

## Frequently Asked Questions About Suboxone/Subutex

- 1. Will Suboxone/Subutex Cure Me?** No, Suboxone/Subutex is not a cure, as it will not resolve the triggers (issues and stress factors) that drive you to use recreational drugs (drugs for which you do not have a true medical need). It is, however, an oasis where you will not have withdrawal symptoms or cravings for pain medications or heroin, so that you can focus on getting your life back together.
- 2. Am I Trading One Addiction For Another?** No. Whether you use Suboxone/Subutex or not, you still have an addiction. The only question is how are you going to deal with the triggers that lead to your drug use. For some it is abstinence (going cold turkey or just saying “no”). For others it is relapse (reusing pain medications or heroin). Suboxone/Subutex is a third option.
- 3. How Can I Get Cured?** Your drug use is really just a symptom of other problems. Until you find an effective way to deal with those problems, you will always have the desire to use drugs. For most people, this means working through the issues that trigger your drug use to find better coping mechanisms to alleviate or eliminate these triggers. Counseling (NA, AA or private) are the most effective ways to do this. So, while Suboxone/Subutex is the oasis, counseling is the cure.
- 4. How Long Will I Need To Use Suboxone/Subutex?** That depends on you. The sooner you find more effective ways to alleviate or eliminate the things that trigger your addiction, the sooner you will no longer need Suboxone/Subutex. The cure, however, is not in Suboxone/Subutex (it is the oasis). The cure is in the counseling.
- 5. How Much Suboxone/Subutex Should I Use?** During the first few days, you may need to use as many as 3 to 4 of the 8 mg pills to stabilize yourself and not have any cravings or withdrawal symptoms. Start by spreading it out as ½ a pill every 3 to 4 hours if needed. After that, however, most people settle into the 1 to 2 pills per day range, taking ½ at a time.
- 6. How Often Should I Use Suboxone/Subutex?** Only you can answer that question. For your first dose of Suboxone/Subutex you must stop all recreational drugs for *at least* 12 to 24 hours or be in the early stages of withdrawal to avoid a sudden and severe precipitated withdrawal.\* After that, you can take it as you feel the need and you do NOT have to wait until you have the same severity of symptoms as you did with the first dose. Instead, look for the early signs or symptoms of cravings or withdrawals (examples: heightened stress or being around friends who use).
- 7. What If I Relapse?** Learning to stay clean is like learning to ride a bike - most people fall down a few times before they get it right. Once you have used Suboxone/Subutex and know how it can help you, if you do relapse then you will likely fall down for a shorter period of time and not as far as before.
- 8. Can I Restart Suboxone/Subutex If I Relapse?** Yes, but you must take the same precautions as you did when you took your very first dose - stay off all recreational drugs for *at least* 12 to 24 hours *and* be sure you are well into the early stages of withdrawal to avoid a sudden and severe precipitated withdrawal.\* Always call Dr. Mitchell first for further advise before restarting Suboxone/Subutex. He can provide you with a form to accurately assess your withdrawal symptoms.
- 9. What If I Have Questions?** You can reach Dr. Mitchell at 786-262-5750. If he does not answer, leave your name and number and he will call you back shortly. Most messages left before 5 PM are returned the same day - even on the weekends. If you leave a message after 5 PM, he will call you back the next day.
- 10. What If I Have An Emergency?** For medical emergencies, dial 911. For over-the-phone crisis counseling, dial 211.
- 11. How Often Should I See Dr. Mitchell?** If you do not have a fixed appointment and want to continue on Suboxone/Subutex, then call Dr. Mitchell while you still have a few pills left (4 to 5). He sees patients Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. by appointment only.

\* - Precipitated withdrawals can condense the entire 5 to 10 day withdrawal process into just a few hours and can sometimes be fatal to people who already have other serious medical conditions.