

A Tool for Buprenorphine Care

(A series of monthly newsletters about buprenorphine treatment)

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New Formulation Recently Approved by FDA

The FDA has approved a sublingual film formulation of buprenorphine/naloxone for the treatment of opioid dependence. They will be available in the same doses as the tablets and each film will be packaged in its own individual pouch. The films dissolve in half the time as the tablets and may taste better than the sublingual tablets. VA pricing information is not yet available.

Since Suboxone Film is a new formulation, it will be reviewed for formulary status by Pharmacy Benefits Management Services (PBM), likely in the first or second quarter of FY2011. In the meantime, and once the product reaches VA pharmacies, Suboxone sublingual film will be available on a case-by-case basis via local nonformulary request processes.

Buprenorphine in the News

What the media is saying and what the public is hearing.

[For addicted veteran, regulation is enemy.](#) Joseph P. Khan. The Boston Globe. August 27, 2010. Read the editorial response [here](#).

[Drug addiction pill Suboxone costly for Kentucky.](#) Deborah Yetter. The Courier-Journal. September 6, 2010. Read the editorial response [here](#).

[Drug Helps Addicts Kick The Habit.](#) KRCR-TV. September 7, 2010.

[Purdue Pharma L.P. to Present Data from Clinical Program for Butrans™ \(buprenorphine\) Transdermal System CIII at PAINWeek® 2010.](#) Sun-Herald. September 9, 2010.

[Addictions & Answers: Dr. Dave and Bill on methadone maintenance.](#) New York Daily News. September 24, 2010.

Research Update

Mouse-over for abstract

A Clinical Trial Comparing Tapering Doses of Buprenorphine with Steady Doses for Chronic Pain and Co-existent Opioid Addiction. Blondell RD, Ashrafioun L, Dambra CM, Foschio EM, Zielinski AL, Salcedo DM. J Am Coll Cardiol. 2010 Sep; 4(3):140-146. PMID: 20824183

The SUMMIT Trial: A field comparison of buprenorphine versus methadone maintenance treatment. Pinto H, Maskrey V, Swift L, Rumball D, Wagle A, Holland R. J Subst Abuse Treat. 2010 Sep 2. [Epub ahead of print] PMID: 20817384

Drug Treatment as HIV Prevention: Expanding Treatment Options. Metzger DS, Zhang Y. Curr HIV/AIDS Rep. 2010 Aug 29. [Epub ahead of print] PMID: 20803321

A contingency-management intervention to promote initial smoking cessation among opioid-maintained patients. Dunn KE, Sigmon SC, Reimann EF, Badger GJ, Heil SH, Higgins ST. Exp Clin Psychopharmacol. 2010 Feb;18(1):37-50. PMID: 20158293

Frequently Asked Question:

Is there a specific stop code for providing buprenorphine treatment?

Providers should use the same stop code for providing buprenorphine treatment as they do for providing other care. If buprenorphine is being provided in primary care, the stop code would be 323. If it is provided in a licensed methadone clinic, the stop code would be 523. If in infectious disease, the stop code would be 310, and so forth.

A procedure code can be used to differentiate buprenorphine care for your monitoring.

In substance abuse treatment clinics, the stop codes are as follows:

Substance Abuse – Individual: 513

Substance Abuse Disorder/PTSD Teams: 519

Opioid Substitution: 523

Intensive Substance Abuse Treatment – Group: 547

Source: Buprenorphine Initiative in the VA Resource Guide

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