

TSM 101 for Medical Professionals

What is the Sinclair Method (TSM)?

The Sinclair Method (TSM) is a research based, medication assisted treatment for alcohol use disorder that targets the brain's reward system through the process of pharmacological extinction resulting in the reduction of heavy drinking and addictive cravings.

What are the patient benefits of TSM?

1. Alcohol reduction or elimination without the risks associated with detox.
2. Alcohol reduction lowers treatment barriers often associated with abstinence.
3. TSM is cost effective. The generic medication used costs less than \$2/pill on average.
4. TSM is NOT replacement therapy. Opiate antagonists are considered to have no abuse potential.
5. TSM does not involve constant endorphin dampening. Medication is targeted to the drinking activity, so it is only used when drinking.
6. TSM can help form healthy habits. Patients should be advised to take part in pleasurable activities on the days when they do not drink.

What about therapy?

If your patient has co-occurring mental disorders, they should also seek treatment for those co-occurring disorders you are unable to treat. However, according to SAMHSA, fewer than 40% of people with AUD have a co-occurring mental disorder.

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How fast does TSM work?

Everyone is different, but on average we see the following:

First 30 days	10 – 20% reduction
30 days – 6 months	10 – 50% reduction
6 – 12 months	50 – 90% reduction
1 – 2 years	70 – 100% reduction
2+ years	80 – 100% reduction

Are there side effects?

Side effects are a potential with every medication, and naltrexone is no different. Experienced clinicians rarely observe any side effects at all. If one has a side effect to naltrexone it is probably going to be some mild or transient nausea.

Can anyone use TSM?

No. Persons addicted to narcotics, such that they would go into withdrawal were they to abruptly stop narcotic use, cannot take naltrexone; because, it would cause withdrawal. Occasional use of narcotics, short of addiction, is not dangerous with naltrexone; but, narcotics won't work when naltrexone is in the brain. Pregnancy and severe liver damage are contraindications. TSM is not recommended for those with extended periods of abstinence who are not at imminent risk of relapse.