Table 9–4
Factors impacting upon severity of withdrawal

Factor	Impact
Opioid type	Withdrawal from longer acting opioids (e.g. methadone) is typically slower in onset and lasts longer (weeks to months). Withdrawal from partial agonists (e.g. buprenorphine) appears to be less severe.
Opioid dose	Higher doses are generally associated with greater withdrawal severity.
Duration of regular opioid use	A short history of regular use (e.g. < 6 months) is generally associated with a milder withdrawal syndrome.
Prior experience of withdrawal and expectancy	Individuals who are particularly anxious about withdrawal often experience greater discomfort.
Concomitant medical or psychiatric conditions	May increase the severity of withdrawal, or decrease the individual's capacity to cope with symptoms.
Setting	The environment in which withdrawal is undertaken impacts upon the experience.