



# PRESCRIBE WITH CONFIDENCE

*Patients with Opioid Use Disorder Need You*

## AN ESTIMATED 5.7 MILLION PEOPLE AGED 12 OR OLDER HAVE OPIOID USE DISORDER

Many primary care providers likely already provide medical care to people who also have opioid use disorder (OUD). There are a lot of people with OUD who need or want treatment but have not yet received any. That includes some people who do not have access to specialty care for this purpose.

## OPIOID USE DISORDER IS A TREATABLE CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION

There is abundant evidence that treatment for OUD is most effective when medications are used. Treatment of OUD with medication reduces opioid misuse and the risks of overdose, return-to-use, and death compared with those receiving no treatment. These medications are an important tool to help people in need.

## WHY MEDICATIONS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER BELONG IN PRIMARY CARE

As a primary care prescriber treating other chronic health conditions, you are in a key position to also prescribe medications for OUD. You can do this the same way you practice shared decision-making to help patients manage asthma, diabetes, or hypertension. Providers in a variety of primary care settings should work together with their patients to manage care for OUD.

### *Types of medications used to treat opioid use disorder and who can prescribe them*

The FDA has approved three medications for treatment of OUD: buprenorphine, naltrexone, and methadone.

The most commonly prescribed medications used to treat OUD in outpatient primary care settings are **buprenorphine-containing products**, which are available in a film or tablet for sublingual or buccal use. There are also long-acting injectable forms of buprenorphine.

Physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners who have a current Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration with authority to prescribe controlled substances can prescribe buprenorphine for OUD, though some states may have additional requirements to do so. New or renewing DEA registrants must meet DEA requirements to continue prescribing.

A DATA waiver (X-waiver), long considered a barrier preventing health care providers from prescribing buprenorphine, **is no longer required**. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has more information about waiver elimination.

**Injectable naltrexone** can also be prescribed by any provider with the authority to prescribe medication.

**Methadone** used to treat OUD can only be dispensed by opioid treatment programs (OTPs), except in very limited circumstances.

People with opioid use disorder should be informed of the risks of these medications and the risks of no treatment.



Get more information and find resources for free training, mentoring, and other details so you can start diagnosing opioid use disorder and prescribing medications used to treat this disorder today.

[www.fda.gov/prescribewithconfidence](http://www.fda.gov/prescribewithconfidence)

**MEDICATIONS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER SAVE LIVES**