



Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)

At Ambetter from Arkansas Health & Wellness, we are committed to the care and wellbeing of our members. We are also committed to working with you as a partner to develop the best possible treatment plans for all patients. With that in mind, we are sharing some valuable information about Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) — a “whole patient” approach combining the use of medications with counseling and behavioral therapies to treat those with substance use disorders.¹

Research shows that a combination of medication and behavioral therapy are key components in successfully treating substance use disorders. MOUD has been shown to reduce the risk of relapse to opioids, lowering the risk of overdose and death.

MOUD is part of a comprehensive, individually tailored program that has been shown to:

- Increase treatment retention
- Decrease illicit opiate use and criminal activities
- Reduce transmission of HIV and Hepatitis C
- Improve birth outcomes among pregnant people with opioid use disorder (OUD)

FDA-approved MOUD medications²

Medication	Mechanism	Form	Access	Cost of Treatment
Methadone	Full opioid agonist that lessens opiate withdrawal symptoms and blocks effects of opiates	Daily tablet, liquid, or wafer	Requires supervision of a physician and can be dispensed only from a federally regulated opioid treatment program (OTP) certified by SAMHSA	\$ \$
Buprenorphine*	Partial opioid agonist that suppresses and reduces cravings; similar to methadone	Sublingual film or tablet, subdermal implant, or subcutaneous injection	Outpatient offices; prescriber must be certified by obtaining a waiver*	\$ \$ \$
Naltrexone	Opioid antagonist	Oral tablets or intramuscular injection. IM injectable form is recommended for OUD.	Any health care provider who is licensed to prescribe medications	\$ \$ \$

^{*}Clinicians who wish to prescribe buprenorphine for the treatment of opioid use disorder must qualify for a waiver under the Drug Addiction Treatment Act of 2000. An additional 8 hours training is necessary for practitioners to obtain a waiver to engage in office-based treatment of opioid use disorders using FDA-approved medications on Schedules III, IV, and V. In addition, nurse practitioners and physician assistants can prescribe buprenorphine with additional training.

Counseling and Behavioral Therapies for MOUD

MOUD is usually prescribed along with a referral to counseling or behavioral therapy.³ Integrated models have demonstrated that they are satisfying for patients and providers. Some examples of behavioral therapies include:⁴

- Individual and group counseling
- Intensive outpatient treatment
- Inpatient and residential treatment
- Partial hospital programs

Many patients who do not access counseling still benefit from MOUD with standard medical visits.

Mutual Help

Evidence shows that people with substance use disorders maintain abstinence longer and more effectively when involved with mutual help. Mutual help includes:

- Peer recovery support
- Refuge recovery
- 12-step fellowships (Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, etc.)

Additional Support

We're here to help with additional tools and local resources. Please contact us by calling **1-877-617-0390** (TTY: 1-877-617-0392), go to **Ambetter.ARHealthWellness.com**, or visit one of the other helpful resources below.

For more information, please see:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

www.samhsa.gov or MAT Webinars and Workshops

Provider Clinical Support Systems (PCSS):

www.pcssnow.org | Answers from Clinicians in Real Time

Sources:

¹ Medication and Counseling Treatment. (2015, September 9). Retried from <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/treatment#medications-used-in-mat>

² NIDA. "Medications to Treat Opioid Use Disorder." National Institute on Drug Abuse, 8 Jun. 2018, <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/medications-to-treat-opioid-use-disorder>. Accessed 18 Oct. 2018.

³ NIDA. "Effective Treatments for Opioid Addiction." National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1 Nov. 2016, <https://www.drugabuse.gov/effective-treatments-opioid-addiction-0>. Accessed 18 Oct. 2018.

⁴ Treatments for Substance Use Disorders. (2018, June 13). Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/treatment/substance-use-disorders>