

MOUD (Medications for Opioid Use Disorder): What It Is, What It Does, and How It's Taken

What is MOUD?

MOUD uses medications alongside counseling and support to help people recover from opioid use disorder.

What MOUD Will Do for You:

- **Stop cravings** so you don't feel constantly pulled toward opioids.
- **Prevent withdrawal symptoms** so you're not sick, anxious, or in pain.
- **Stabilize your mood and brain chemistry**, helping you feel steady and clear-headed.
- **Lower your risk of overdose** — the medications protect you from deadly relapse.
- **Support long-term recovery** so you can rebuild relationships, hold a job, and focus on life goals.

Medications, What They Do, and How They're Taken

Medication	What It Does	How It's Administered
Methadone	Full opioid agonist that relieves cravings and withdrawal without a high.	Taken daily as a liquid drink at a specialized clinic under supervision. Some clinics also offer it in tablet or dispersible powder forms.
Buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex, Sublocade, Brixadi)	Partial opioid agonist that reduces cravings and withdrawal with lower misuse risk.	Taken daily as a sublingual film (placed under the tongue) or tablet or long-acting injections
Naltrexone (Vivitrol)	Opioid blocker that stops opioids from working if taken.	Administered as a once-monthly injection (Vivitrol) into the muscle by a healthcare provider, or as a daily pill (oral naltrexone). Must be fully detoxed for 7-10 days before starting.

What to Expect When Starting MOUD

- **Initial Assessment** — A provider will evaluate your opioid use history, health, and goals.
 - **Induction Phase** — Starting medication slowly and adjusting the dose.
 - **Stabilization** — Finding the right dose that keeps you comfortable and craving-free.
 - **Maintenance** — Ongoing treatment, counseling, and support.
 - **Counseling** and behavioral therapy are recommended alongside the medication to address emotional and psychological recovery.
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