

DEBUNKING HARMFUL Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)/ Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) MYTHS

When a person becomes dependent on opioids, they may experience withdrawal symptoms and feel extremely sick when they attempt to reduce or stop using. These symptoms also include intense cravings for opioids, which can make recovery quite challenging. MOUD/MAT offers FDA approved medications that help to address the opioid withdrawal symptoms and promote long-term recovery. These medications may include: Naltrexone (Vivitrol), buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex, Zubsolv) or methadone.

Misconceptions about MOUD/MAT are harmful and perpetuate stigma which can limit recovery options and healing.

MYTHS VS. FACTS

MYTH: Quitting drugs is all about willpower.



Addiction is a medical disease that affects the brain and body. Opioids specifically are highly addictive and change how the brain works, greatly affecting a person's day-to-day life and functioning. Many people find that supplementing their behavior therapy and/or support groups with MOUD/MAT helps to address the biological symptoms that make recovery challenging.

Source: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/understanding-drug-use-addiction>

MYTH: MOUD/MAT just substitutes one addiction for another.



MOUD/MAT promotes healing and recovery by relieving withdrawal symptoms. When properly prescribed, MOUD/MAT medications reduce drug cravings and can prevent relapse without causing a "high". This treatment approach has shown to improve patient survival, increase retention in treatment, decrease illicit opiate use and criminal activity, and increase employment ability and maintenance.

source: <https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/topics/medication-assisted-treatment.aspx>

MYTH: You should not be on MOUD/MAT if you are pregnant.



Quickly stopping opioids during pregnancy is not recommended, as it can have serious consequences, including preterm labor, fetal distress, or miscarriage. Current clinical recommendations for pregnant women with opioid use disorder include MOUD/MAT. Although NOWS (Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome) / NAS (Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome) is an expected condition that can follow exposure to MOUD/ MAT, it should not deter treatment. Close collaboration with the pediatric care team can ensure NOWS/NAS is identified and treated.

Source: www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/opioids/treatment.html

MYTH: MOUD/MAT should not be long-term.



An individual's treatment plan is created with their doctor. People may safely be on MOUD/MAT medications for months, years, several years, or even a lifetime. If an individual chooses to shorten or extend their treatment, it should always be discussed with their provider first. There is no "recommended" treatment length, it varies for each individual.

source: www.smartrecovery.org/what-is-medication-assisted-treatment-mat/

CT State Resources



CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services



CT Community for Addiction Recovery



CT 24/7 Treatment Access Line: 1-800-563-4086



211 CT



Women's REACH Program



DMHAS Addiction Services Bed Availability



LiveLOUD