

Common Signs, Symptoms, and Side Effects of Buprenorphine Abuse



Signs, Symptoms, and Side Effects of Buprenorphine Abuse

Buprenorphine is a semi-synthetic opioid used to relieve withdrawal symptoms for someone recovering from an opioid addiction, and it's sometimes prescribed to treat mild pain.

When a person becomes addicted to opioids, the recovery process usually involves uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms. If someone is not in a rehabilitation setting, withdrawal symptoms often lead to recurring use.

Buprenorphine is given to help a person deal with their withdrawal symptoms, which can decrease the urge for cravings and reduce the severity of withdrawal.

Although buprenorphine is used for opioid recovery, it has the potential for misuse and addiction, although the risk is small. To better understand how a recovery medication can be addictive, the following sections will explain what buprenorphine is, as well as common signs of addiction.

What is Buprenorphine?

As previously mentioned, buprenorphine is a medication used to help a person in recovery handle their withdrawal symptoms by either reducing the intensity or preventing them completely.

Buprenorphine is classified as a partial opioid agonist, which means that it is an opioid, however the risk for substance misuse and addiction is much lower than morphine, codeine, and other opiates. When given in small amounts, it eases opioid withdrawal symptoms and treats mild pain.

Buprenorphine may have a lower risk for addiction but it's still important to follow the directions provided by a doctor to avoid misuse; especially if the person is in recovery.

Buprenorphine is commonly given as a sublingual tablet, meaning the tablet is placed under the tongue and dissolves into their system.

Someone taking buprenorphine is expected to experience some side effects, like:

- Nausea
- Stuffy/runny nose
- Sneezing
- Trouble sleeping
- Coughing and hoarseness
- Chills
- Lower back pain
- Headaches

Severe side effects are less common but possible, including:

- Confusion
- Trouble breathing

- Muscle weakness
- Irregular heartbeat

Buprenorphine Addiction

Addiction to buprenorphine is possible if it's taken in high amounts. Larger doses of buprenorphine can produce effects similar to that of morphine, making it often sought after by people struggling with opiate addiction.

Buprenorphine is obtained and sold illicitly outside of medical settings; people who are addicted to opioids may seek buprenorphine from dealers because it is a much cheaper option than heroin or other narcotics.

If you know someone taking buprenorphine and fear they may be addicted, signs indicating an addiction include:

- Mood swings
- Flu-like symptoms (withdrawal)
- Apathy towards other aspects of life
- Anxiety
- Increased sweating
- Angry outburst
- Obtaining medications without a prescription

Buprenorphine Long-Term Effects

Buprenorphine impacts chemicals in the brain by secreting more than the usual amounts, so long-term use can affect how someone's brain secretes those chemicals in the absence of the drug.

Long-term use can also cause anxiety and disrupt sleep patterns, causing an abundance of health issues. Addiction to opioids like buprenorphine not only causes health problems, it can also cause problems with money, work, grades, and family.

If you or your loved one is battling buprenorphine addiction, a substance-free life is within reach at [CLIENT NAME]. To learn more about our inpatient and outpatient programs, speak to a representative by calling our 24/7 toll-free hotline at [CLIENT PHONE].