Arrive with a **full bladder**
- Bring completed **forms** (or come 30 minutes early)
- Bring **ALL medication bottles**
- Fees due** at time of visit (cash or check)