

Should I Start a Medication to Help With My Drinking?

Medication for AUD Options



	Naltrexone - oral (ReVia)	Naltrexone - injection (Vivitrol)	Acamprosate (Campral)	Disulfiram (Antabuse)
<p>Drinking Goal</p>	Abstinence or cutting back	Abstinence or cutting back	Abstinence or cutting back	Abstinence only
<p>How it Works</p>	Decreases cravings and pleasurable effects of drinking	Decreases cravings and pleasurable effects of drinking	Decreases cravings	Causes an unpleasant “instant hangover” when combined with alcohol
<p>Works Best For Patients Who</p>	Prefer once daily dosing	Don't like taking pills	Have severe liver disease	Are partnering with a friend or family member
<p>Dosing</p>	One pill daily	One injection every 4 weeks	Two pills taken 3 times daily	One pill daily
<p>Consider Alternatives If</p>	Taking opioids (e.g., methadone, buprenorphine)	Fear of needles, taking opioids (e.g., methadone, buprenorphine)	Trouble taking pills multiple times per day	Goal is not abstinence but reduced drinking or drinking more safely
<p>Potential Side Effects</p>	Nausea, headache	Nausea, headache, buttock pain	Diarrhea, nausea	Interaction with alcohol can cause headaches, redness of the face, fast pulse, dizziness, low blood pressure, and vomiting; liver inflammation
<p>Tips</p>	Take with food	Rotate injection sites	Take with food	Be aware of hidden alcohol in foods, beverages (e.g., kombucha, non-alcoholic spirits), sauces, and mouthwash

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Potential Questions to Discuss with your Healthcare Provider



What are my goals?

Do I want to quit drinking, cut back on my drinking, or drink more safely?



Do medications work?

Yes! Each of these medications is effective at helping to achieve your goals related to alcohol.



Are they safe?

Yes! These medications have been tested on thousands of patients and require minimal, if any, monitoring by your healthcare provider.



Are there side effects?

Most side effects are mild and usually go away on their own.



How long will I need to take it?

Take the medication as long as it is working, whether it's 6 months or 6 years. There are no long-term side effects and no withdrawal symptoms if you stop.



Are they affordable?

Yes, most insurance covers medications for alcohol use disorder with minimal copays. If you do not have insurance or have high copays, speak to your provider or pharmacist for ways to help.

Final Key Points

- Medications to manage alcohol use are effective, safe, and inexpensive.
- Take whichever medication works best for you, for as long as it is working.
- Medication is only part of the treatment plan - talk to your healthcare provider about other treatment options to pair with your medication, such as mutual aid groups with [PCSS-MAUD's Recovery Groups Resource](#).
- Don't give up! There are many treatment options available. Explore [SAMHSA's Treatment Locators](#) for more treatment options.

Funding Statement

Funding for this initiative was made possible by cooperative agreement No. 1H79TI086771-03 from SAMHSA. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.