



## Anti-Craving Medications for Relapse Prevention

All HealthWorks NW physicians, nurses and counselors are experienced with the prescription of anti-craving medications for the purpose of preventing relapse in patients suffering from the disease of addiction. Evidence in the medical literature shows that the use of anti-craving medications in conjunction with community based recovery support improves the probability that a person will remain clean and sober for a longer period of time than if they did not take anti-craving medications.

Anti-craving medications are medicines like Naltrexone (ReVia-oral medicine, Vivitrol- injectable) or Campral (Acamprosate). The current FDA indications for Naltrexone are for alcohol (to consider immediately starting) and/or opiate dependence (once detoxification is complete). The FDA indication for Campral is for alcohol dependence.

These medicines work by binding to the region of the brain that reminds the addicted individual about the pleasurable effects of drinking or using opiates. The literature reports that patients experience benefits in several ways:

- Anti-craving medicines reduce the craving for the brain effects of alcohol or opiates.
- Anti-craving medicines result in longer periods of abstinence
- If a person 'slips', the amount of substance used is usually reduced because the medicine interferes with the amount of pleasure the person experiences from the drug or alcohol.

HealthWorks NW physicians, nurses and counselors support the use of Anti-craving medicines as part of a relapse prevention plan for sustained recovery in our patients and clients.

These medicines are not a replacement for participation in community based AA, NA or other support group participation, but a useful, clinically proven tool to be considered as part of a comprehensive Recovery program.

Our goal is to educate patients and their primary physicians about the safety and use of anti-craving medicines so that these medicines can be started when appropriate, and then eventually managed by the patient's primary physician after successful completion of treatment.



Many patients who are already solidly in recovery and continue to experience cravings for alcohol or opiates present for HealthWorks NW physician consultation for relapse prevention.

Our experience has been uniformly positive with initiation of Naltrexone therapy. We have several clients who have years of frequent 'slips' or short relapses reporting Naltrexone therapy has helped change this behavior pattern in an extremely significant way.

Please contact HealthWorks NW for a chemical dependency Relapse Prevention Evaluation, to discuss anti-craving medication for yourself or a loved one.