

Nalmefene for reducing alcohol intake in people with alcohol dependence

Information for the public

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What has NICE said?

Nalmefene (also known as Selincro) is recommended as a possible treatment for people with alcohol dependence who:

- are still drinking more than 7.5 units per day (for men) and more than 5 units per day (for women) 2 weeks after an initial assessment and
- do not have physical withdrawal symptoms and
- do not need to either stop drinking straight away or stop drinking completely.

Nalmefene should only be taken if the person is also having ongoing support to change their behaviour and to continue to take their treatment, to help them reduce their alcohol intake.

What does this mean for me?

If you are dependent on alcohol, and your doctor thinks that nalmefene is the right treatment, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS.

Nalmefene should be available on the NHS within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

Why has NICE said this?

Nalmefene was recommended because the benefits to patients justify its cost.

NICE looks at how well treatments work in relation to how much they cost compared with other treatments available on the NHS.

The condition and the treatment

If you are dependent on alcohol, you have a strong desire to drink alcohol and may have difficulty in controlling how much you drink. Your body can become used to lots of alcohol and even if you want to reduce your drinking, it is often difficult.

Nalmefene (also known as Selincro) helps you to reduce the amount of alcohol you are drinking by affecting your urge to drink.

NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) may be a good place to find out more.

Sources of advice and support

- Addaction, 020 7251 5860, www.addaction.org.uk
- ADFAM, www.adfam.org.uk
- Alcohol Concern, 020 7566 9800, www.alcoholconcern.org.uk
- British Liver Trust, 0800 652 7330, www.britishlivertrust.org.uk
- Lifeline Project, 0161 834 7160, www.lifeline.org.uk

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Accreditation

