

# Suboxone & Opioid Agonist Treatments



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WOMENS CLINIC

## About This Treatment

We have been offering this promising and safe treatment for opioid use disorders for the last five years. Suboxone has been a highly beneficial treatment for our clients struggling with opioid use—allowing them to better focus on their individual therapy rather than being distracted by the struggles of withdrawals and cravings that come with long-term opioid use. Suboxone also allows our clients with opioid addictions to regain a normal state of mind quicker so that they may sooner and more actively participate in their treatment.

Suboxone comes in a pill form and is taken “sublingually” (placed under the tongue to dissolve). The Buprenorphine component is absorbed quickly by the bloodstream under the tongue. The Naloxone portion is not absorbed and must either be swallowed or spit out.

Because Suboxone may cause precipitated withdrawal—a rapid onset and intense withdrawal caused by taking Suboxone when you have residual opiate drugs in your system—our physician ensures you are in a partial opiate withdrawal state and then slowly introduces Suboxone to your system over several hours while in our medical unit. This minimizes your chances of experiencing precipitated withdrawal. Your dose will be adjusted over this 24-hour period, and then you will be reassessed a week later, in most cases. Depending on your medical history and presenting symptoms, our physician may suggest another opioid agonist treatment such as Sublocade or Methadone.

After medical withdrawal (aka detox), most clients will remain on opioid agonist treatments throughout their stay with us, but you may not, depending on the recommendations of our physician. Depending on your individual treatment plan, you may be supported in tapering off Suboxone while in treatment with us, but most likely you will stay on a consistent dose throughout your stay. When you are preparing to leave our treatment program, we connect you with a physician or clinic in your home community who will take over your Suboxone prescription.

Therapy and counselling are key components to the success of substitution treatment. Suboxone treatment prescribed in combination with counselling and other therapies has a much higher success rate than Suboxone treatment without counselling.