

METHADONE

METHADONE

- Methadone has been used for decades to treat people with OUD.
- When taken as prescribed, methadone is safe and effective.
- It allows people to recover and reclaim active and meaningful lives.
- For the best results, patients should also participate in a comprehensive medication for addiction treatment (MAT) program that includes counseling and social support.



How Does Methadone Work?

- Methadone works by changing how the brain and nervous system respond to pain.
- It decreases the painful symptoms of opiate withdrawal and blocks the euphoric effects of opiate drugs such as heroin, morphine, and codeine, as well as semi-synthetic opioids like oxycodone and hydrocodone.



How Does Methadone Work?

- Methadone is offered in pill, liquid, and wafer forms and is taken once a day.
- Pain relief from a dose of methadone lasts about four to eight hours.
- Methadone is effective in higher doses, particularly for heroin users, helping them stay in treatment programs longer.



Methadone and Pregnancy

- Pregnant woman with OUD should be offered MAT consisting of pharmacotherapy with methadone or buprenorphine and evidence-based behavioral interventions.
- Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding can safely take methadone.
- When withdrawal from an abused drug happens to a pregnant woman, it causes the uterus to contract and may bring on miscarriage or premature birth.
- Methadone's ability to prevent withdrawal symptoms helps pregnant women better manage their addiction while avoiding health risks to both mother and baby.
- <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma18-5054.pdf>



Side Effects of Methadone

Side effects should be taken seriously, as some of them may indicate an emergency. Stop taking methadone and contact a doctor or emergency services right away if you:

- Experience difficulty breathing or shallow breathing
- Feel lightheaded or faint
- Experience hives or a rash; swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat
- Feel chest pain
- Experience a fast or pounding heartbeat
- Experience hallucinations or confusion



Resources

For more information on Methadone, check out the “Medications” tab under “Resources” in the app!

