

Naloxone

What is naloxone?

Naloxone is an antidote for opioid overdose. In an overdose, opioids can cause difficulty breathing, sedation, and death. Naloxone is a medication that reverses these effects.

Naloxone only works if opioids are present in the body, and has no effect if they are not. It does not work on other drugs or alcohol. Naloxone usually takes effect in 3 to 5 minutes and lasts 60 to 90 minutes.

Who should take naloxone?

Naloxone should be given to someone experiencing an opioid overdose. Overdose death can occur over one to three hours. This gives time to take life saving actions.

Overdose most often occurs when people take a large or increased amount of opioids, mix opioids with alcohol or other drugs, or have had recent changes in tolerance levels.

If a person is **not responding**, **not breathing**, or is **struggling to breathe**, they may be experiencing an overdose and it is time to begin the steps of naloxone administration.

How to Respond in an Overdose:

Step 1: IDENTIFY OVERDOSE

Opioids can be dangerous because they suppress the body's urge to breathe, which can possibly lead to death. If someone is **not breathing or is struggling to breathe** try calling their name and rubbing your knuckles on their chest. If they are still unresponsive they may be experiencing an overdose. Other signs that may help you identify an overdose are:

blue or pale skin color, small pupils, low blood pressure, slow heart beat, slow or shallow breathing, snoring sound, gasping for breath

Step 3: GIVE RESCUE BREATHS

Giving oxygen can save a life in an overdose.

- Make sure nothing is the person's mouth blocking their breathing.
- Place one hand on the chin and tilt the head back. With the other hand pinch the nose closed.
- Administer two slow breaths and look for the chest to rise.
- Continue administering **1 breath every 5 seconds** until the person starts breathing on their own. Continue this for at least 30 seconds. If the person is still unresponsive, you can give naloxone.



Examples of Opioids:

MORPHINE (MS Contin®)

CODEINE

HYDROCODONE (Vicodin®, Norco®)

HYDROMORPHONE (Dilaudid®)

OXYCODONE (Percocet®, OxyContin®)

OXYMORPHONE (Opana®)

FENTANYL (Duragesic®)

BUPRENORPHINE (Subutex®)

METHADONE

HEROIN

The **RI Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Act** prevents anyone in a drug overdose or anyone seeking medical help for them from being charged or prosecuted for certain crimes related to drugs if the evidence for the charge was gained as a result of the overdose and the need for medical help.

Step 2: CALL 9-1-1

After identifying an overdose it is very important to get help as quickly as possible. **Call 9-1-1**. Make sure to say the person is unresponsive and not breathing or struggling to breathe. Give a clear address and location.

Prevent Overdose:

- Only take medication prescribed to you, and take it as directed.
- Don't mix opioids with drugs or alcohol.
- Store your medication in a safe and secure place and dispose of any unused medication.
- Not taking opioids for a while changes tolerance levels, which means you restart you need to start at a lower dose.
- Teach your family and friends how to respond to an overdose.

Step 4: GIVE NALOXONE

Naloxone is available as an injection and as a nasal spray. Follow the instructions on what form you have. While getting ready to give naloxone, make sure you are not going too long without giving rescue breaths. Store naloxone in an easy to reach place in case of emergency. Make sure your friends and family know where it is stored.

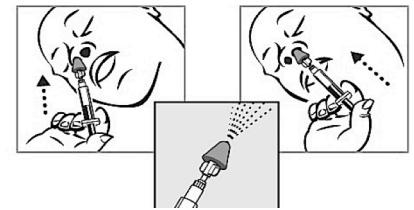
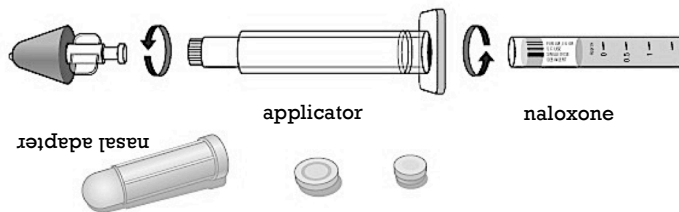
Injection into the Muscle

Open the cap of the naloxone vial. Remove the cap of the needle, and insert into the vial. With the vial upside down, pull back the plunger and draw up **1mL (1cc) of naloxone**. Your naloxone vial may only have one dose, or may be a multi-dose vial. Using a needle at least 1 inch long, inject into the muscle in the upper arm.



Nasal Spray

When using the nasal spray you will have three pieces- the nasal adapter, the applicator, and the prefilled naloxone syringe. Remove the yellow caps from the ends of the applicator. Twist the nasal adapter on the tip of the applicator until it is tight. Take the red cap off of the naloxone syringe and insert in the other side of the applicator and twist in until tight. Push 1mL (1cc) of naloxone into each nostril. The naloxone vial contains 2mL, so you are administering **one half in one nostril and one half in the other nostril**.



After giving naloxone continue rescue breathing with **1 breath every 5 seconds**. If they are still not responding in **3 to 5 minutes** you can give a second dose of naloxone. Continue rescue breathing until emergency responders arrive.

Step 5: STAY UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

It is important to stay with someone after giving naloxone. Naloxone can reverse an overdose, but can also make someone enter withdrawal.

After someone is given naloxone, make sure they **do not take any more opioids** because they could go back into overdose after the naloxone wears off. They can also go back into overdose if they took a long-acting opioid. In these situations, repeat doses of naloxone may be needed.

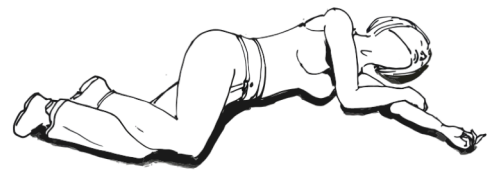
Get medical help immediately if after naloxone administration someone experiences rapid or irregular heart beat, chest pain, seizures, sudden stopping of the heart, hallucinations, or loss of consciousness.

Rescue Position

If you have to leave someone alone at anytime, like to call for help or to get naloxone, make sure that they are in the **rescue position**. Put them on their side with their top leg and arm crossed over their body. This makes it difficult for them to roll over, and lessens the chances that they will choke on vomit.

RECAP: Steps for Responding in Overdose:

- 1) Identify overdose
- 2) Call 9-1-1
- 3) Give rescue breaths
- 4) Give naloxone
- 5) Stay until help arrives



More Questions?

In an emergency call 9-1-1 for questions or help with life saving steps. For more information on naloxone call your pharmacy.

Poison Center: 1-800-222-1222