

## Diversion

### Patient Education Module

**Diversion.** Diversion is the redirection of a prescription drug from its lawful purpose to illicit use. Diversion can be done with criminal intent. Diversion includes sharing, selling, trading, or giving away prescription medications like Buprenorphine. Diversion is illegal. Diversion, in reality causes harm to others who are trying to receive treatment for substance abuse, because it leads to further regulation and restricts access to care.

Diversion can contribute to the death of others. People who have never taken Buprenorphine should never attempt to taking Buprenorphine without an evaluation from a physician. People can die from Buprenorphine, especially those who are opiate naïve. Medications should be secured in a lock box to prevent diversion and to prevent children from overdosing.

## Overdose Prevention And Reversal Agents (Naloxone)

### EHC Patient Education Module

**Naloxone: Overdose Prevention.** The heart of the challenge is the possibility that things could be different: overdose is a public health problem that can be solved. Unlike many of the other leading causes of death, death from opioid overdose is almost entirely preventable, and preventable at a low cost. Opioids kill by depressing respiration, a slow mode of death that leaves plenty of time for effective medical intervention.

Overdose is rapidly reversed by the administration of a safe and inexpensive drug called naloxone. Naloxone strips clean the brain's opioid receptors and reverses the respiratory depression, thus preventing death. Anyone who is receiving Buprenorphine or Methadone for opiate addiction should be offered Naloxone. Patients and family members should be familiar with its use in the event of accidental overdose.

## Risk for Overdose When Central Nervous System Depressants Are Taken With Buprenorphine

### EHC Patient Education Module

Mixing or combining multiple depressants is considered dangerous because they can magnify each other's effects causing severe and potentially fatal results. Depressant is a generic term for a wide variety of central nervous system (CNS) depressants. Some of the most common CNS depressants include the following: 1) Benzodiazepines (Xanax, Klonopin, Valium, Ativan, Ambien, Restoril) 2) Alcohol 3) Barbiturates (Fioricet, Phenobarbital) 4) Neurontin 5) Lyrica 6) Phenergan 7) Marijuana 8) Morphine 9) Heroin 10) Muscle Relaxers (Soma, Zanaflex, Flexeril) 11) other opiates. **These drugs should not be taken with Buprenorphine.**

Depressants work by decreasing or suppressing the normal functioning and activity of the brain. This effect is what makes depressants desirable to abusers because it helps to make them feel calm and relaxed. The central nervous system is made up of two main structures, the brain and the spinal cord which are connected to each other. These two structures in turn influence and coordinate activity through all the different parts of the body. When depressants are consumed or mixed with one another the central nervous system can be depressed to a point where it is significantly slowed down or even stopped. When the central nervous system is depressed parts of the body begin to function abnormally or they stop functioning altogether. Parts of the body like the brain, heart and liver can stop working which can cause a person to fall into a coma or die.

The major dangers of abusing multiple depressants include the following: 1) Damage to the esophagus 2) Seizures 3) Loss of consciousness 4) Brain damage 5) Reduced heart rate 6) Reduced respirations 7) Respiratory failure 8) Reduced reflexes 9) Impaired judgment 10) Impaired coordination 11) Reduced vision 12) Depression 13) Suicidal tendencies 14) Overdose 15) Coma 16) Death.