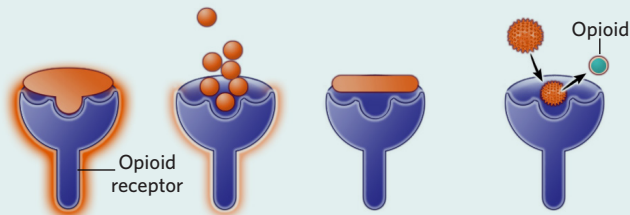


# APPROVED DRUGS FOR OPIOID USE DISORDER

While it may seem counterintuitive, some drugs used to treat opioid use disorder (OUD) activate opioid receptors in the brain. Methadone is a full opioid agonist, binding to and activating opioid receptors while blocking the binding of other opioids. It is longer-acting than opioids such as heroin and oxycodone, however, so it can provide a mild, controlled “hit” to reduce withdrawal symptoms such as drug craving, gastrointestinal distress, and accelerated heart rate. Another OUD treatment approved in the US is buprenorphine, a partial opioid agonist that binds to but only partially activates the receptor. A third option, naltrexone, is an opioid antagonist, meaning that it blocks opioids from binding the receptors without any activation. In addition, the overdose antidote naloxone can be used to treat overdose itself. It is an opioid antagonist that knocks opioid molecules off the opioid receptors and takes their place.



## Drugs for OUD

## Drug for reversing overdose

**Methadone**  
Binds and fully activates

**Buprenorphine**  
Binds and partially activates

**Naltrexone**  
Binds but doesn't activate

**Naloxone**  
Knocks opioid off receptors