

## Information Sheet on Medication for Opioid Use Disorder

- **Opioid use disorder (OUD)** is a chronic condition requiring long-term care.  
Source: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395916302985>
- **An estimated 80% of people** who try abstinence-based behavioral treatment or detoxification relapse.  
Source: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10550887.2012.694598>
- **Individual counseling and group counseling**, by themselves, are not evidence-based treatments for opioid use disorder. Individuals receiving only counseling are at higher risk of death than individuals on opioid maintenance treatment.  
Source: <http://www.handshakemediainc.com/2017/02/05/on-counseling-and-medication-assisted-treatment/>  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.13193/full>
- **People are more likely to fatally overdose** prior to beginning maintenance medication and upon ceasing it than are those with continuous treatment.  
Sources: <http://www.bmj.com/content/357/bmj.j1550>  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0740547216304123>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20978062>
- **Only buprenorphine or methadone maintenance treatments** are known to cut death rates by half or more.  
Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20978062> | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25601365>
- **While oral naltrexone**, and extended release naltrexone marketed as Vivitrol, may be helpful to some, current data only support buprenorphine and methadone in terms of reducing death rates. Further, the risk of overdose and death is high upon cessation of naltrexone.  
Sources: <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/what-science-says-to-do-if-your-loved-one-has-an-opioid-addiction/>  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dar.12205/full>
- **Maintenance treatment** reduces rates of disease.  
Source: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.12682/full>
- **For those with OUD** who are part of the criminal justice population, maintenance is known to reduce rates of re-incarceration by 20% or more.  
Sources: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2011.03618.x/full>  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/16066359909004372>  
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-abuse-treatment-criminal-justice-populations/principles>
- **A minimum of 12 months** is recommended for maintenance to be effective.  
Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20978062>
- **People must be in remission** from illicit opioid use for at least five years before risk of relapse decreases substantially.  
Source: [http://journals.lww.com/hrpjournal/Abstract/2015/03000/Long\\_Term\\_Course\\_of\\_Opioid\\_Addiction.3.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/hrpjournal/Abstract/2015/03000/Long_Term_Course_of_Opioid_Addiction.3.aspx)
- **Many individuals need** long periods of maintenance on methadone or buprenorphine before they are stable in remission, even 17 years or longer, sometimes lifelong.  
Sources: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871616308675>  
<https://www.karger.com/Article/PDF/468518> | <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871617301977>