

## What does an overdose look like?

*Learn the signs of an opioid overdose and educate those around you.*

Three strong signs of overdose are:

- Tiny, pinpoint pupils
- Slow and shallow breathing
- Unconsciousness and/or unresponsiveness

## What do I need to do?

- 1) Try to wake the person up
- 2) CALL 911
- 3) Give the first dose of Naloxone
- 4) Check for breathing
- 5) Be prepared to give a second dose of Naloxone if needed

**If someone has overdosed, a Naloxone kit can be used to save them.**

You can get a kit from a specially trained pharmacist without a prescription, but it may not be covered by your medical insurance unless your doctor writes an order.

If you would like to receive a kit for free, please ask your counselor, doctor or call us at (831) 424-6655.

## Mission & Vision

**As a leading treatment provider for Substance Use Disorders, such as Opioid Use Disorder, serving Monterey County and San Benito County,** Valley Health Associates offers a combination of behavioral therapy and medication therapy known as Medication Assisted Treatment. This treatment strategy is the most effective way to help a person struggling with Opioid Use Disorder, a serious and chronic illness.

## Important Reminder

### MAT Medications & Child Safety

**It's important to remember that if medications are allowed to be kept at home:**

- 1) They must be locked in a safe place away from children
- 2) Methadone in its liquid form is colored & is sometimes mistaken for a soft drink
- 3) Children who take medications used in MAT may overdose & die



# Walking the road of recovery together.

**CONTACT INFO.** 427 Pajaro St. Ste. 4, 5 & 6  
Salinas, Ca 93901  
Phone: (831) 424-6655  
Fax: (831) 424-9717  
(831) 424-9807  
(Youth Outpatient)  
valleyhealthassociates.com



Valley Health Associates  
has established partnerships with:

Monterey County Behavioral Health, Alcohol & Drug Division  
United States Probation and Pretrial Service System

**Valley Health Associates is licensed,  
certified & accredited by:**



State of California, Department of  
Health Care Services  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration  
U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services  
Monterey County Behavioral Health  
Administration  
The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)  
The Commission on Accreditation of  
Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)



# Valley Health Associates

## Get the help you Deserve



Valley Health Associates offers comprehensive Outpatient **Medication-Assisted Treatment Services (MAT)**

# Medicines for Treating Opioid Use Disorder:

*What you need to know when choosing the best treatment for you*

“At Valley Health Associates we individualize treatment in collaboration with the patient, counseling staff & medical team. Treatment includes exit strategies that assist the patient in acquiring the coping skills necessary to live a life free of all mind alerting substances.”

AMY BRAVO  
Executive Director



## Buprenorphine

(Suboxone®, Subutex®, Zubsolv®)

### ✓ BENEFITS

- It is a well-studied medicine, and safe for long-term use.
- People who take buprenorphine are less likely to overdose or die than people who do not take it.
- It blocks cravings and prevents feeling “high” if you slip and use.
- It is more effective for chronic pain than methadone or naltrexone.
- It blocks withdrawal symptoms (unlike naltrexone or no medications).
- You can get to a comfortable dose in a couple of days (faster than with methadone).
- It does not produce a “high.”
- Most people get it from a primary care doctor who can provide up to one month of medicine at a time—no need to go every day or go to a special clinic.
- Some people prefer the counseling and support of a methadone clinic—many clinics now also offer buprenorphine at the window.
- Safely used by patients who have employee health screens or on parole.
- It is covered by most health insurance programs.

### ⚠ CAUTIONS

- Side effects are rare AND less severe and less frequent than other opioids. All opioids can cause trouble sleeping, nausea, headaches, or overdose if mixed with other drugs.
- Some AA/NA groups, treatment programs, and police/judges may not support this.
- Usually, you should be in some withdrawal before you take the first dose.
- Stopping buprenorphine often is done slowly and with support of medical team.

## Methadone

### ✓ BENEFITS

- It is a well-studied medicine that is safe for long-term use.
- People who take methadone are less likely to overdose or to die than people who do not take it.
- It blocks cravings and prevents feeling “high” if you slip and use.
- It helps with chronic pain, but less than buprenorphine.
- It blocks withdrawal symptoms (unlike naltrexone or no medications) and may take longer to get to a comfortable dose than buprenorphine.
- It does not produce a “high” if taken at the right dose.
- Methadone users are less likely than those who don’t take it to relapse, get HIV, or go to prison.
- Methadone clinics offer counseling and case management support.
- You do not need to go into withdrawal before starting it.
- It is covered by most health insurance programs.

### ⚠ CAUTIONS

- Side effects may include sleepiness (if dose is too high), constipation, or dangerous heart rhythms—these can be prevented by working with your medical team.
- If you take too much or mix with other drugs, you can overdose.
- It can only be taken by going to a methadone clinic daily.
- Stopping methadone must be done slowly and with support of medical team.

## No Medication

### ✓ BENEFITS

- Some patients prefer to be off all medicines, even when there is a higher risk of relapse and overdose.
- Medication side effects are avoided. The side effect of no medication is increased risk of relapse and overdose death.

### ⚠ CAUTIONS

- You are much more likely to relapse, overdose, and die in comparison to results from buprenorphine or methadone.
- Cravings and withdrawal are not controlled when you are not taking medicines, and if you slip and use it can be much harder to stop.
- Your tolerance goes down when you don’t take any opioid medicine. That means if you return to using, you have a bigger risk of dying than if you took methadone or buprenorphine.
- Because of increased risk of overdose death without medication, you should have naloxone rescue kit at home for your safety.

