

When people enter recovery from opioid or alcohol use disorders, questions swirl around medication, support systems, and overall recovery strategies. One common query is: **Can I do peer support while on naltrexone?** The short answer is yes — and combining medication-assisted treatment (MAT) like naltrexone with peer-led support can make your recovery path stronger. But what does this actually *look like* on a Tuesday night when cravings hit? Let's unpack it carefully.

Understanding Naltrexone and Its Role in Recovery

Naltrexone is a medication that blocks opioid receptors in the brain. It helps reduce cravings and the rewarding effects of alcohol and opioids, making relapse less likely. It's been a key part of medication-assisted treatment (MAT), which integrates medication with counseling and behavioral therapies.

Important: Naltrexone by itself isn't "a cure" or magic — it's part of a clinical treatment plan that should be personalized and closely monitored by medical professionals. That's where recovery communities and peer support come into play.

What Is Peer Support in Addiction Recovery?

Peer support refers to assistance provided by individuals with lived experience of addiction and recovery. Certified Peer Specialists or recovery coaches have "been there" and can offer guidance, encouragement, and [AA peer support](#) accountability. This isn't formal therapy or medical care — it's a relational, community-based helping role.

- **Peer support is about sharing real experiences:** It offers social modeling and hope, demonstrating that long-term recovery is possible.
- **It builds relationships without judgment or shaming:** Accountability is encouraged, but through respect and understanding.
- **Boundaries are clear:** Peers do not prescribe medication or replace clinicians. Instead, they support the person's entire recovery journey.

So, what does this look like practically? On a tough night — like your Tuesday night, when triggers and cravings seem overwhelming — a peer supporter might check in, remind you of your progress, or share tools that helped them manage those very same moments.



Merging MAT and Peer Support: How Do They Work Together?

There's sometimes a misconception that medication-assisted treatment (MAT), such as naltrexone, and peer support (often linked with 12-step or non-12-step programs) are incompatible or that using medication means you aren't "really" in recovery.

This couldn't be further from the truth. Let's look at how these components complement each other:

Component Role in Recovery Example on a Challenging Night
Naltrexone (MAT) Reduces cravings and prevents relapse by blocking euphoric effects Taking your medication as prescribed to help stop the urge from escalating
Peer Support Provides emotional support, accountability, and hope through shared experience Talking with a peer who's faced the same cravings and found healthy coping strategies

In short, while naltrexone manages the biological aspect, peer support addresses the emotional and social drivers of addiction. Together, they create a holistic approach that honors both clinical treatment and community involvement.

Exploring Different Peer Support Models

Not all peer support looks the same. Two broad approaches often referenced are:

Twelve-Step Programs

- Examples: Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
- Emphasize spiritual principles, surrendering to a higher power, and regular group meetings
- Some factions may be skeptical of medications like naltrexone, but many modern groups welcome members on MAT without stigmatizing

Non-Twelve-Step Approaches

- Examples: SMART Recovery, LifeRing, Secular Organizations for Sobriety (SOS)
- Focus on self-empowerment, scientific understanding of addiction, and cognitive-behavioral strategies
- Generally openly supportive of medication-assisted treatment options

Understanding what each approach entails can help you find a peer support group or individual peer specialist who respects your treatment choices and offers tailored encouragement.

Relationships as a Recovery Driver

The heart of peer support is relationship. On a Tuesday night, when the urge to use feels loud, having connection — someone who knows the struggle and can say, “I get what you’re facing, and you can get through this” — is invaluable.

Social modeling means seeing peers who:

- Have successfully navigated cravings while on naltrexone
- Use both medication and peer support to maintain stability
- Demonstrate practical coping skills, like mindfulness, distraction techniques, and reaching out

Concrete examples foster hope. Instead of vague platitudes like “community fixes everything,” real stories help clarify *how* support works in practice.

Accountability Without Shame

Accountability in peer support means honest conversations about progress and struggles — but always free from shame or guilt. If you miss a dose of naltrexone or experience a slip, peer supporters meet you with empathy, not judgment.

For instance, a peer might say:

“Hey, I noticed you said you forgot your medication last night. That happens to me too sometimes. What helped me was setting a daily alarm and keeping the meds near my keys. Want to brainstorm what might work for you?”

This approach contrasts sharply with environments that stigmatize medication or failures, which only isolate and discourage people.

Integrating Peer Support Into Discharge Planning

Many clinical treatment programs now incorporate peer recovery support specialists into the discharge process. This integration acknowledges that medical treatment is vital, but sustained recovery depends on ongoing social support.

Peer specialists provide:

1. Help connecting with community resources and support groups
2. Check-ins during vulnerable moments, such as weekends or “off hours”
3. Guidance navigating both twelve-step and non-twelve-step communities

This combined approach respects the complexity of recovery and offers tailored, continuous support.

Summary: Your Recovery Toolbox

Tool	Benefit	Example
Naltrexone (MAT)	Biological craving reduction	Blocking opioid receptors to reduce urge intensity
Peer Support	Emotional/social support and accountability	Peer check-ins during cravings; role modeling
Twelve-step Groups	Structured meetings, fellowship, spiritual principles	AA or NA meetings, sponsors
Non-		

Twelve-step Groups Self-empowerment, evidence-based coping strategies SMART Recovery meetings, cognitive tools

Combining these tools forms a robust, multi-layered approach that acknowledges the complexities of recovery “on a Tuesday night” or any tough moment you face.

Final Thoughts

Yes, you absolutely can engage in peer support while on naltrexone. The key is ensuring your support network respects your use of medication-assisted treatment and recognizes that recovery is a blend of medical care, personal effort, and social connection.

When cravings hit, especially on those challenging Tuesday nights, it’s the combination of clinical tools and relational support that makes a real difference. Build relationships with peers who offer hope grounded in their own lived experience, prioritize accountability without shame, and seek out peer support models that fit your values and treatment plan.



Recovery isn’t a one-size-fits-all journey — it’s a personalized path where medication and community each have a place. Understanding how they work in tandem empowers you to leverage all your resources effectively.

If you’re looking to integrate peer support while on naltrexone, don’t hesitate to talk frankly with your medical provider and seek out certified peer specialists or recovery coaches who understand medication-assisted treatment.

Remember: recovery is a journey of many small steps — and building your toolbox with both MAT and meaningful peer support is a smart stride forward.