

Narcan Newsletter

Narcan (Naloxone) is a life-saving nasal spray medication that has been approved by the FDA to reverse accidental overdoses caused by opiates. Narcan is listed on the World Health Organizations Essential Medicines List because Narcan can save lives in an emergency and having access to it is crucial. Accidental overdoses are preventable. Thousands of people have been saved by Narcan that has been distributed to the public by community-based prevention programs. There is no way to abuse Narcan and it can be administered by a healthcare provider, an emergency medical provider, a police officer, a caregiver, a family member or a friend who has been properly trained to administer Narcan safely.

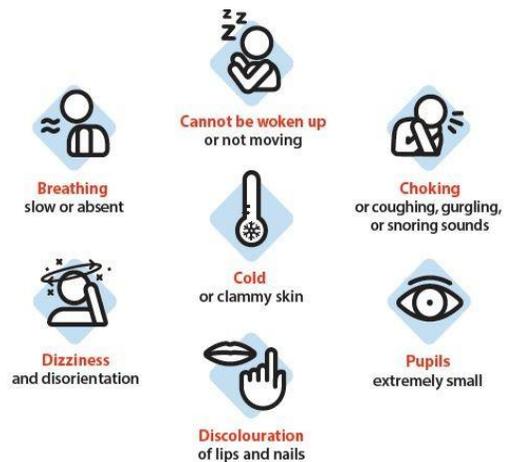
You may ask yourself, what are opiates? Opiates are often prescribed for pain relief following an injury, a surgery or for ongoing pain management from an illness. These medications and drugs include morphine, codeine, oxycodone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone and fentanyl as well as the street drug heroin. Opiates are powerful, dangerous and extremely addicting painkillers and drugs that work by attaching to pain receptors in the brain and central nervous system. They trigger the release of neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin, that reduces the feelings of pain. Opioids affect the brain, central nervous system and respiratory system, slowing down breathing, blood pressure and heart rate. An opiate overdose can happen to anyone and usually occurs within 1 to 3 hours after taking prescription medication or drugs.

Risk factors for opiate overdose include:

- Being prescribed a pain management medication
- Forgetting the last dose and taking more than needed or as prescribed
- Using an opioid that is not prescribed to you
- Leaving treatment or incarceration and returning to drug use (tolerance can decrease in as little as 1 to 2 days)
- Consuming street drugs that have been unknowingly mixed with the dangerous and fatal opioid fentanyl
- Mixing alcohol, opioids and other drugs
- Having been given Narcan before for a previous overdose
- Medication/drugs being left out and a young person or child finding and consuming it

SIGNS OF AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

Learn how to spot an overdose and what to do.



CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY!

When Narcan is administered, it goes to the pain receptors and removes the opiate off of them and blocks the drugs from attaching again by binding itself to the pain receptors. Narcan is fast-acting and short-acting, which means that it does its job quickly and only stays in a person's system for roughly 30-90 minutes. Always call 9-1-1 if you find someone unconscious and

suspect an overdose. Narcan should be given at the first sign of an overdose because the brain of a person who isn't breathing is being deprived of oxygen. Narcan will prevent an overdose when it is administered fast enough, which is why it is important to learn the signs and symptoms of an overdose and to learn the proper way to administer Narcan so that you can help save lives and keep our community members safe.

The Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency Program provides free 15-minute Narcan trainings and informational sessions for the community. These trainings will educate you on how to recognize the signs of an overdose and how to respond to an overdose. Everyone is welcome to attend the trainings where they will receive a free Narcan kit as well as information on local and nationwide substance abuse resources.

If you would like more information on upcoming events or to schedule a group training for Narcan for your family or place of business, please call the Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency Program at (518) 358 – 3145.

