


EXPLANATION OF TREATMENT

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

Intake

You will be given a comprehensive substance dependence assessment, as well as an evaluation of mental status and physical exam. The pros and cons of the medication, SUBOXONE, will be presented. Treatment expectations, as well as issues involved with maintenance versus medically supervised withdrawal will be discussed.

Induction

You will be switched from your current opioid (heroin, methadone or prescription painkillers) on to SUBOXONE. At the time of induction, you will be asked to provide a urine sample to confirm the presence of opioids and possibly other drugs. You must arrive for the first visit experiencing mild to moderate opioid withdrawal symptoms. Arrangements will be made for you to receive your first dose in your doctor's office. Your response to the initial dose will be monitored. You may receive additional medication, if necessary, to reduce withdrawal symptoms.

Since an individual's tolerance and reactions to SUBOXONE vary, daily appointments may be scheduled and medications will be adjusted until you no longer experience withdrawal symptoms or cravings. Urine drug screening is typically required for all patients at every visit during this phase.

Intake and Induction may both occur at the first visit, depending on your needs and your doctor's evaluation.

Stabilization

Once the appropriate dose of SUBOXONE is established, you will stay at this dose until steady blood levels are achieved. You and your doctor will discuss your treatment options from this point forward.

Maintenance

Treatment compliance and progress will be monitored. Participation in some form of behavioral counseling is strongly recommended to ensure best chance of treatment success. You are likely to have scheduled appointments on a weekly basis, however, if treatment progress is good and goals are met, monthly visits will eventually be considered sufficient. The Maintenance phase can last from weeks to years—the length of treatment will be determined by you and your doctor, and, possibly, your counselor. Your length of treatment may vary depending on your individual needs.

Medically Supervised Withdrawal

As your treatment progresses, you and your doctor may eventually decide that medically supervised withdrawal is an appropriate option for you. In this phase, your doctor will gradually taper your SUBOXONE dose over time, taking care to see that you do not experience any withdrawal symptoms or cravings.