

A photograph of a woman with long black braids holding a young child with curly hair in a park. The woman is wearing a white sweater and the child is wearing a pink jacket. They are both looking off to the side with gentle expressions. The background shows trees and a path.

Is Medication-Assisted Recovery Right For Me?

Understanding Why MAR Can Work For You

Moving your life past opioids is challenging, but it is possible. Medication-Assisted Recovery (MAR) is a type of treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD) where medications and optional behavioral counseling are used to sustain recovery. Medications work to reduce your cravings and most help your withdrawal symptoms. MAR can help you move past your OUD and take back the power in your life.

Your doctor can help you decide if MAR makes sense for you. Here are some common concerns you may have.

Do You Feel Ready to Start Treatment?

Treatment will be most successful if you feel ready to take it on. If you aren't sure it's the right path for you, or want to talk about other options, a health care provider can help. All three of the medications of MAR are proven to reduce cravings, and two can even help your withdrawal symptoms. Studies show that you are more likely to stay off of opioids with MAR versus other pathways of recovery.

Have You Had Challenges Quitting or Reducing Your Use Another Way?

Overcoming cravings and withdrawal symptoms is not easy, and every attempt at quitting or reducing your use deserves respect. With the help of MAR, you can be successful. MAR is different from other types of treatment you may have tried, and can be an important tool in looking towards your recovery.

Are You Worried About How it Will Make You Feel?

Methadone and buprenorphine (e.g. Suboxone®) will reduce your cravings and withdrawal symptoms if you take them consistently and as directed. For buprenorphine, you must be in early withdrawal (roughly 12–24 hours) before you start it, otherwise it will make you feel sick. However it is known to help you think clearly once on it. Methadone can have some side effects. Both medications are proven effective to help you in your recovery.

You may prefer one medication to another. Your doctor can help you find the one that works for you and makes you feel best.

Are You Worried it Won't Help?

When taken consistently and as directed, MAR can be effective, with success rates up to 80%. The key is finding a medication and plan that works for you, and sticking with it.

Are You Concerned About Your Responsibilities?

There are other types of treatment and rehabilitation, some of which require you to go away to a treatment center. One of the benefits of MAR is that it doesn't require you to change your whole life if you do not want it to. It's convenient and made just for you. For example, a buprenorphine (e.g. Suboxone®) prescription is filled at your local pharmacy and can be taken at home, allowing you to maintain your other responsibilities and priorities.

Are You Worried About Being Judged?

Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) is a disease that deserves medical care, just like any other chronic illness. No matter what has led to this point, MAR can help you by reducing your cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Using MAR to manage your experience with OUD is healthy, safe, and controlled. It's not about trading one substance for another. It's about getting you well and ready to take the next step forward in life.

Other Considerations:

- MAR includes three types of medications: buprenorphine (e.g. Suboxone®), methadone, and naltrexone (e.g. Vivitrol®). They will all reduce your cravings and help you move forward, but each medication has its own experience and reaction with your body.
- Each medication is taken differently. Talk to a doctor about what will work best for you.
- Recovery is challenging, you can do this. Your inner strength combined with MAR can make the recovery process successful, putting you back in control of your life moving forward.



For more information and resources about how Medication-Assisted Recovery may be right for you, visit RethinkRecoveryIL.com.

