

Starting Buprenorphine: Tips for Filling Your Prescription in Maryland

Buprenorphine is an evidence-based medication approved by the [US Food and Drug Administration](#) to safely and effectively treat opioid use disorder. This medication has been shown to reduce the [risk of opioid overdose](#).

The person prescribing your medication will give you instructions on when to start buprenorphine and how to adjust the dose. Note that prescriptions for injectables (Brixadi and Sublocade) will be sent to specific FDA-certified pharmacies. Some pharmacies such as CVS and Safeway administer injections.

Buprenorphine is a controlled substance, so pharmacies have specific regulations for filling these prescriptions and prescriptions are only submitted electronically.

Five Types of Buprenorphine

1. **Brixadi** (buprenorphine extended-release) injection for subcutaneous use
2. **Sublocade** (buprenorphine extended-release) injection for subcutaneous use
3. **Suboxone** (buprenorphine and naloxone) film for sublingual or buccal use
4. Buprenorphine and naloxone tablets and film for sublingual or buccal use
5. Buprenorphine tablets for sublingual use

TIPS FOR FILLING YOUR PRESCRIPTION

1. Check Your Prescription

Know which form of buprenorphine you were prescribed including whether it is generic or brand name (see box above).

2. Call Ahead to the Pharmacy

Call the pharmacy ahead of time to make sure they have buprenorphine. If they do not, then your provider needs to be contacted so they can send the prescription to a different pharmacy.

3. Look for Potential Cost Savings

Prescription medication costs associated with buprenorphine might be available through resources such as [GoodRx](#).

4. Be Prepared to Show ID

Some pharmacies may ask for identification when filling medications for opioid use disorder.

5. Ask Questions if You Need Help

You can ask your pharmacist or prescriber questions, or you can call 211 or use local harm reduction or recovery networks for pharmacy referrals.

6. Be Polite but Persistent

If a pharmacy says they won't fill your prescription, ask if they can recommend another location.

Don't give up---getting your medication is important for your recovery.

7. Tips for Taking Your Medication

- Film: Moisten mouth before use,
- Film/Tablet: Hold in mouth for 2-8 minutes until completely dissolved. Try not to swallow. If using two at one time, place the second under the tongue on the opposite side and try to avoid having the films/tablets touch.

8. Safety and Side Effects

- Keep naloxone with you at all times in case of an overdose.
- Side effects of buprenorphine can include headache, mouth irritation, and nausea.