

## DON'T ASK TOO MUCH OF YOURSELF

During your withdrawal process, avoid, when possible, undertaking any other major lifestyle changes... now is not the time to quit smoking or start a new job.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A COMFORTABLE MEDICATION DOSAGE

It's possible that you'll discover, as others have, that your body cannot function properly without a substitution medication.

Don't blame yourself. There are neurophysiological reasons for this phenomenon, that have nothing to do with your motivation and efforts to complete withdrawal.

If you discover yourself in this group, we suggest you adjust to the dosage where you're the most comfortable and experience the least side effects.

**Living a satisfying drug-free life with medication is an extremely worthwhile goal.**

## SUPPORT



Surround yourself with people who care...

✓ Take the time to explain what you're trying to do and talk about how you're feeling whether it concerns your body, your mind, or both.

✓ Your counsellor at CRAN, (even if you did not see them before) is there to support you. We can accompany you all throughout your process if you wish. We are available by phone or appointment and have experience with patients in progressive withdrawal.

✓ The drop-in office (SEAO 13h—17h) by phone or in person, no appointment necessary.

✓ Méta d'âme (514.528.9000) offers peer support from other methadone patients.

✓ The Comité des Usagers du CRAN 514.528.9000 ext. 235 is also composed of methadone patients who are there to help you.



Created by:  
Mireille Forget &  
Marie-Claude Fugier

Translation:  
Andrea D'Elia

In collaboration with :  
Caroline Vaillancourt



## Withdrawal Should be Comfortable

Reducing your medication dose too quickly usually leads to unpleasant...

- Cravings (starting to think about opioids again)
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Muscle Pain & Spasms
- Upset Stomach
- Insomnia
- Runny Nose
- Sweating
- Chills/ Hot Flashes
- Etc.

Progressive withdrawal at a rhythm that respects your body's signals typically avoids the above; if any of the above symptoms appear it's a sign to slow down.

[Contact your treatment team to discuss your symptoms](#)

**WAITING TO TALK TO US? HERE'S WHAT TO DO IN THE MEANTIME**



**Stomach Upset**

- Eat small amounts, more frequently
- Snack on fruit & crackers
- Drink mint tea (an oldie but goodie)
- Chew gum

\* Watch out for sweets! Easy to eat, but they can increase nausea.



**Trouble Sleeping**

- Reduce nighttime cigarettes
- Get some rest:
  - ✓ Don't nap for more than 30 minutes during the day so you'll sleep at night
  - ✓ Have a regular bedtime routine
  - ✓ Use your bed only for sleep
  - ✓ Drink calming teas



**Muscle Aches**

- Take acetaminophen or ibuprophen to relieve aching muscles
- Take a cleansing bath:

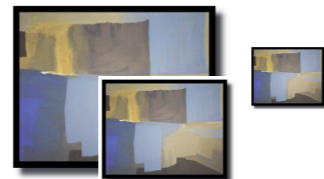
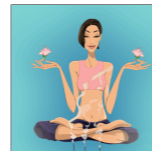
Mix: 1/2 cup Aveeno or oatmeal  
1/2 cup Epsom salts  
1/2 baking soda

Add to warm tub and soak  
20 minutes



**Stress & Crabyness**

- Breathing exercises
- Relaxation exercises
- Yoga
- Calm music
- Talk to your counsellor



**STIMULATE YOUR ENDORPHINS**



- Exercise will help you through all stages of your withdrawal, by stimulating the production of your natural endorphins. Some examples:

Walking rapidly  
Cycling  
Swimming  
Skiing  
Roller blading

To get the most «Endorphin boost», shoot for 30 minutes sessions three times a week.



- The experience of pleasure can also stimulate endorphine production and facilitate your withdrawal, so practice:

- ☺ Laughing (funny movies, comedy shows)
- ☺ Eating dark chocolate 70% (in moderation, of course)
- ☺ Sexual activity is also a good way to boost endorphin production.



**ACUPUNCTURE AND MASSAGE**

Acupuncture and massage are other great ways to enhance the production of endorphines and help your body gradually adapt to your withdrawal.

Here's where to find them:

Québec Professional Order of Acupuncturists  
1.800.474.5914

CEGEP Rosemont  
(done by graduating students)  
20\$ treatment  
514.376.1620 ext. 353

**MASSAGE**

School of Professional Massage  
« À fleur de peau »  
35\$/ 90 minutes massage by senior students  
514.728.1583

«Académie de Massage»  
20\$/ 60 minutes by students  
1.800.475.1964