

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR PHARMACY EXPERIENCE EASIER

- **Be sure to call ahead to check if your prescription is ready.** Pharmacies can be busy and have wait times. Some pharmacies may not have buprenorphine, and calling ahead can save you time and stress.
- If they ask, **let the pharmacy know about your opioid use disorder treatment or diagnosis.** If you're not sure why the pharmacist is asking something, it is OK to ask them to explain.
- **Know your rights.** Only a pharmacist can decide whether to give you your medication. If a technician or other staff member says no or has questions, feel free to ask to speak with the pharmacist. You can also remind them that substance use disorder is a treatable medical condition and a federally protected disability.
- If you feel you are being treated unfairly and need help, **reach out to your doctor.** They may be able to talk to the pharmacy, help you find another pharmacy, or connect you with other resources in your community.

## NEED HELP?



### CONTACT US



# Accessing Buprenorphine at the Pharmacy: A Guide for Patients (Suboxone, Subutex, Zubsolv)

## HOW TO FILL YOUR BUPRENORPHINE PRESCRIPTION:

### Questions to Ask Your Doctor or Provider:

- **Include their cell phone or direct contact information on the prescription itself.** This helps the pharmacist reach them quickly if needed. Also, ask your doctor if they are OK giving you their on-call line or cell phone number to use if you need help getting your medication at the pharmacy.
- **Include a diagnosis code on your prescription.** Pharmacists often need this code to enter a buprenorphine prescription in their system.
- **Include a personal note to the pharmacist,** either on the prescription or in the notes section on the electronic prescription, like: "Thanks for helping our patient access their life-saving treatment! Please reach out if you have any questions."
- **Give you the names of local pharmacies** that should have your medication in stock.
- **Write "OK to fill now/today" on the prescription,** if you are getting a refill that might be earlier than usual.

### Questions to Ask Your Pharmacist:

Your pharmacist is a medication expert. Here are some questions you can ask them **before you take your buprenorphine home:**

- How do I take this medication the right way?
- How long should I wait to eat, drink, or use tobacco after taking it?
- What are the side effects and how can I manage them?
- How can I protect my teeth and mouth from potential side effects?
- Are you concerned about this medication interacting with anything else my doctor prescribed?
- When should I ask for a refill?
- Will my medication be in stock when I need it?
- What should I do if there's a problem filling my prescription?
- What should I do if I feel sick, have cravings, or withdrawal symptoms?
- If you feel like your pharmacist isn't able to answer your question, or if you feel like the medication isn't working, try to contact your doctors.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Find a pharmacy that stocks buprenorphine or report a pharmacy that does not stock buprenorphine



<https://bupe.opioidpolicy.org/>



American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists  
Buprenorphine Fact Sheet



<https://www.nami.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Buprenorphine.pdf>



Patient Advocacy Toolkit from the Legal Action Center



<https://www.lac.org/resource/mat-advocacy-toolkit>



Recovery Resources for Patients



<https://findtreatment.gov/>



### What Else Can My Pharmacy Do for Me?

Pharmacies can do more than just fill your prescriptions.

#### Your Pharmacist Can:

- Help you figure out if you may need any vaccines, like the flu or COVID shot, and give them to you at the pharmacy.
- Help you purchase naloxone and wound care supplies. Your pharmacist may also know if these are available for free from a program in your area.
- Help you choose the right over-the-counter medications for things like rashes, nausea, constipation, allergies, women's health products, headaches, and pain.
- Help you find a cheaper version of your medication if the one your doctor picked costs too much.
- Tell you if a health problem is serious enough that you should see a doctor.
- Help you with long-term health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, or asthma by checking your blood pressure or blood sugar and giving advice.
- Teach you how and when to take your medication so it works best.
- Help you if you want to stop smoking, lose weight, or reach other health goals.

#### In Some States, Pharmacists Can Also:

- Prescribe and give birth control:
- Test for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or provide home test kits:
- Test and treat for strep, flu, and COVID:

**NOTE:** Not all pharmacies offer these services. Ask your pharmacist if these and other services are available and check with your insurance to see what is covered.

