Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

PATIENT EDUCATION

Nalmefene

Opvee / Zurnai emergency rescue · Selincro oral international use

A guide for adults taking nalmefene.
Follow the directions on your prescription and your provider's recommendations.

OVERDOSE RESCUE: CALL 911

ORAL TABLETS HAVE A DIFFERENT USE

Formulations: Opvee is a single-use nasal spray; Zurnai is a single-use thigh auto-injector. Oral Selincro and clinician-administered injections have separate uses and instructions.

What it is used for

In the United States, nalmefene formulations reverse known or suspected opioid overdose. This is emergency treatment and must be followed by emergency medical care.

Selincro oral nalmefene is used in some countries to reduce drinking in selected adults with alcohol dependence. It is not a U.S.-approved alcohol treatment and does not treat alcohol withdrawal.

How it works

It blocks opioid receptors. This can restore breathing after opioid exposure, but can also trigger abrupt withdrawal in someone physically dependent on opioids.

What to expect over time

Rescue treatment works during an emergency, but breathing problems can recur. Oral alcohol treatment is reviewed over weeks alongside psychosocial support.

Taking your medication

- For suspected opioid overdose, give the available prescribed rescue device promptly and call 911. Follow its instructions and dispatcher guidance for breathing support or CPR.
- If breathing does not improve or slows again, repeat with a new device every 2–5 minutes while waiting for help. Stay with the person.
- Do not test a rescue device or reuse it. Keep enough devices available for repeat dosing.
- For oral Selincro, follow the separate prescriber plan; never use oral tablets as overdose rescue.

Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

NALMEFENE / 02

Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Opioid withdrawal: sweating, nausea, vomiting, cramps, agitation, or rapid pulse
- Headache or dizziness
- With oral treatment: nausea, insomnia, or transient confusion

Keeping track of treatment

Some side effects resolve with time; others may require a change of medication. Discuss persistent or bothersome side effects with your provider.

After rescue, the person needs emergency assessment even if awake. Discuss replacement devices and ongoing overdose prevention afterward.

If you take too much

For a suspected overdose, call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222** immediately, even if you feel well. Call 911 for a seizure, collapse, trouble breathing, or inability to wake.

Before you start

Tell your provider about opioid use, including methadone, buprenorphine, tramadol, and opioid pain or cough medicines. For oral treatment, opioid use and dependence are major contraindications.

Discuss pregnancy, pregnancy plans, and breastfeeding with your provider. Treatment decisions should consider both the medication and the condition being treated.

Medicines and interactions

Review all your medications with your provider, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements. Have new medications checked before taking them.

Nalmefene interferes with opioid pain treatment. Do not try to overcome receptor blockade by taking more opioids. Tell emergency and surgical teams about oral nalmefene use.

Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

NALMEFENE / 03

Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Suspected opioid overdose always requires 911. Unresponsiveness, slow or absent breathing, and blue or gray lips are emergency signs; give rescue medicine and follow dispatcher instructions.

Prompt medical advice. After recovery, arrange follow-up for overdose prevention and substance-use treatment. Oral-treatment patients should report severe confusion, hallucinations, or persistent adverse effects.

If you feel unsafe or have thoughts of self-harm, call 911 or go to an emergency department.

Your questions answered

Is rescue medicine enough if the person wakes up?
No. Breathing can worsen again and other substances may also be involved. Stay with the person until emergency help arrives.

Can the oral tablets replace a rescue spray?
No. The formulations serve different purposes and are not interchangeable.

Everyday tips

Teach household members where rescue devices are kept and how to use them.

Check expiry dates and replace used devices promptly.

Storage and safety

Keep medication in its labeled container, away from excess heat and moisture and out of reach of children and pets. Do not share it. Ask a pharmacy about disposal of unused medication.

Sources

DailyMed: Opvee
DailyMed: Zurnai
UK patient leaflet: Selincro

Educational handout; does not replace your prescription or provider's recommendations.