

Commonly asked Questions

What if I used Buprenorphine before I knew I was pregnant?

Sometimes you may have used and didn't realise you were pregnant, try not to worry. It's important you tell your GP and Midwife straight away so they can check everything is ok.

To protect your baby from Buprenorphine related danger, you should also tell your prescriber and recovery worker as soon as you know your pregnant or if you think you are.



What can you do..

Do not just Stop! Contact one of the services below to discuss a carefully planned reduction

Together — 0800 233 5444

Your own GP

Midwife Team

Specialist Midwife

If you feel there is something seriously wrong with either yourself or the baby go to your nearest A & E or if not possible dial 999

Buprenorphine and Pregnancy



Risks during pregnancy

The first trimester (i.e. months 1-3)

There does not appear to be any extra risks from taking Buprenorphine on baby's early growth.

Second and Third trimesters (month 4

onwards) increases in body weight and fluid may dilute the Buprenorphine. If you feel your dosage is no longer working, contact your Prescriber straight away, as they can adjust the dosage to help you.

During birth Buprenorphine is likely to make some Opiate type pain killers less effective if they are needed during labour.



Buprenorphine

Buprenorphine aka Subutex, is an Opioid used to treat Opioid addiction, moderate acute pain and moderate chronic pain.

Like Heroin and other drugs derived from Morphine, Buprenorphine contains chemicals that link with opioid receptors in the brain to reduce pain and produce feelings of well-being.

Possible effects on the new born

Your baby may experience minor withdrawal effects (known as Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome) These include:

- Being irritable,
- Crying,
- Shivering,
- Vomiting & Diarrhoea
- Fits

Your baby will also be checked for side effects such as breathing problems or being extra sleepy.

Can I use Buprenorphine and breastfeed?

Simple Answer is **Yes**

Buprenorphine passes into breast milk in small amounts so you can breastfeed if you have a healthy full-term baby

If your baby was born early then breastfeeding is not recommended as your baby may not be able to safely get rid of the Buprenorphine

If your baby becomes restless, very sleepy or develops feeding problems stop breastfeeding and quickly seek medical advice

Can I just stop using Buprenorphine while pregnant?

Simple answer is **No**

Women who are taking Buprenorphine when they get pregnant are generally advised not to stop taking it. If you stop taking it you could experience withdrawal symptoms which your baby would also feel.