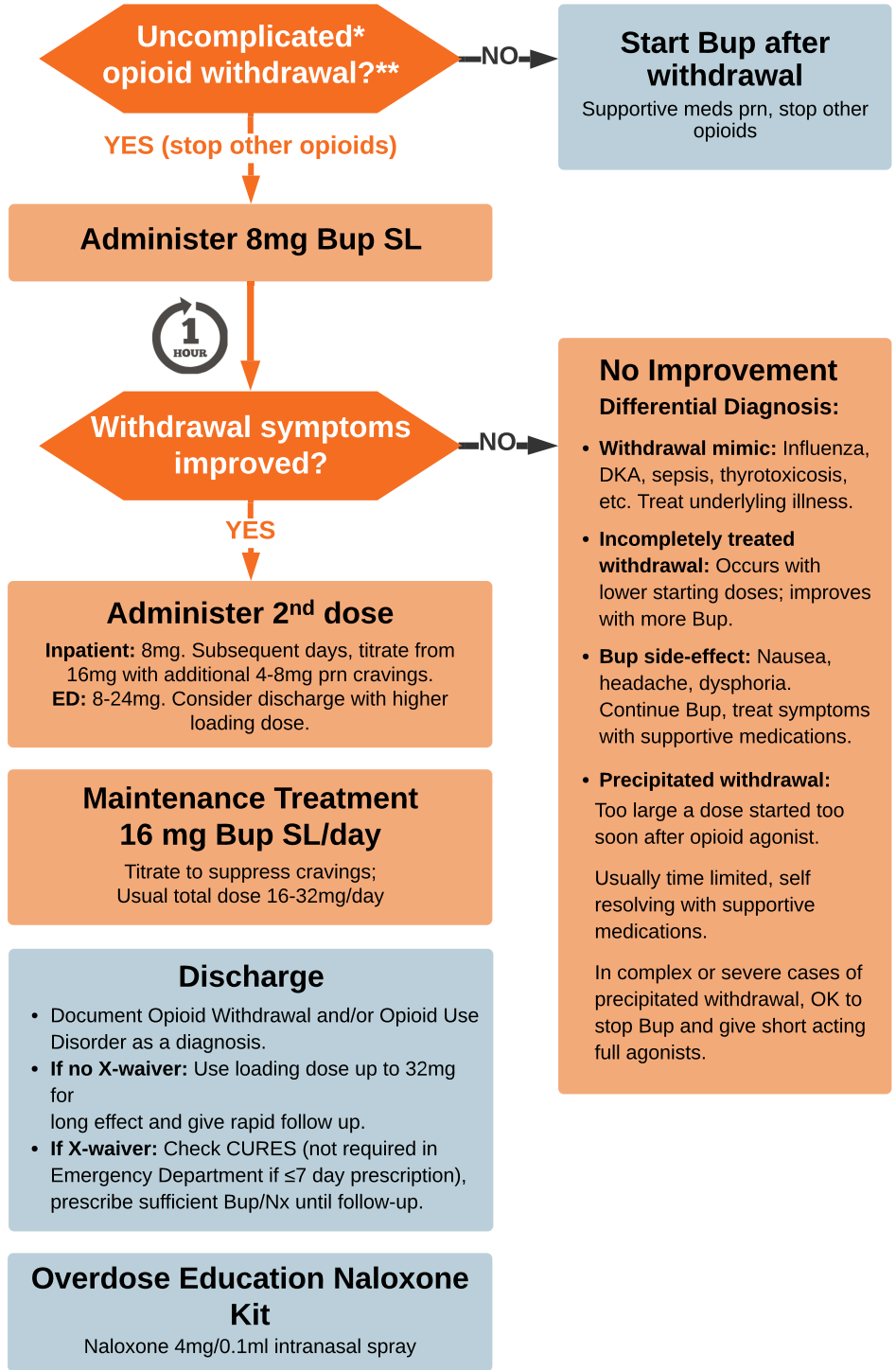




Buprenorphine (Bup) Hospital Quick Start

- Any prescriber can order Bup in the hospital, even without an x-waiver.
- Bup is a high-affinity, partial agonist opioid that is safe and highly effective for treating opioid use disorder.
- If patient is stable on methadone or prefers methadone, recommend continuation of methadone as first-line treatment.



Buprenorphine Dosing

- Either Bup or Bup/Nx (buprenorphine/naloxone) films or tab sublingual (SL) are OK.
- If unable to take oral/SL, try Bup 0.3mg IV/IM.
- OK to start with lower initial dose: Bup 2-4mg SL.
- Total initial daily dose above 16mg may increase duration of action beyond 24 hrs.
- Bup SL onset 15 min, peak 1 hr, steady state 7 days
- May dose qday or if co-existing chronic pain split dosing TID/QID.

*Complicating Factors

- Altered mental status, delirium, intoxication
- Severe acute pain, trauma or planned large surgeries
- Organ failure or other severe medical illness
- Recent methadone use

**Diagnosing Opioid Withdrawal

Subjective symptoms AND one objective sign

Subjective: Patient reports feeling "bad" due to withdrawal (nausea, stomach cramps, body aches, restlessness, hot and cold, stuffy nose)

Objective: [at least one] restlessness, sweating, rhinorrhea, dilated pupils, watery eyes, tachycardia, yawning, goose bumps, vomiting, diarrhea, tremor

Typical withdrawal onset:

- ≥ 12 hrs after short acting opioid
- ≥ 24 hrs after long acting opioid
- ≥ 48 hrs after methadone (can be >72 hrs)

If unsure, use COWS (clinical opioid withdrawal scale). Start if COWS ≥ 8 AND one objective sign.

If Completed Withdrawal:

Typically >72 hrs since last short-acting opioid, may be longer for methadone. Start Bup 4mg q4h prn cravings, usual dose 16-32mg/day. Subsequent days, OK to decrease frequency to qday

Opioid Analgesics

- Pause opioid pain relievers when starting Bup.
- OK to introduce opioid pain relievers after Bup is started for breakthrough pain. Do not use methadone with Bup.

Supportive Medications

- Can be used as needed while waiting for withdrawal or during induction process.

Pregnancy

- Bup monoproduct or Bup/Nx OK in pregnancy.
- Consider referencing buprenorphine in pregnancy guide.

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Buprenorphine (Bup) Hospital Quick Start

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