

# Acknowledgment of Loss of Opioid Tolerance Following Withdrawal

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## CLIENT INFORMATION

It is important that you are aware of and fully understand the risks of using opioids following your discharge because of loss of tolerance to the effects of opioids.

Tolerance occurs in response to prolonged exposure to drugs such as opioids. Tolerance means that you no longer feel the desired effects at the same dose you have been using and must take more of the drug to feel the desired effects. This is why some people who take opioids for a long time are on high doses that would be toxic and potentially fatal to individuals who have never taken the drug.

**Tolerance to opioids is lost very rapidly, within a few days of your last opioid use.** After withdrawal (detox), it is very dangerous to use similar amounts of opioids as you did before. It can lead to toxicity which includes increased sedation, suppression of breathing, and death. This effect is worsened if you are taking sedating medications such as benzodiazepines or if you consume alcohol. **If you take the same amount of opioids as you did before you detoxed, you can have a fatal overdose.**

Even if you have been switched to a different opioid or are taking methadone or buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone®), your tolerance may be decreased. In light of this serious risk, if you choose to start using opioids after discharge, it is essential that you use much less than you did before admission, have a naloxone kit available, avoid using alone, and avoid consuming alcohol and other sedating medications.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I have read this warning information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand the serious risk of choosing to use opioids following my discharge.

I have received a naloxone kit and have been instructed in its use.

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Client signature

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Date

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Witness signature

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Date