



CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES



MEMORANDUM

Date: 06/02/2021

To: CDCR_CCHCS Extended Executive Staff

From:

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Subject: SUBOXONE ADMINISTRATION PROCESS

The purpose of this memorandum is to communicate changes to the current Suboxone (buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film) administration process at California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) institutions. Suboxone medication is an essential treatment utilized to address opioid dependence. In an effort to mitigate potential Suboxone diversion, increase therapy adherence, and assure compliance with medication administration, all institutions shall implement and abide by the standardized process outlined in this memorandum. Chief Executive Officers (CEO) are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the following integrated processes:

1. Equitable distribution of Suboxone administration across all pill lines facilitated by Health Care Providers making every effort to order and administer Suboxone at Hour of Sleep (HS), AM (morning) or PM (evening) in consideration of medication line capacity.
2. Adherence to updates to HCDOM 3.2.4 Medication Administration Policy outlining the process for Sublingual Controlled Medication Administration (e.g. Suboxone) that are currently in the final stages of approval at the executive level as described below:

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Nursing:

- a. *"The patient will present to the medication line (GP) or the cell front (locked units) with a cup of water and remove any mask or face covering.*
- b. *Licensed health care staff administering medication shall verify the patient's identity and use "Six Rights" of medication administration by following the steps outlined (refer to EHRS Workflow 500-90, Care Admin BCMA Med Line):*
- c. *Administer sublingual controlled medication after all other prescribed medications have been taken.*
- d. *Licensed health care staff administering medication shall have the patient wet their mouth with a small drink of water before administration.*
- e. *Licensed health care staff shall observe the patient take the sublingual medications into their mouth and the patient shall be instructed not to chew, swallow, talk or open their mouth while the medication is dissolving. The patient shall remain clearly visible to health care staff.*
- f. *Once the medication is administered, licensed health care staff shall provide face-to-face patient education or instruction to ensure initiation of the dissolution process over the required observation time.*
- g. *Observation of the sublingual medication (e.g., buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film) entering the mouth and completion of the face-to-face education or instruction to initiate dissolution as outlined shall satisfy the verification of administration as required by the DOT procedure."*

3. Training

- Licensed Nursing Staff shall complete the following Medication Management LMS courses within 30 days of the dated memo:
 - o EHRS – Medication Administration 1 – Nursing Online – HCS - OJT
 - o BET ID: 11058364.
 - o EHRS – Medication Administration 2 - Nursing Online – HCS - OJT
 - o BET ID: 11058365.
 - o Medication Administration: The 6 Rights Online – HCS
 - o BET ID: 11060697.
- Supervising Registered Nurse IIs shall be responsible for the direct oversight of Medication Administration and complete the following nursing webinar located on: [Lifeline ECHOS/EHRS Project, ECHOS Learning Team Link](#), Nursing Webinars Tab within 30 days of this dated memo: [Medication Administration Scanning and Override Report V2 10.16.2019](#).
- Licensed Nursing Staff shall also read and sign a Training Participation Sign-In Sheet CDCR 844 (Rev. 06/14) for the following attachments within 30 days of this dated memo. Completed 844s will be maintained by the local institution Nursing Education Department.

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Attachments

- Attachment A – Suboxone Film Nursing Education
- Attachment B – How to Take Your Suboxone Film – Patient Education
- Attachment C – [The ISUDT Insider Number 10 Alcohol Awareness, April 2021, Page 7](#)
- Attachment D – Suboxone Administration Observation Checklist

SUBOXONE Film Nursing Education

WHAT IS SUBOXONE?

- This medication is prescribed to patients to treat opioid dependence
- Suboxone contains a combination of buprenorphine (partial opioid agonist) and naloxone (opioid antagonist)
- Formulation: Film
- Route: Sublingual (under tongue)



SAFE PRACTICES

- Wash your hands
- Wear gloves
- Ensure patient places medication under tongue
- Collect dispense cups or foil pouches after administration
- Report adverse side effects to primary care provider

30 SECOND PATIENT EDUCATION TOPICS

- Hand Washing
- Social Distancing
- Medication Adherence
- Sick Call Process
- Patient's Prescribed Medication
- Withdrawal Symptoms

ADMINISTRATION

- Have patient show ID, match face to photo and provide a second identifier (Six Rights).
- Ask patient to completely remove mask from face/head/neck.
- Administer other medications prior to Suboxone, as Suboxone must be given last.
- Have patient drink water to moisten mouth.
- Have patient show both empty hands with palms up and fingers open.
- Open Suboxone sublingual medication and hand patient the open film foil pouch in a dispensing cup.
- Instruct patient to hold the medication between two fingers and have them place the Suboxone under their tongue and close their mouth.



- If they take two films at a time, instruct the patient to place the second film under their tongue on the opposite side.
- Avoid letting the individual films touch or overlap.
- Instruct patient to keep the medication in place until completely dissolved.
- Instruct patient not to chew, swallow or talk while Suboxone is dissolving.
- Provide patient education for about 30 seconds while the medication begins to dissolve. For example: "With your mouth closed, nod or shake your head to my questions:"
 - o Do you feel the medication under your tongue? (Patient should indicate "yes"). Be sure not to talk, chew, drink or swallow for about 10 minutes.
 - o Is this your first dose?
 - If no, are you currently experiencing any side effects?
 - If yes, please alert your healthcare team if you start to experience any side effects such as irregular heartbeat, blurry vision, headache, constipation, drowsiness, trouble sleeping or any symptoms of withdrawal.
- A variety of health topics may be addressed (Please see suggested patient education topics).
- Instruct patient to show empty hands again with their palms up and fingers open, continue to keep their masks off.

HOW TO TAKE YOUR SUBOXONE FILM

Patient Education

You are receiving this card because you are on Suboxone. Please follow the instructions below each time you come to the medication line.

- Come to the line with your cup of water and ID.
- Show your ID.
- Take your mask completely off your face/head/neck when you reach the nurse.
- Take all of your other medication first, Suboxone needs to be taken last.
- Drink water to wet your mouth (swish water in mouth).
- Show the nurse your empty hands, palms up and fingers apart.
- Remove the Suboxone film from the foil pouch.
- Hold the film between two fingers by the outside edges.
- Place the Suboxone film under your tongue and close your mouth.
 - o If you take two films at one time, place one film under the right side of your tongue, and the other film under the left side of your tongue. Do not let the films touch.
- Keep the films under your tongue until they are completely gone.
 - o Do not chew, swallow, or talk so the medicine can work.
- Show the nurse your empty hands, palms up and fingers apart.

NOTE: Provide education card to patient when prescribed Suboxone.

Revised: 05.20.2021 Nursing Services Headquarters (m_ISUDTTransitionsTeam@cdcr.ca.gov)

ISUDT PATIENT JOURNAL SHARE: MOTIVATION TO NOT DRINK

What motivates me to overcome/avoid alcohol related problems? Well one thing is being locked up. I've seen people who drink pruno lose their sight and even mess up their insides real bad. So that for sure helps my decision to avoid alcohol. Another thing is my son. He is the whole reason I wanted to get help with my addiction. I don't want anything that could jeopardize anything that I can have with him. Now that I've been sober I can see that I wasn't fully a good dad because of my usage. Never doing it front of him, but being under the influence is just as bad.

~ California City Correctional Facility

My son and my daughter are my motivation to overcome my problems with drugs and alcohol abuse. Once my children were born, the fragility of life became extremely apparent. I was able to attend rehab and quit drinking in order to become the best parent I

could be. My wife has never had substance use problems so my children have been sheltered from at least that. My addiction to drugs was easy to hide at home. I never used around my wife or children. My arrest as a first time offender was hard and my addictions grew out of control over the last almost decade in prison. Thanks to ISUDT and MAT in particular, I've been clean for two months and 20 days."

~ Wasco State Prison

Seeing from the past of people being drunk off of alcohol. Drinking to oblivion and barely able to walk or talk. Seeing that many times before as well as intoxicated people became violent. These reasons are why I don't drink any alcohol. I don't want to ever be in that state nor do I want to hurt anyone again. I want to cherish each moment of life, not be in a blur.

~ High Desert State Prison

QUICK TIPS: HELPING YOU GET YOUR SUBOXONE

Diversion is very dangerous, can lead to legal penalties and disrupt the recovery process for you and others.

There is really no telling what you are getting when you use diverted medication!

With so much risk of catching an infection and disease, contamination with fentanyl or other deadly substances, or getting a piece of strip with little or no active medication, it is best to seek out treatment of your own if needed.

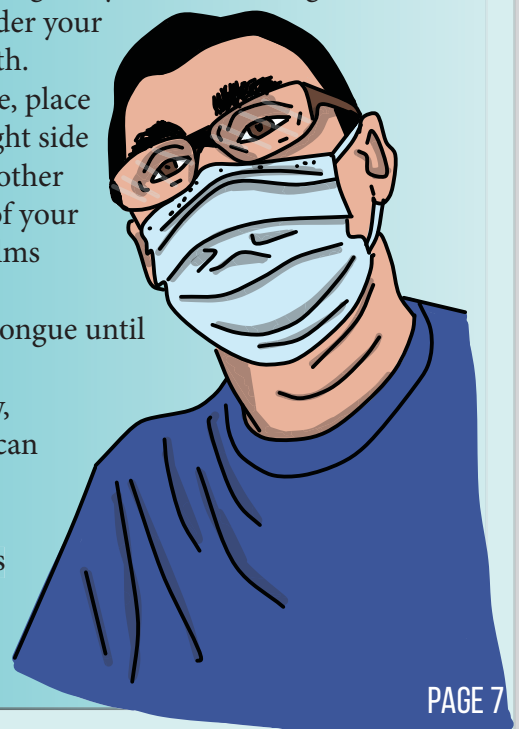


BE SMART, DO NOT DIVERT!

- Take your mask completely off your face/head/neck when you reach the nurse.
- Show the nurse your empty hands, palms up and fingers apart.
- Take all of your other medication first, suboxone needs to be taken last.
- Drink water to wet your mouth.
- Remove the suboxone film from the foil pouch.
- Hold the film between two fingers by the outside edges.
- Place the suboxone film under your tongue and close your mouth.

If you take two films at one time, place
 » one film under the right side of your tongue, and the other film under the left side of your tongue. Do not let the films touch.

- Keep the films under your tongue until they are completely gone.
 » Do not chew, swallow, or talk so the medicine can work.
- Show the nurse your empty hands, palms up and fingers apart.
- Place your hands to your side and report to custody.



Suboxone Administration Observation Checklist

Print Institution: _____ Yard: _____ Watch: _____

Date of Observation: _____

Instructions: Complete and submit Suboxone Administration Observation Checklist in accordance with your LOP for Medication Administration Observation. Observe each Medication Administration nurse at least once every six months.

Observation	Yes	No	Comments and If "No" – Plan to Correct
Suboxone Administration Observation Checklist			
1. Did the nurse check ID, verify face to photo and ask for a second identifier (Six Rights)?	☐	☐	
2. Did the patient remove mask completely off face/head/neck? If no, did the nurse ask patient to comply?	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	
3. Did the nurse administer all other medications prior to Suboxone?	☐	☐	
4. Did the patient drink water to wet their mouth? If no, did the nurse ask the patient to comply?	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	
5. Did the patient show empty hands, palms up and fingers apart? If no, did the nurse ask the patient to comply?	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	
6. Did the patient place the Suboxone film under the tongue and close their mouth? If no, did the nurse ask the patient to comply?	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	
7. Did the nurse educate patient for 30 seconds after dose?	☐	☐	
8. After Suboxone is administered did the patient show the nurse their empty hands, palms up and fingers apart? If no, did the nurse ask the patient to comply?	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	

Suboxone Administration Observation Checklist

COMMENTS / OVERALL COMMENTS / FEEDBACK TO STAFF / RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

COMMENTS OBSERVATION 1 – 8:

OVERALL COMMENTS:

Suboxone Administration Observation Checklist

FEEDBACK TO STAFF:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT (IF INDICATED):

Observer Signature

Date

Observer Printed Name