



Frequently Asked Questions about Opioid Use Disorder and IMAT

Opioid Use Disorder

What is Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)?

OUD is a chronic (or constant) brain disease that some people can get from taking opioids often. This type of disease leads to craving opioids, not being able to stop using opioids, and can cause major life problems.

What are signs of OUD?

Signs of OUD include:

- **Craving-** When you have a strong desire or urge to use opioids
- **Tolerance-** When your body does not respond to the same amount of medicine and you need a higher dose to have the same relief
- **Withdrawal-** When a person feels physical withdrawal symptoms after a fast change in dose or stopping the opioid
- **Loss of Control-**
 - Continuing to use opioids even though you know it may be harmful
 - Taking larger amounts or for a longer period of time than the doctor recommends
 - Difficulty cutting back or stopping opioids
 - Not being able to follow through with major life responsibilities

What are treatment options for OUD?

Treatment options for OUD may include some combination of the following:

- Detoxification (stopping opioid use, often with medicines to lessen withdrawal symptoms) and group or individual counseling
- 12-Step programs like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
- Medicine to lessen cravings and withdrawal symptoms



Integrated Medication-Assisted Treatment

What is Integrated Medication-Assisted Treatment (IMAT)?

IMAT combines talk therapy (either individual or group counseling) with medicines that can control cravings and lessen withdrawal symptoms. The medicines help a person feel normal again so they can focus on therapy and help rebuild their life. This therapy can continue as long as you medically need it. The medicines that are used are:

- Buprenorphine (pronounced byoo-pre-nor-feen), also called suboxone
- Methadone (available only at a methadone clinic)
- Naltrexone (nal-trek-sohn)

While a small number of people can treat their opioid use disorder with behavioral therapies and/or 12-step programs, most people need IMAT to be successful and achieve long-term recovery. Your care team will help decide what the best treatment option is for you.

Can I take other medicines while in an IMAT program?

It can be dangerous to your health to take other prescription medicines while you are in an IMAT program. These are some medicines to be worried about:

- Benzodiazepines (ben-zoh-dahy-az-uh-peen) can cause overdose when taken with buprenorphine or methadone. These might be medicines like Klonopin, Ativan or Valium.
- Talk with a psychiatrist to decide if you should take stimulant medicines for ADHD while in IMAT. These medicines may be Adderall or Ritalin.

Where can I find information on Medication-Assisted Therapy programs in Maine?

- Call 2-1-1
- Go to: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/gethelp/>

MaineHealth IMAT

The IMAT program is an effort that ensures patients get the care they need, from anywhere in the MaineHealth system. The program is designed so that all patients get the best quality of care, at the level they need, and at a location as close to home as possible. Patients who need intensive services will get care by providers with special addiction training until they are more stable. More stable and healthy patients can get their IMAT treatment at primary care offices by doctors and behavioral health clinicians. If a patient's condition worsens, they can switch back to intensive care for more help until they become more stable and ready to return to receiving care at a primary care office.

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