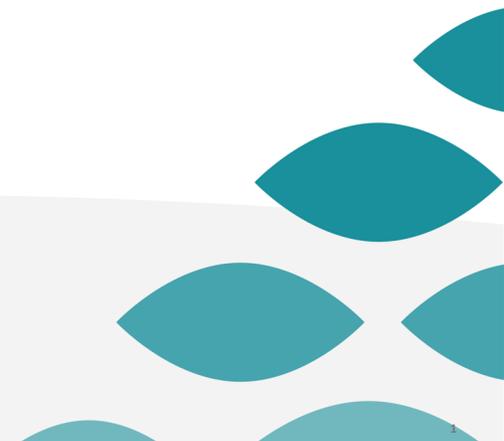




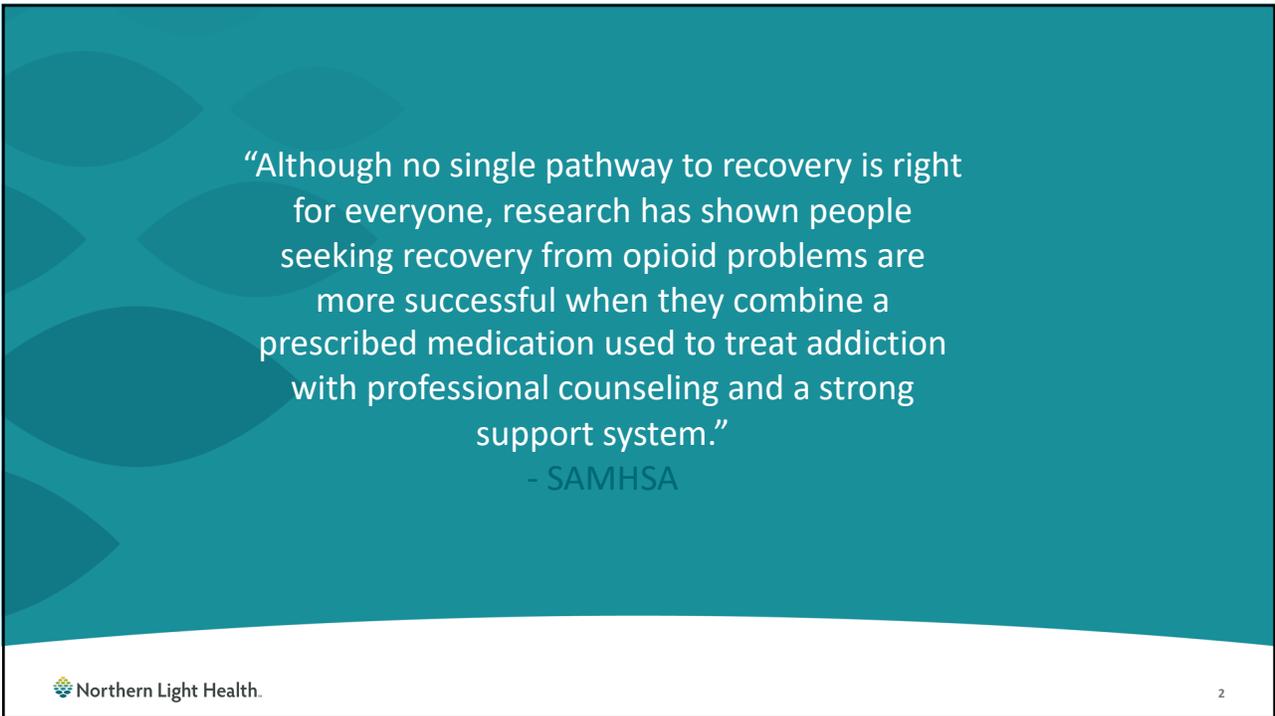
Northern Light  
Health.

# Approaches to SUD with Methadone

Jacquelyn A. Cyr, RN, MSN, NPC  
Director of Substance Use Services  
Northern Light Acadia Hospital



1



“Although no single pathway to recovery is right for everyone, research has shown people seeking recovery from opioid problems are more successful when they combine a prescribed medication used to treat addiction with professional counseling and a strong support system.”  
- SAMHSA



Northern Light Health.

2

## What is Methadone?

### Scheduled II medication for treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

#### Synthetic, slow acting full mu-opioid receptor agonist

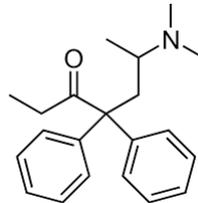
Purpose: Methadone can help achieve control over withdrawal symptoms, craving, and is lifesaving.

Increase  
functionality  
and quality of  
life

Provided in an  
OTP setting

Daily dosing with  
ability to achieve  
take homes  
assessed by  
overall stability

Gold Standard  
treatment for  
MOUD



3

## What is Methadone? Cont.

### Benefits

- Prevents withdrawal symptoms, reduces cravings, reduces euphoria of subsequent opioid use, high efficacy in opioid use disorder

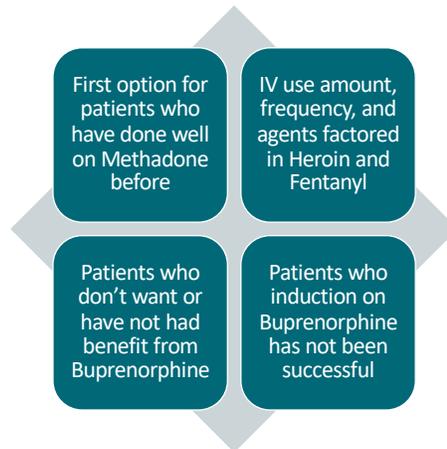
### Risks

- Possible overdose risk, misuse, hyperalgesia, cardiac arrhythmias, dependence

4

## Determination of Appropriateness to Start Methadone

Who is Methadone appropriate for?



5

## Diagnostic Evaluation

Complete Psychosocial Evaluation

Medical Workup:

- Vital signs/EKG, skin assessment (signs of injection, jaundice), edema of extremities, signs of abscess/cellulitis/endocarditis/tuberculosis, signs of opioid withdrawal or intoxication, COWS
- Hepatic function, Viral Hep B/Hep C, HIV, TB, Toxicology screen/breathalyzer, and if appropriate, pregnancy test

Assessment with provider to discuss all treatment options so patient can make a fully informed decision

- It is the responsibility of the provider to cover all treatment modalities (Methadone, Buprenorphine, Naltrexone, withdrawal, symptom management with other agents (Comfort pack) and abstinence

6

# Diagnostic Evaluation Cont.

All in the 1<sup>st</sup> day:

Initial dosing between 5-30 mg with max of 40 mg in a day

Can go up on dose every 3-7 days depending on individual and program

Can be increased by 5-10 mg increments

- Average dosing has been 60-120 mg
- Starting to see an increased need to go higher with Fentanyl's increasing presence in illicit supply
- More research/published studies are needed, but most individuals using Fentanyl typically need to be between 80-100 mg

7

WHAT IS FENTANYL?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is approximately **50X MORE POTENT THAN MORPHINE**<sup>1</sup>

Many people are exposed to fentanyl without knowledge while others use it intentionally because of its potency.

OVERDOSE DEATHS IN THE UNITED STATES EXCEEDED 100,000 IN A 12-MONTH PERIOD FOR THE FIRST TIME!<sup>2</sup>

61% of these deaths involved synthetic opioids, mainly illicitly manufactured fentanyl (IMF) (May 2020-April 2021)<sup>2</sup>

This is up from the more than 91,000 overdose deaths that occurred the previous year (December 2019-December 2020)<sup>2</sup>

Although the northeast region continues to suffer the highest overdose deaths, several regions of the country showed sharp increases in IMF related deaths.<sup>2</sup>

FENTANYL IS IMPACTING MINORITIES AT AN ALARMING RATE!

Non-Hispanic Blacks had the highest mortality rate due to synthetic opioids other than methadone in 2020. In addition, from 2013-2020, the highest changes in this rate were for: non-Hispanic Blacks, Hispanics, non-Hispanic Whites.<sup>3</sup>

**47.6X**

Overdose deaths involving IMF rose 47.6-fold among Non-Hispanic Blacks.<sup>3</sup>

**35.7X**

Overdose deaths involving IMF rose 35.7-fold among Hispanics.<sup>3</sup>

**15.9X**

Overdose deaths involving IMF rose 15.9-fold among Non-Hispanic Whites.<sup>3</sup>

YOU CAN HELP SAVE LIVES - CARRY NALOXONE!

AN OVERDOSE CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE.

If you suspect an opioid overdose, administer NALOXONE and get emergency medical assistance right away. NALOXONE is a small, easy to carry medicine that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose.

Looking for NALOXONE?

Visit: [www.naloxoneforall.org](http://www.naloxoneforall.org)

8

# Overdose Response

**HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF AN OVERDOSE.**

- UNRESPONSIVE
- IRREGULAR BREATHING
- GRAY, BLUE, OR PALE SKIN COLOR
- VERY SMALL PUPILS

**HOW TO REVERSE AN OVERDOSE.**  
Immediate action saves lives! Good Samaritan Laws protect you when you are trying to help someone in need.

<p><b>CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY</b></p> <p>Call 911, or direct someone nearby to call and say that you are supporting a suspected overdose.</p>	<p><b>ADMINISTER NALOXONE</b></p> <p>Even though the person is unresponsive, 1) Assume that you are going to give naloxone. 2) Spray the naloxone in the person's nose.</p>	<p><b>ADMINISTER CPR</b></p> <p>Tilt the individual's head back to make sure their airways are open. Apply chest compressions.</p>	<p><b>GIVE NALOXONE AGAIN</b></p> <p>Administer additional naloxone if the person does not regain color or breathing, otherwise continue chest compressions until help arrives.</p>	<p><b>REMAIN CALM &amp; COMFORTING</b></p> <p>If the person is revived, remain calm and compassionate and encourage them to accept help or stay in a public place.</p>
--	---	--	---	--

Harm reduction is all about keeping people safe in a practical way. **Simple tips are to:**  
**CARRY NALOXONE | NEVER USE ALONE | GO SLOW | TEST YOUR DRUGS**

**TEST YOUR DRUGS FOR FENTANYL.**

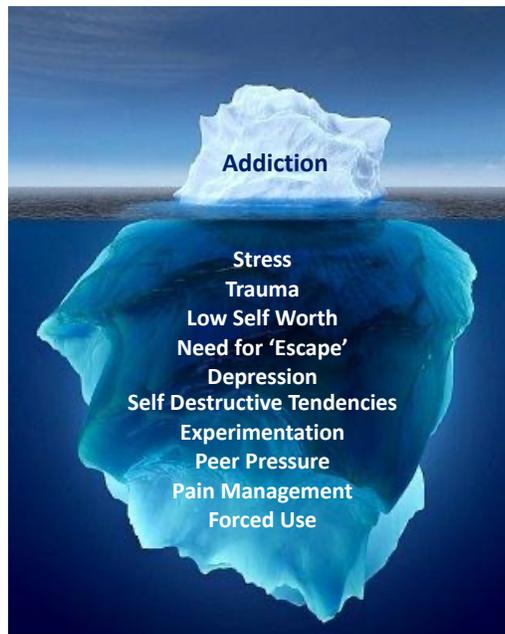
POSITIVE FOR FENTANYL      USE CAUTION      FENTANYL TEST STRIPS CAN BE USED TO DETERMINE THE PRESENCE OF FENTANYL IN YOUR SUBSTANCE.  
 Even if your drugs test negative for fentanyl, use caution and remember the harm reduction steps to take.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) | Clinical Trials Network (CTN) Dissemination Initiative | Center for Addiction Medicine and Policy

## Forms of Narcan



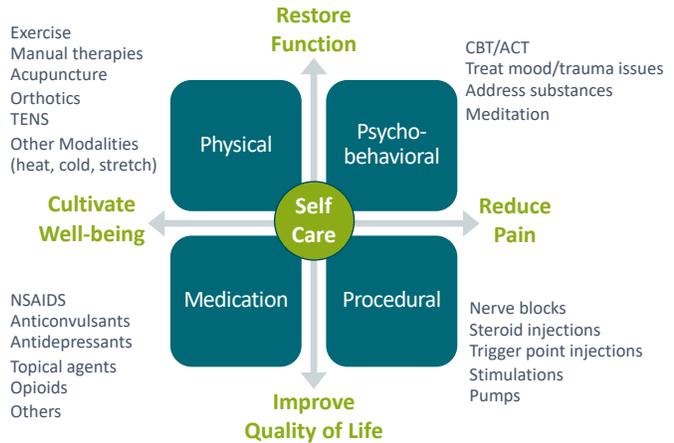
9



10

## Methadone treatment is so much more than the medication.

Patient centered and trauma informed.  
See the whole person. Mind, body, and spirit are all connected.



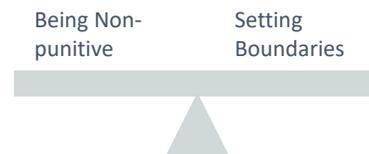
11

## Interdisciplinary Approach

Person in Recovery, LIPs, Nurses, Clinicians, Psych Techs

- Allows for wrap-around care and a holistic, individual approach to treatment
- Allows patient to have numerous safe people within their recovery environment (expands support system)
- Master's level clinicians (LCSW, LCPC) help address underlying mental health issues which are often the root cause of addiction
- CADC, LADC provide counseling specific to SUD, including coping skills, networking with recovery communities, and relapse prevention
- Certified intentional peer support specialist

The balance to facilitate recovery-focused care.



12

Knowing all treatment options allows for the person in recovery to make a fully informed decision with guidance from their multidisciplinary team.

“Methadone maintenance has been demonstrated repeatedly to be safe and effective when used with appropriate safeguards and psychosocial services. Maintenance treatment typically leads to reduction or cessation of illicit opioid use and its adverse consequences, including cellulitis, hepatitis, and HIV, infection from use of non-sterile injection equipment, as well as criminal behavior associated with obtaining drugs.”  
SAMHSA Tip 43 Handbook

13

## Resources

If you need resources or support, please contact one of the numbers below...

Non-Crisis Peer Support	Maine Crisis Line	Information & Referral Resources
<p><b>Statewide Intentional Warm Line</b></p>  <p><b>1-866-771-9276</b></p> <p><small>Offers non-crisis peer support 24 hours a day/7 days week</small></p>	<p><small>MAINE 24-HOUR</small> <b>CRISIS HOTLINE</b> 1-888-568-1112</p>  <p><b>1-888-568-1112</b></p> <p><small>To access your local, mobile crisis services, please call the statewide hotline above...</small></p> <p><small>Offers crisis phone support 24 hours a day/7 days week</small></p>	 <p><b>Dial 211 on your phone</b></p>  <p><b>Text Your Zip Code to: 898-211</b></p> <p><small>Contact for information related to COVID-19 and/or referrals to needed services</small></p>

Northern Light Addiction Care: 207.973.6100

14

## References

SAMHSA: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)
- <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/virtual-recovery.shtml>

NIDA: National Institute on Drug Abuse

- <http://nida.nih.gov>

ASAM: American Society of Addiction Medicine [www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org)