

# Recovery Pathways, LLC

## Patient Handout (Give to all new patients)

### SAFE AND UNSAFE DRUGS FOR PEOPLE IN RECOVERY

The following is a partial list of medications and preparations, which are generally considered to be **unsafe** for those who are recovering from substance use disorder:

1. Any preparation which contains **alcohol (ethanol)** including drinking beer, wine, liquor or other mixed drinks. This also includes most cough syrups and mouthwashes. When in doubt, always read the label. Beware of foods which are prepared with alcoholic beverages, such as cooking wine/sherry, the alcohol may (but not always) be evaporated if added prior to cooking.
2. **Benzodiazepines and other tranquilizers** – i.e. Ativan, Klonopin, Valium, Xanax, Soma, Librium, Limbitrol, Tranxene, Dalmane, Serax, Halcion, Versed, Miltown, Equanil, Equagesic, temazepam (Restoril), and others.
3. **Barbiturates and other sedatives/hypnotics** – i.e. Ambien, Fioricet, Fiorinal, Nembutol, Seconal, Esgic, Donnatal, Doriden, Placidyl, Chloral Hydrate, Sonata and others.
4. **Narcotics** – i.e. Morphine, Demerol, Dilaudid, Dolophine (methadone), Percodan, Duragesic (fentanyl), Tylox, Synalgos-DC, Codeine (Tylenol #3, etc), Talwin, Darvocet, Wygesic, Vicodin, Lortab, Lorcet, Nubain, Stadol, Ultram and others. **Tramadol is included in this group and is also not allowed.**
5. **Amphetamines and other stimulants** – i.e. Dexedrine, Benzedrine, Fastin or Ionamin (phentermine), Adipex, Tenuate, Ephedrine, Ritalin, Cylert, Adderall, Meridia and others.
6. **Decongestants or weight-control preparations** containing Ephedrine, Pseudoephedrine or Phenylpropanolamine.
7. **Marijuana, synthetic marijuana products, medical marijuana and “bath salts”** – none are allowed.

The following are usually considered acceptable medications, but remember **ALL PRESCRIPTIONS and OVER THE COUNTER medications must be approved** by your Addictionist: Aspirin, Tylenol, non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (i.e. Motrin, Nuprin, Advil, Naproxyn, Anaprox and others), Celebrex, Cymbalta, Elavil, Neurontin (gabapentin), Etodlac, Frova, Imitrex, Lyrica, Toradol, Voltaren, antibiotics, some cough syrups (**not** containing Codeine or alcohol) and some antihistamines (i.e. Allegra and Claritin) and others – ask your addictionist if you have questions about using any medication, vitamin, or supplement.

Ask for our brochure listing safe, non-opioid, non-narcotic pain relievers. If you plan to have an operation or procedure requiring pain management, discuss treatment options with your addictionist as well as your doctor/dentist/surgeon performing the procedure/operation. You must notify your doctor/dentist/surgeon of **all** medications you are prescribed, including Suboxone (buprenorphine) or Vivitrol (naltrexone). At times, individuals in recovery need to be maintained on psychiatric medications, and the decision to do so should be made jointly by the patient’s Psychiatrist and Addictionist. Drugs prescribed to control psychiatric disorders should be used only with caution and with a secure diagnosis.

### **SUBOXONE: buprenorphine hydrochloride (bue-pre-NOR-feen hi-droe-KLOR-ide) / naloxone**

**Treats addiction to narcotic prescription medicines and street opiates such as heroin.**

#### **When Should This Medicine Not Be Used:**

You should not use this medicine if you have had an allergic reaction to buprenorphine or naloxone.

#### **How To Use This Medicine: (Suboxone comes in a film.)**

- Your doctor will tell you how much of this medicine to use and how often – always take as directed. Your dose may need to be changed by your doctor in order to find out what works best for you. Do not use more medicine or use it more often than your doctor tells you to. You will not be given an early refill if you take too much of your medication against directions from the doctor.

#### **This medicine should be dissolved under the tongue.**

- You may take this medicine with or without food.

**If a dose is missed: This medicine needs to be given on a fixed schedule.** If you miss a dose or forget to use your medicine, call your doctor or pharmacist for instructions.

## How to Store and Dispose of Medicine:

*Store the medicine in a closed container at room temperature, away from heat, moisture and direct light.*

- **Keep all medicine away from children. Suboxone can kill children. Call 911/ER immediately if ingested by a child.**
- **It is dangerous and illegal to share your buprenorphine with anyone. Lock it in a box of which only you have the key.**
- Ask your pharmacist, doctor, or health caregiver about the best way to dispose of any leftover medicine after you have finished your treatment. You also need to throw away old medicine after the expiration date has passed.

## Drugs and Foods to Avoid:

*Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, supplements, herbals.*

- Make sure your doctor knows if you are using antibiotic medicine such as erythromycin(Ery-tab®), medicine to treat fungal infections such as ketoconazole, or medicine to treat HIV/AIDS such as ritonavir, indinavir or saquinovir.
- Tell your doctor if you are using any medicines that make you sleepy. These include sleeping pills, cold and allergy medicine, narcotic pain relievers and sedatives.
- DO NOT use this medicine together with alcohol or with sedatives such as Valium® or Xanax® (see above list of other unsafe medicines). Used together, these combinations could result in death.

## Warnings While Using Suboxone:

- Make sure your doctor knows if you are pregnant. You should not breast feed while you are using buprenorphine.
- Make sure your doctor knows if you have asthma or other breathing problems, liver disease, kidney disease, a bone disorder, thyroid problems, an adrenal gland problem, urination problems, an enlarged prostate or mental illness.
- Make sure your doctor knows if you have ever had a head injury, brain tumor or stroke.
- Using too much of this medicine may cause death. Symptoms of overdose include: Extreme dizziness or weakness, shortness of breath, slow heartbeat, seizures or cold, clammy skin. Call 911 or poison control center immediately if you suspect overdose.
- Your doctor may need to check your blood/urine regularly while you are using this medicine. Be sure to keep all appointments.
- This medicine may be habit forming. If you feel that the medicine is not working as well, do not use more than your prescribed dose. Call your doctor for instructions.
- Do not stop using this medicine suddenly without asking your doctor. You may need to slowly decrease your dose before stopping it completely. NOTE: Recovery Pathways does not have to provide a taper if you are discharged from the program.
- This medicine may make you dizzy or drowsy. Avoid driving, using machinery, or doing anything else that could be dangerous if you are not alert.
- Make sure any doctor or other medical professional who treats you knows that you are using this medicine.

**Possible Side Effects While Using This Medicine:** *\*Call your doctor right away if you notice any of these side effects:\**

- Allergic reaction: Itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing.
- Dark-colored urine or pale stools.
- Fever, chills, cough, sore throat or body aches.
- Lightheadedness or fainting.
- Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, pain in your stomach.
- Severe headache.
- Shallow breathing.
- Yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes.

**If you notice these less serious side effects, talk with your doctor:**

- Headache, anxiety, trouble sleeping.
- Mild stomach pain or constipation.
- Pain, tired feeling.
- Sweating.
- Warmth or redness in your face, chest or arms.

**If you notice other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor.**

**\*These are only general guidelines and not to be used in place of individual instructions from your physician.\***