

BUPRENORPHINE SUBLINGUAL (TEMGESIC)

DRUG NAME

Generic: Buprenorphine

Class of drug: Opioid

Brands in Australia: Temgesic

DOSAGE FORM

Available as a 200 microgram sublingual tablet. Quantity 50.

Sublingual tablets deliver the medicine directly into the bloodstream through the mouth lining.

HOW IT WORKS

Opioids act on receptors in the central nervous system, reducing transmission of the pain impulse and modulating the pathways from the brain. Because it only partially activates receptors, it provides pain relief with a **lower risk of breathing suppression** than full opioids.

Used for **moderate to severe pain**, often when other options are not effective.

Onset of action

- Starts working within **30–60 minutes**.
- Pain relief lasts for **6–8 hours**.

DOSAGE & FREQUENCY

Your doctor will advise on the starting dose and guide the dose changes.

- start with _____
- if tolerated, increase to _____ after _____ days
- if necessary, increase by _____ every _____ week(s)
- if successive increases are well tolerated *and bring additional benefit*, continue to titrate up to a maximum of _____
- to be reviewed by your doctor on _____

Always follow your doctor's instructions — do **not** increase dose on your own.

ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION

Placed under the tongue and allowed to dissolve completely (sublingual).

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW WHILE TAKING THIS MEDICATION

- Place tablet under the tongue and keep in place until dissolved. Do not chew or swallow the tablet.
- Avoid eating or drinking until it has dissolved.
- Do not take alcohol or sedatives with this medicine.
- Monitor bowels - usually will be prescribed a laxative.

- **Chronic use:** look after your teeth and mouth, and get dental checks regularly, as opioids may make your mouth dry which increases risk of dental caries.

STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS

Store below 25°C in original packaging. Keep away from heat and moisture. Keep out of reach of children.

DISPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Return unused or expired medication to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

MISSED DOSE INSTRUCTIONS

Ask your doctor or pharmacist.

EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS

Seek urgent medical help if you:

- Take too much (overdose signs: severe drowsiness, slow or stopped breathing, pinpoint pupils, unconsciousness).
- Develop severe allergic reaction (rash, swelling, difficulty breathing).

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- Constipation
- Nausea, vomiting
- Drowsiness, dizziness
- Headache
- Sweating
- Dry mouth

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS

- Slow or shallow breathing
- Severe drowsiness or confusion
- Mood changes, hallucinations
- Irregular heartbeat
- Severe allergic reaction

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR SIDE EFFECTS

- Constipation: Use stool softeners, increase fibre and fluids.
- Nausea: Ask your doctor about anti-nausea medications.
- Drowsiness: Do not drive until you know how it affects you.
- Dry mouth: Sip water or chew sugar-free gum.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Interactions:

- Dangerous with alcohol, sedatives, benzodiazepines (risk of severe sedation or death).
- May interact with antidepressants, other opioids, or seizure medicines.

Precautions:

- Use with caution in liver disease, breathing problems, or low blood pressure.
- Not usually recommended in pregnancy or breastfeeding.
- Do not stop suddenly — taper under medical guidance.

Elective surgery advice

- Usually continued before surgery to prevent withdrawal.
- Must inform your anaesthetist — buprenorphine can block or reduce the effect of other opioids used in surgery.
- Pain management after surgery may need special planning (sometimes higher opioid doses or non-opioid pain medicines are required).

TITRATION DIARY

Date	Dose Taken	Side Effects	Notes (e.g., sleep, pain relief)