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Joint Statement: Naltrexone contraindicated with Opioid Agonist Therapy

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan has been informed of some cases where patients are prescribed Opioid Agonist Therapy (buprenorphine, methadone) with naltrexone, resulting in cases of severe withdrawal.

Naltrexone is an opioid-receptor antagonist and is contraindicated with Opioid Agonist Therapy. Patients should be opioid free for 7-10 days (and as long as 14 days with oral OAT) before receiving naltrexone. Long-acting formulations (e.g. Sublocade®) may be detected in plasma/urine for over 12 months. Consider seeking expert advice for such cases before prescribing/administering naltrexone.

Naltrexone can be found in a variety of products, as a single active ingredient or as a combination product (e.g. Contrave®) and is usually prescribed as an anti-craving medication for alcohol use disorder or a weight-loss medication.

The Opioid Agonist Therapy Program is available to support you with clinical situations and may be reached at oaip@cps.sk.ca.