

ED Buprenorphine/Naloxone Initiation:

This order set is intended for use on patients with a history of opioid use disorder who present to the ED in opioid withdrawal, or requesting medical management of their opioid dependence.

Buprenorphine is one of two main medications used for opioid withdrawal. Buprenorphine and combination buprenorphine/naloxone can both be used in the same way for opioid withdrawal.

Buprenorphine should NOT be started unless the patient has clinical signs of opioid withdrawal. Administering buprenorphine before withdrawal develops (if the patient is using other opioids) can cause precipitated withdrawal, in which the patient gets acutely worse.

Opioid withdrawal is assessed via the COWS score (below). Notify provider if COWS is > 8 . Medication can be administered q1h up to 4 times if COWS remains > 8 .

COWS should be repeated **every 1h** while medication is being administered, or **if any signs of clinical worsening**. If COWS increases by >2 , notify provider to assess for precipitated withdrawal.

Buprenorphine and buprenorphine/naloxone MUST be administered buccally or sublingually. The medication does not work if swallowed. Patients should not talk or drink for 10 minutes following medication administration.

Any patient receiving buprenorphine should have a completed SBIRT screen and referral to peer recover coaches.

Nursing documentation:

The screenshot displays the 'ED Adult Condensed View' interface. On the left, a sidebar lists various assessment tools, with 'ED Adult Systems Assessment' expanded to show 'COWS' (Cranial Opioid Withdrawal Scale) selected. The main area shows the COWS assessment form, which includes a table for recording results over time. The table has columns for '05:00 - 05:59 EDT', '04:00 - 04:59 EDT', and '03:00 - 03:59 EDT'. The rows include 'Reason for Assessment', 'Resting Pulse Rate', 'Sweating', 'Restlessness', 'Pupil size', 'Bone or Joint aches', 'Runny nose or tearing', 'GI Upset', 'Tremor', 'Yawning', 'Anxiety or Irritability', 'Gooseflesh skin', and 'Total Score'. The 'Total Score' row shows a score of 8. Below the table, there is a section for 'Respiratory' assessment, which is currently empty.

	05:00 - 05:59 EDT	04:00 - 04:59 EDT	03:00 - 03:59 EDT
COWS			
Reason for Assessment			
Resting Pulse Rate			
Sweating			
Restlessness			
Pupil size			
Bone or Joint aches			
Runny nose or tearing			
GI Upset			
Tremor			
Yawning			
Anxiety or Irritability			
Gooseflesh skin			
Total Score	8		
Respiratory			

COWS:

Select what best describes the patient's signs or symptom. Rate on just the apparent relationship to opiate withdrawal. For example, if heart rate is increased because the patient was jogging just prior to assessment, the increase pulse rate

Reason for this assessment:		
Resting Pulse Rate: Measured after patient is sitting or lying for one minute	☐ Pulse rate 80 or below ☐ Pulse rate 81-100 ☐ Pulse rate 101-120 ☐ Pulse rate greater than 120	GI Upset Over last ½ hour
Sweating: Over past ½ hour not accounted for by room temperature or patient activity.	☐ No report of chills or flushing ☐ Subjective report of chills or flushing ☐ Flushed or observable moistness on face ☐ Beads of sweat on brow or face ☐ Sweat streaming off face	GI Upset ☐ No GI symptoms ☐ Stomach cramps ☐ Nausea or loose stool ☐ Vomiting or diarrhea ☐ Multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting
Restlessness: Observation during assessment	☐ Able to sit still ☐ Reports difficulty sitting still, but is able to do so ☐ Frequent shifting or extraneous movements of legs/arms ☐ Unable to sit still for more than a few seconds	Tremor Observation of outstretched hands
Pupil size:	☐ Pupils pinned or normal size for room light ☐ Pupils possibly larger than normal for room light ☐ Pupils moderately dilated ☐ Pupils so dilated that only the rim of the iris is visible	Tremor ☐ No tremor ☐ Tremor can be felt, but not observed ☐ Slight tremor observable ☐ Gross tremor or muscle twitching
Bone or Joint aches: If patient was having pain previously, only the additional component attributed to opiates withdrawal is scored	☐ Not present ☐ Mild diffuse discomfort ☐ Patient reports severe diffuse aching of joints/ muscles ☐ Pt rubbing joints/muscles Can't be still due to discomfort	Yawning Observation during assessment
Runny nose or tearing: Not accounted for	☐ Not present ☐ Nasal stuffiness or unusually moist eyes ☐ Nose running or tearing ☐ Nose constantly running or tears streaming down cheeks	Yawning ☐ No yawning ☐ Yawning once or twice during assessment ☐ Yawning three or more times during assessment ☐ Yawning several times/minute
		Anxiety or Irritability
		☐ None ☐ Patient reports increasing irritability or anxiousness ☐ Patient obviously irritable/anxious ☐ So irritable/anxious participation in assessment difficult
		Gooseflesh skin
		☐ Skin is smooth ☐ Piloerection of skin felt or arm hairs standing up ☐ Prominent piloerection
		Total Score
		Score: 5-12 = mild; 13-24 = moderate; 25-36 = moderately severe; more than 36 = severe withdrawal