

# What's next?

Learn more about OUD and how to use this brochure:

[learnabouttreatment.org](http://learnabouttreatment.org)

Connect to medication options near you:

[warecoveryhelpline.org](http://warecoveryhelpline.org)



Find naloxone and overdose info:  
[stopoverdose.org](http://stopoverdose.org)

More info on medications:  
[samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment](http://samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment)



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED  
DRUG EDUCATION, EPIDEMIOLOGY,  
AND RESEARCH

**W** UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON  
PSYCHIATRY & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
School of Medicine

This brochure provides basic information for educational purposes. Speak with a health care professional to make an informed decision that best fits your needs including learning the risks and benefits of all treatment options.

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# Your preferences

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Dosing frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic visit frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

Counseling: \_\_\_\_\_

Support group: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication options: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Call the **Washington Recovery Help Line** to talk about your options for medications, counseling and support groups, and connect to care.

Washington  
**Recovery Help Line**

24-Hour Help for Substance Abuse, Problem Gambling & Mental Health

**1.866.789.1511**  
(206.461.3219 tm)

[warecoveryhelpline.org](http://warecoveryhelpline.org)

# About OUD

## What is opioid use disorder?

Opioid use disorder (OUD) is a long term medical condition. People with the condition are physically dependent on opioids and have brain changes that affect their thinking, priorities, and relationships.

OUD can come back if not treated properly. You may need to try more than one type of treatment to find what works best for you.

## What can medications do for me?

Medications are proven to work the best at treating opioid use disorder.

### They help:

- Manage craving and withdrawal.
- Reduce illicit opioid use.
- Decrease the risk of having an overdose.

Medications can provide stability, allowing people to address other things in their lives.

*You can be in recovery  
and be on medications  
at the same time.*



# Medications for Opioid Use Disorder

# Treatment options



There are **three** places where you can get medications for opioid use disorder:

## Opioid treatment program (OTP)

- **Methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone** available.
- Highly structured—counseling and supervised dosing may be required.

## Medical office/Primary care

- **Buprenorphine or naltrexone** available.
- Familiar medical office setting.
- Less structure (often weekly or monthly visits, some don't require counseling).
- Appointment often needed.

## Community program

- **Buprenorphine or naltrexone** available.
- Other services may be offered (syringe exchange, housing supports, etc.).
- May have drop-in visits.

## Methadone

## Buprenorphine

## Naltrexone

How does this medication work?	Buprenorphine	Naltrexone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methadone is a <b>full</b> opioid medication.</li> <li>• The more you take the <b>more you will feel</b> its effects.</li> <li>• Manages cravings and withdrawal by binding to opioid receptors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buprenorphine is a <b>partial</b> opioid medication.</li> <li>• Has a ceiling effect, so above a certain dose you <b>stop feeling more</b> of its effects.</li> <li>• Manages cravings and withdrawal by binding to opioid receptors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naltrexone is an opioid <b>blocker</b>.</li> <li>• It is not an opioid, so you <b>won't feel</b> an opioid effect.</li> <li>• Helps manage cravings for some people.</li> </ul>
Does it lower my risk of dying? <i>Based on research that tracked outcomes in the real world.</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lowers</b> risk of death by about 50%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lowers</b> risk of death by about 50%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has <b>not been shown</b> to lower the risk of death.</li> </ul>
How long does it last, and how do I take it?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lasts about <b>24 hours</b> and is taken by <b>mouth</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oral form</b> lasts about <b>24 hours</b>, <b>injectable form</b> lasts <b>7-28 days</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An <b>injection</b> that lasts for <b>28 days</b>. You can't use any opioids for 7-10 days before taking naltrexone.</li> </ul>
Where can I get it, and how often do I need to go?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dispensed only at <b>opioid treatment programs</b>.</li> <li>• Dosing can start up to <b>6 days a week</b>, but usually becomes less often over time during treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prescribed</b> by a medical provider and <b>picked up</b> at a pharmacy (<i>oral</i>) or <b>given</b> at an appointment (<i>injection</i>). Both are available at some <b>opioid treatment programs</b>.</li> <li>• Visits vary from near daily to monthly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prescribed and given</b> by a medical provider, or provided at an <b>opioid treatment program</b>.</li> <li>• Visits vary from weekly to monthly.</li> </ul>
Will I need to go to counseling?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires regular urine drug testing and counseling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most providers require urine drug testing and some require counseling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some providers require urine drug testing and counseling.</li> </ul>