

# Buprenorphine - Beginning Treatment

**Day One:** Before taking a buprenorphine tablet you want to feel lousy from your withdrawal symptoms. Very lousy. It should be at least 12 hours since you used heroin or pain pills (oxycontin, vicodin, etc.) and at least 24 hours since you used methadone.

Wait it out as long as you can. The worse you feel when you begin the medication, the better it will make you feel and the more satisfied you will be with the whole experience.

You should have a least 3 of the following feelings:

- twitching, tremors or shaking
- joint and bone aches
- bad chills or sweating
- anxious or irritable
- goose pimples



• very restless, can't sit still



• heavy yawning



• enlarged pupils



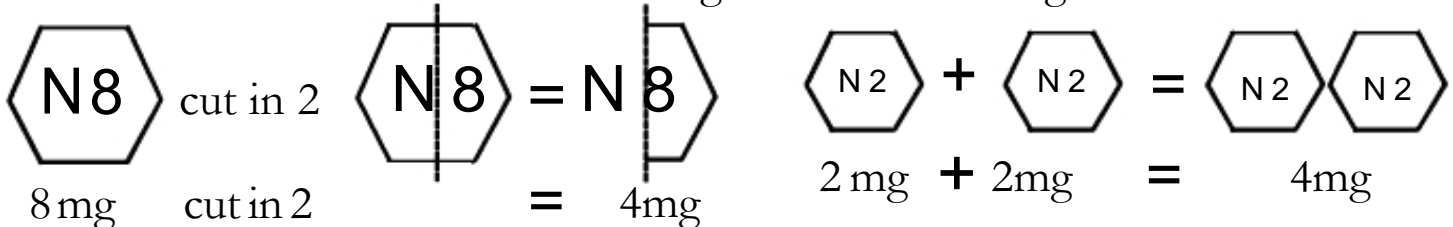
• runny nose, tears in eyes



• stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

**First Dose:** 4 mg of Buprenorphine (Bup) under the tongue.

This is one half of an 8 mg tablet or two 2 mg tablets:



Put the tablet (one half tablet of 8mg tabs, or two tablets if 2mg tabs) under your tongue. Keep it there. If you swallow Bup tablets they will not work, the medicine is best absorbed through the thin skin on the bottom of your tongue.

It takes 20-45 minutes for the medication to be absorbed and have an effect. Feel better? Good, the medicine is working. Still feel lousy after 45 minutes? Don't worry, you just need more medication.

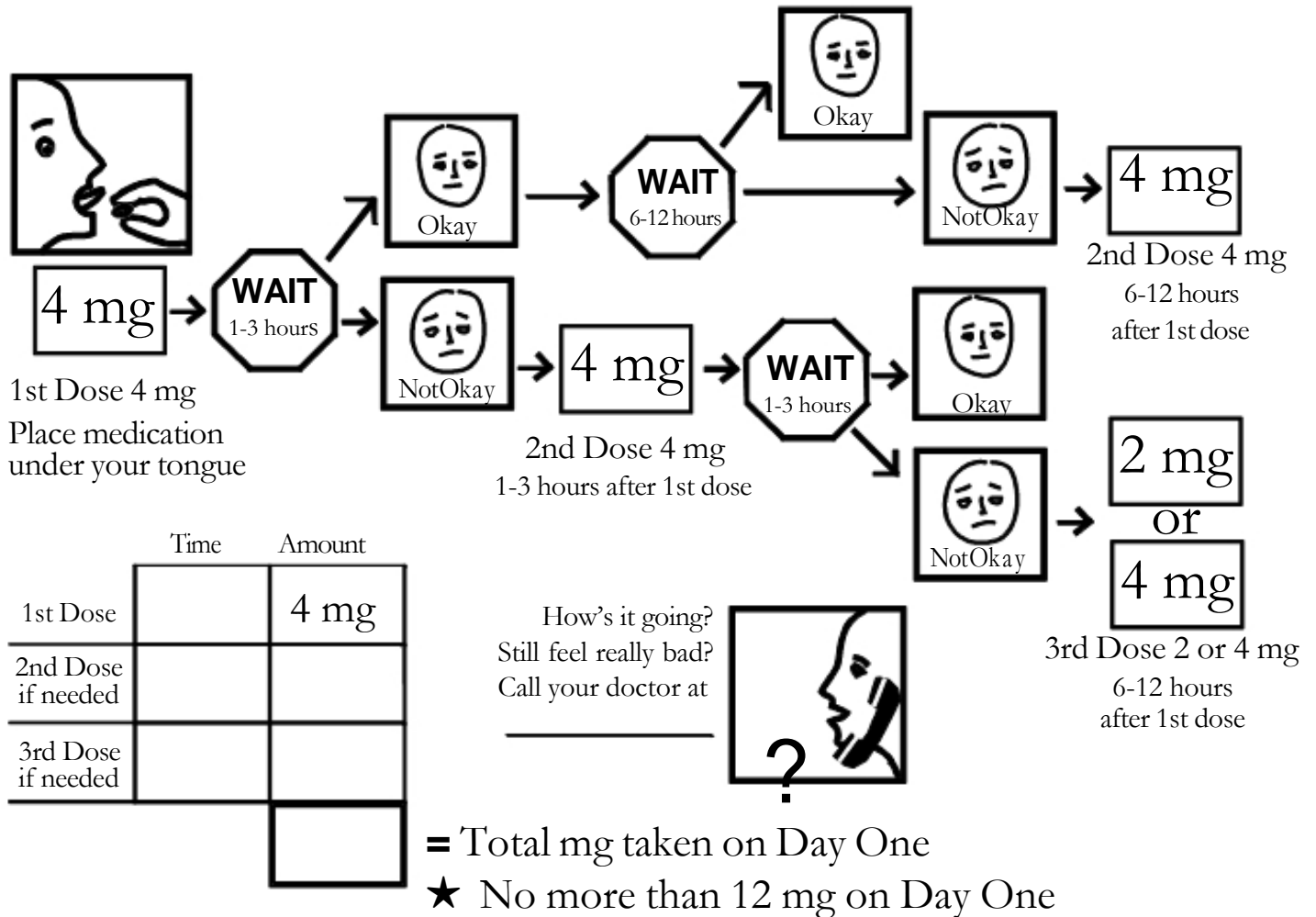
At 1-3 hours (60-180 minutes) after your first dose, see how you feel. If you feel fine after the first 4 mg, don't take any more, this may be all you need. If you have withdrawal feelings, take another 4 mg dose under your tongue.

Later in the day (6-12 hours after the first dose), see how you feel again. If you feel fine, don't take any more. If you have withdrawal feelings, take another 2 or 4 mg dose under your tongue.

Do not take more than 12 mg of Bup on the first day.

Most people feel better after the 4-12 mg on the first day. Still feel really bad, like a bad withdrawal? Call your doctor right away. You can call any time during the day if you are having difficulty.

**Day One Summary:** 4 mg under your tongue, wait 1-3 hours. If still feel sick, take 4 mg again. Wait 1-3 hours. If still sick, take 2-4 mg again. Do not take more than 12 mg on Day 1.



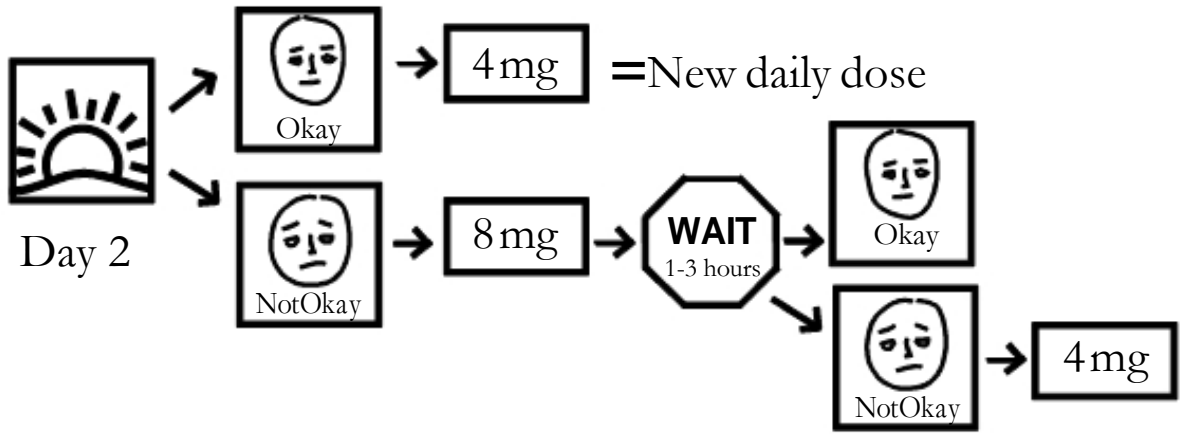
**Day Two: The right dose depends on how you felt on Day One**

If the total on Day One was <b>4 mg</b>	If you took <u>4 mg total on Day 1 and feel fine the next morning</u> , then take 4 mg again on Day 2. This will be your new daily dose. If you took <u>4 mg total on Day 1 and feel some withdrawal the next morning</u> , then try starting with 8 mg on the morning of Day 2. Later in the day on Day 2, see how you feel. If you feel fine, there is no need to take more. If you still feel withdrawal, you can try taking another 4 mg dose.
If the total on Day One was <b>8 mg</b>	If you took <u>8 mg total on Day 1 and feel fine the next morning</u> , then take 8 mg again on Day 2. This will be your new daily dose. If you took <u>8 mg total on Day 1 and feel some withdrawal the next morning</u> , then try starting with 12 mg on the morning of Day 2. Later in the day on Day 2, see how you feel. If you feel fine, there is no need to take more. If you still feel withdrawal, you can try taking another 4mg dose.
If the total on Day One was <b>12 mg</b>	If you took <u>12 mg total on Day 1 and feel fine the next morning</u> , then take 12 mg again on Day 2. This will be your new daily dose. If you took <u>12 mg total on Day 1 and feel some withdrawal the next morning</u> , then try starting with 16mg on the morning of Day 2.

# Day Two Summary: 4-16 mg total, depending on how much you took on Day 1.

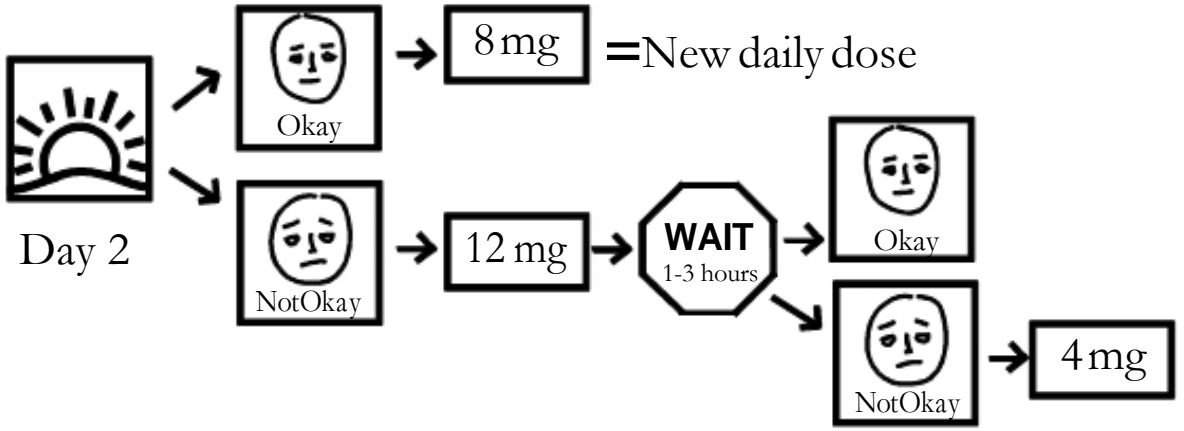
If the total on Day One was

**4 mg**



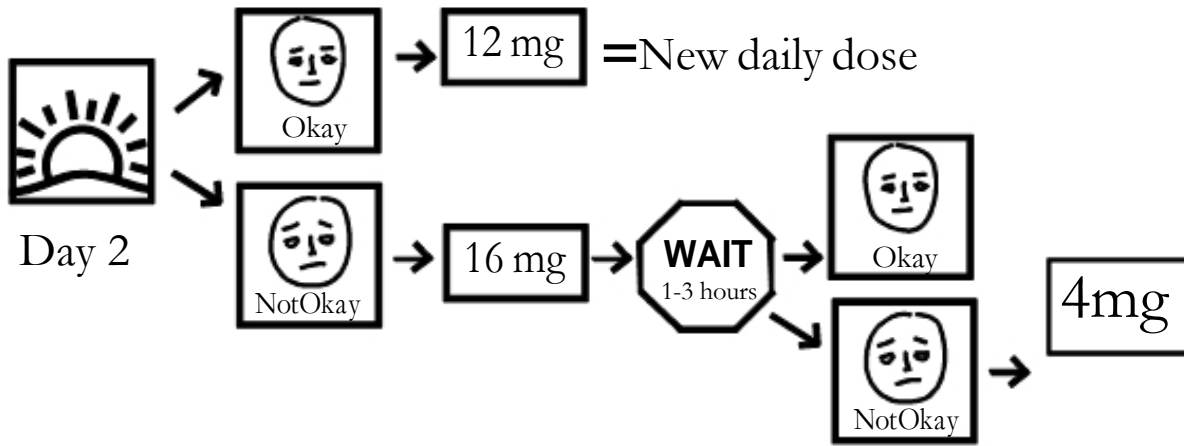
If the total on Day One was

**8 mg**



If the total on Day One was

**12 mg**



	Time	Amount	
1st Dose			= Total mg taken on Day One
2nd Dose if needed			
			= Total mg taken on Day Two

Still feel really bad?  
Call your doctor at

\_\_\_\_\_



## Day Three

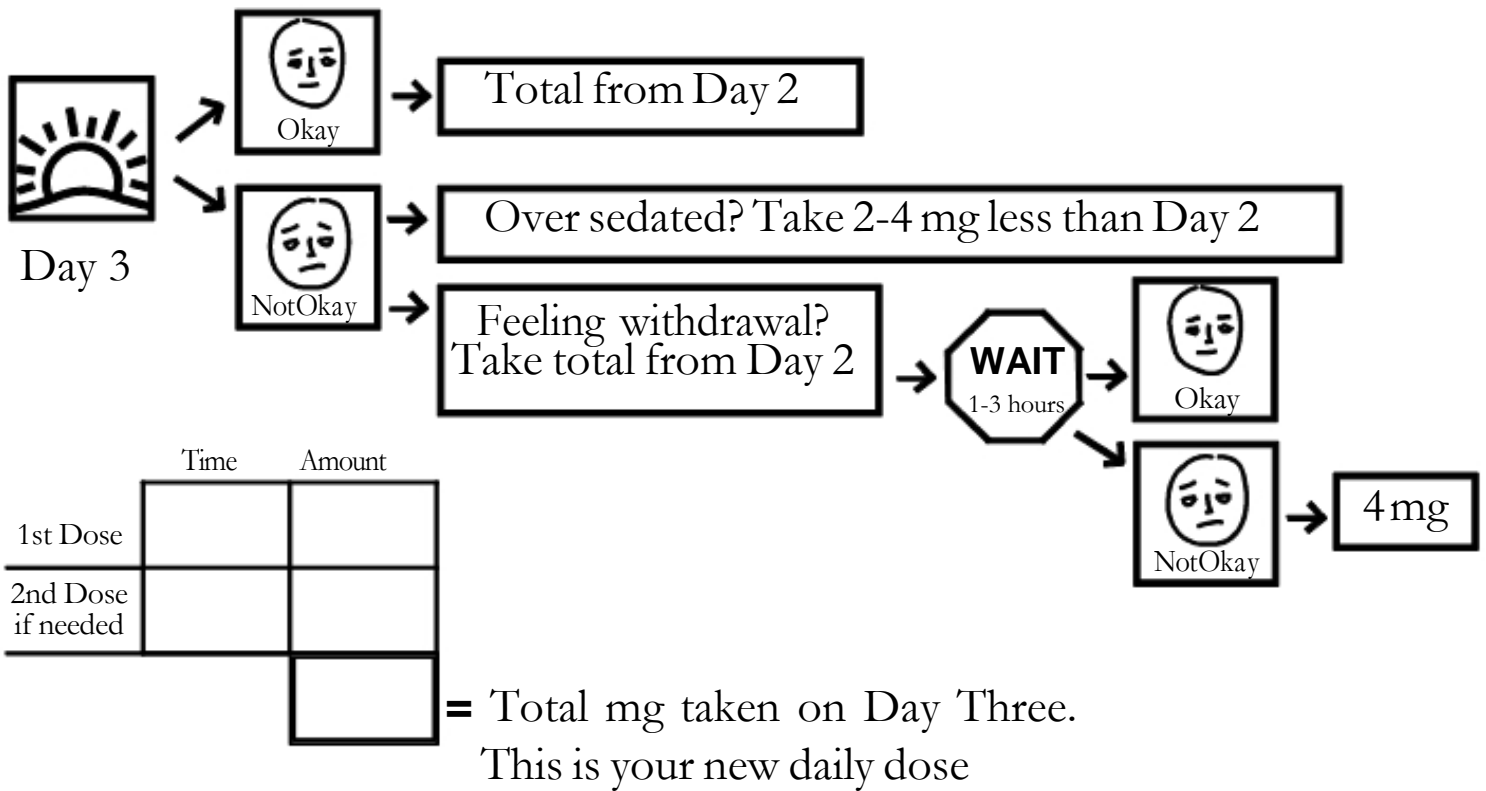
The right dose for you on Day 3 depends on how you felt on Day 2. Did you still feel unwell, like you were in some withdrawal by the evening or night of Day 2? Or did you feel like the medication was too strong, leaving you too groggy or sedated? Different people need different doses of Bup: some feel fine on just 4 mg per day, and others can need up to 24 mg per day to feel comfortable.

If you felt good at the end of Day 2, repeat the dose you took on Day 2. This is your new daily dose.

If you felt too tired, groggy, or over sedated on Day 2, try taking a lower dose on Day 3. Take 2-4 mg less on Day 3 than you took on Day 2.

If you still felt some withdrawal at the end of Day 2, start Day 3 by taking the same total dose you took on Day 2. If you still have withdrawal symptoms later on Day 3, take another 4 mg later in the day.

**Day Three Summary:** Take the total Day 2 dose under your tongue in the morning. You can try a little less if the Day 2 dose felt too strong and you can take an extra 4 mg dose if you still feel withdrawal.



## Day Four and Beyond

On Day 4 and beyond, take the dose you used on Day 3. This is now your daily dose. You can take more or less depending on how you feel overall, whether or not you still have cravings or are still using, etc. You should discuss any dose adjustments after this point with your doctor. If you do need to increase your dose, you should not change it by more than 4 mg per day.

- ★ Never take more than 24 mg of Buprenorphine in one day.
- ★ Come back to your next clinic appointment.