Starting Buprenorphine Outside of Hospitals/Clinics

Wait, Withdraw, Dose

For people with major medical issues or with lower opioid tolerance (for example using pain pills like Norco or Percocet)

If you have started Bup before:
• If it went well, that’s great! Just do that again.
• If it was difficult, talk with your care team to find ways to make it better.

If this is your first time on Bup:
• Gather your support team and if possible take a “day off.”
• Don’t drive.
• Using cocaine, meth, alcohol or pills makes starting Bup harder. Be safe.
• Too little Bup can make you still feel withdrawal.
• Too much Bup can make you feel sick or sleepy.

DAY 1
• Plan to take a day off and have a place to rest.
• Stop using and wait till you feel very sick from withdrawals (at least 12 hours is best).
• Dose ½ of an 8mg tablet or strip (4mg) under your tongue & let it dissolve.
• If you feel suddenly worse after the first dose, call the Substance Use Navigator or go to the ER.
• Repeat dose (another 4mg) in an hour to feel well.
• If you still feel sick, take another 4mg every 6 hours, up to 24 mg.

DAY 2 AND BEYOND
• Take the total amount you needed on day 1 as a single dose in the morning—for example, if you took a total of 16 mg, take 2 tablets/films at the same time.
• Later in the day, if you still feel like you’re in withdrawal or craving, take 4 mg (half-tablet or half-film) more.
• If you’re too sleepy, take 4 mg less the next day.

Call or text your Substance Use Navigator for help at ____________________________________________
Your next appointment is _________________________________________________________________