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OPIOID ADDICTION RECOVERY PROGRAM

SUBUTEX/SUBOXONE

medication management for opioid addiction

Dr. Smolen is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry with qualification in the sub-specialty of Addiction Psychiatry. He has created an office based recovery program for opioid addiction and abstinence from other addictive substances. Success in the treatment of opioid addiction hinges primarily on achieving abstinence and preventing relapse. The main reason for relapse is a compulsion to satisfy the addictive need for opioids. This can also be intensified by the physical discomfort of withdrawal and the emotional pain from life's problems.

Dr. Smolen has chosen to use Subutex/Suboxone as a therapeutic substitute for opioids. These FDA approved medications enable the patient to be comfortable instead of distracted by cravings to use. Subutex/Suboxone makes it possible to have the freedom to embrace addiction recovery and make better life choices leading to success and happiness.

Subutex is Buprenorphine, a partial opioid which will relieve withdrawal and cravings without causing any addictive compulsion to take more than the amount prescribed.

Suboxone is Buprenorphine and Naloxone combined. Naloxone is an opioid blocker which prevents the addictive effect from an opioid such as Roxycodone and lessens the desire to take more. It will not prevent an overdose from causing respiratory failure and death.

Dr. Smolen has treated hundreds of patients for opioid addiction in the past few years since Subutex and Suboxone have become available. He says, "*The results have been amazing. My patients are living healthy productive lives again and enjoying their families. The patients achieve the best outcomes when they have a daily recovery routine to follow. When this becomes the number one priority their problems have a way of getting solved one at a time.*"

The Opioid Addiction Recovery Program is designed to offer the best opportunity for success. It consists of several phases each directed and supervised by Dr. Smolen:

- 1. 30 min. comprehensive addiction and mental health evaluation by Dr. Smolen is done before you are accepted into the Suboxone Program.**
- 2. Comfort is preferred during the 30 minute evaluation – it is important to not be in drug withdrawal since it is too difficult to focus on the interview questions**
- 3. Diagnosis and treatment recommendations will follow the evaluation**
- 4. There is no guarantee that the Opioid Addiction Recovery Program will be offered. It must be an appropriate fit for each individual. Some patients are better served with inpatient residential treatment**
- 5. Willingness to abstain from all addictive substances except tobacco is a requirement for acceptance into the program.**
- 6. Signed contractual agreement is required before treatment begins**
- 7. Day one of treatment - in office Subutex induction takes one hour**
- 8. Day two of treatment – prescribing Suboxone to continue stabilization**
- 9. Drug testing – to verify abstinence from all addictive substances**
- 10. Dual recovery evaluation and treatment as needed – for the diagnoses of depression, bipolar and anxiety disorders**
- 11. Introduction to 12 Step Fellowship – Narcotics Anonymous**
- 12. Medication management and addiction counseling - weekly for the first month**
- 13. Medication management and addiction counseling – every two weeks for the second month**
- 14. Medication and management and addiction counseling – monthly for the next year**
- 15. Group therapy – weekly. Group size is about 8-12. Meetings are held at Dr. Smolen’s office.**
- 16. Group therapy includes a sharing process about life’s problems and how to use recovery principles to deal with them**
- 17. Group therapy – always confidential**
- 18. Group therapy is a learning experience including topics about sobriety, spirituality and how to enjoy life without addictive substances**

19. Step One - Group members have an opportunity to tell their life story about addiction and receive a warm response of compassionate support. A commemorative medallion is given representing this special achievement
20. Group bonding – contact with group members outside of the meeting to enhance support, strengthen sobriety and commitment.
21. Group members often attend Narcotics Anonymous meetings together

Of all the services offered, patients have enjoyed the group therapy experience most and found it to be the most valuable in helping them to remain sober. The success rate improves as the length of time in treatment increases. A one year commitment is recommended. All patients who have completed one year of treatment are eligible to discontinue taking Suboxone.

The following is a step-by-step explanation of the Suboxone Program and each step from the evaluation – 1st weeks of treatment & group therapy

Evaluation

1. The initial evaluation with Dr. Smolen will take 30 minutes
2. The patient's physical comfort is very important during the interview
3. If there are intense opioid withdrawal symptoms (restless, anxious, sweating, nauseated, cramps, diarrhea or pain) the appointment will be rescheduled. The patient must be able to focus and properly participate in the interview, assessment and discussion about treatment.
4. The patient is expected to bring the completed form thoroughly detailing the drug use history with all substances including opioids (pain pills, methadone and heroin), alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines (Adderall and Ritalin) and tranquilizers (Klonopin, Valium, Xanax and Ativan).
5. **NO PATIENT WILL START THE MEDICATION ON DAY OF EVALUATION.**

Treatment

1. **The Opioid Addiction Treatment Program addresses chemical dependency not just opioid abuse. The patient must be willing to abstain from all addictive substances, except tobacco, in order to begin treatment with Suboxone/Subutex.**
2. **There is no automatic admission into the program.**
3. **Dr. Smolen is most interested in offering this program to those who will take advantage of the opportunity for recovery. Not everyone is a perfect fit. Success in the program requires commitment.**
4. **Each patient invited to join the program will sign a treatment contract in alliance with Dr. Smolen. The contract is available to read under the heading “Treatment Contract.”**

Methadone Users

1. **Subutex is more effective in stopping withdrawal when the daily dose of methadone is 30mg or less.**
2. **Anyone on a higher dose than 30mg will have to wean down before induction. Methadone remains active for 72 hours or longer after it is discontinued.**
3. **The patients must stop methadone at least 48 hours before induction and have moderate symptoms of withdrawal before Subutex induction is safe.**
4. **For patients on the methadone program at Operation PAR, it is recommended to request help in lowering the methadone dose gradually to 30mg before induction with Subutex.**

Subutex Induction – Day 1

1. **Induction is the first day of treatment with Subutex**
2. **All patients must arrange to remain at home and not attempt to work that day**
3. **A prescription for Subutex will be filled and brought to the office by the patient**
4. **A mild state of opioid withdrawal is required to begin Subutex. The ideal state of withdrawal includes the following symptoms:**
5. **Chills, flushing or sweating**
6. **Restlessness – difficulty sitting still**
7. **Mild aching in the muscles, bones and joints**
8. **Stuffy nose and tearing eyes**
9. **Stomach cramps and nausea**
10. **Although uncomfortable, withdrawal is required before Subutex can be effective. Subutex can immediately worsen withdrawal if it is taken while opioids are still present in too high a concentration, especially methadone.**
11. **Dr. Smolen will meet with the patient to complete the Clinical Opiate Withdrawal Scale and assess the readiness and safety for induction.**
12. **Two pills equaling 4 mg will be taken over a one hour period. The patient will remain in the office lobby and be monitored by Dr. Smolen.**

13. Next, Dr. Smolen will meet with the patient to assess how much of the withdrawal has been relieved and provide written instructions to take 2mg of Subutex every 2-4 hours for the next 24 hours as needed to stop the withdrawal.
14. The patient is instructed to return home and rest.
15. Withdrawal symptoms are eliminated slowly over a period of hours. Usually about 50% of the withdrawal has stopped the same day the Subutex is started. There is usually 80% improvement within 24 hours and 100% within 48 hours. Patients are amazed at how good they feel being “back to normal”.

Suboxone Stabilization - Day 2 -7

1. Day two - the patient will see Dr. Smolen the day after induction for a 15 minute medication follow-up.
2. Dr. Smolen welcomes the patient’s return to celebrate this long awaited day of relief from withdrawal and the beginning of recovery from addiction.
3. Dr. Smolen will assess the status of remaining withdrawal and make any medication adjustments if needed.
4. The patient will receive written instructions and a prescription to begin taking Suboxone – which has an opioid blocker to prevent any opioid effect if there is relapse
5. The starting dose of Suboxone is usually 4mg four times per day and eventually becomes 8mg twice per day with additional 4mg doses as needed for break through withdrawal. The breaks through doses are allowed for the first week and are not needed after stabilization.
6. The third visit with Dr. Smolen is one week later.
7. During the first month on Suboxone the patient will see Dr. Smolen for medication management appointments each week to monitor patient.
8. On the second month, patients will see Dr. Smolen for medication mgt. appt twice a month and then once a month thereafter.

Group Therapy

1. Group therapy at Dr. Smolen’s office will be attended during the first week and each week thereafter.
2. Dr. Smolen will lead the session from 6:15 to 7:30 PM. Arrive at 6:00 to meet, greet and socialize with group members.
3. The group’s purpose is to unite in the pursuit of strengthening recovery through a process of sharing each person’s experience with addiction and abstinence.
4. Dr. Smolen is the instructor and mentor for the group and will teach the principles of addiction recovery, including an introduction to the 12 Step Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.
5. Group success depends upon the freedom to express feelings with an assurance of confidentiality and acceptance.

6. Further achievement in recovery requires consistent attendance from all group members who are entitled to a steady stream of support, friendship, understanding and encouragement.
7. After one month, each new member will prepare and present a Step One Life Story of their experience with addiction. This allows the group to really get to know each other more personally.
8. Members say this step is the most rewarding because the group listens with respect. They are sincerely compassionate and caring without any judgment.

Medallion Ceremony

1. The Step One Life Story is a very memorable day because the group will present a commemorative medallion during a very special ceremony. Each member of the group will offer praise and thanks honoring the completion of an early but significant period of recovery.
2. This accomplishment has helped many to increase their confidence, determination and willingness to remain in recovery with an expectation for an even better life.
3. The group also acknowledges lengths of sober living with medallions for one month, 6 months and one year. A special celebratory ceremony is held for each medallion presentation. Each member contributes with heart felt remarks about the recipient. These occasions bring the group closer together in trust and faith about their mission to stay sober one day at a time

Fees for Suboxone/Subutex Treatment – Without Insurance

\$350.00 – Covers initial evaluation and DAY 1 induction of Subutex

\$ 95.00 - Medication management appointments

**\$ 25.00 Mandatory weekly group therapy sessions –
Tuesday or Thursday night @ 6:15PM for approx. 1 ½ hours**

Medication Costs – Suboxone/Subutex

Most insurance companies cover these medications – check with your insurance company

For patients without insurance, the cost for these medications will be no less than \$105.00 for the first week. The monthly fee for the highest dose is \$450.00. The average cost per month is \$250.00.