

## Common Side Effects of Suboxone®

Suboxone is safe to use for most patients. Some people do experience side effects, but most of Suboxone's side effects are not dangerous --they're just unpleasant.

Common minor side effects include:

- \_ Nausea \_ Sweating
- \_ Constipation \_ Headache
- \_ Drowsiness \_ Depression
- \_ Disturbed sleep

If you experience any of the above, talk to your doctor. Your doctor may give you medicine to treat the side effects, or your doctor may lower your dose of Suboxone slightly. Regardless, most minor side effects will either go away as you become used to the drug or can be treated with minor lifestyle changes.

Some people with certain medical conditions are at risk for more serious side effects:

**Drug Interactions:** Some people who take both sedatives and Suboxone have overdosed on one or both drugs. If you have been prescribed medications, make certain your doctor knows. He or she may change how much of each drug you take. Also, while on Suboxone, never take sedatives or other drugs except those prescribed by your doctor!

**Allergic reaction:** If you develop hives or a rash while taking Suboxone, you may be allergic to it. If this happens, call your doctor or go to the emergency room immediately. Also, tell your doctor if you know that you are allergic to drugs called buprenorphine or naloxone.

**Respiratory depression:** Like prescription narcotics and heroin, Suboxone affects the reflexes that keep you breathing. In most patients, this effect is minimal, but it can be serious in patients who already have damaged or diseased lungs. If you have a condition that impairs your breathing, tell your doctor before beginning Suboxone.

**Liver problems (hepatitis):** A few people have developed problems with their livers while taking Suboxone. Most of these people already had liver problems like hepatitis B or C or cirrhosis due to alcohol abuse. If you have had liver problems in the past, make sure that your doctor knows. He or she will monitor your liver closely during your treatment. If you develop severe stomach pain, severe nausea, or jaundice (skin and/or whites of the eyes look yellow), get to the hospital as quickly as possible. Your chances of full recovery are very good if you get treatment quickly.

**Head injury:** If you have suffered a severe head injury or have been told by a doctor that you have an *intracranial lesion*, tell your doctor before beginning Suboxone. Suboxone causes an increase in pressure in the skull, and this can make your injury worse.