

Preventing an Opioid Overdose



THE NALOXONE PROGRAM

WHAT IS AN OVERDOSE FROM OPIOIDS?

An overdose occurs when you have taken too high of a dose of opioids or taken a dangerous mix of drugs that it can stop your breathing. This can lead to death.



WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SOMEONE WHO HAS OVERDOSED ON OPIOIDS?

- Person is not responding;
- Breathing is slow or absent;
- Snoring/gurgling sounds;
- Blue fingernails or lips;
- Cold clammy skin; and
- Pupils are tiny.

WHO IS AT RISK OF AN OVERDOSE FROM OPIOIDS?

- Every person is different. There is no exact way to know how much of a certain drug or combination of drugs will lead to an overdose.
- Anyone who uses opioids is at a risk of an overdose.



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HOW DO I HELP PREVENT AN OVERDOSE?



KNOW YOURSELF

Recognize how your body reacts to drugs. It can be affected by:

- Your health;
- Your weight;
- Your tolerance level (i.e., how much of an opioid you take to feel its effects);
- Drug strength and purity;
- How you take the drug (e.g., swallow, snort, inject);
- How often you use; and
- How much you use.

USE SAFELY

Reduce your chance of overdosing by doing the following:

- Don't mix drugs or mix drugs with alcohol. Other drugs can also slow or stop your breathing, which can lead to death. Alcohol can change the way you think, and result in you taking too much of a drug.
- Don't use drugs you don't know. Some drugs are cut with other substances, which when mixed with opioids, can slow or stop your breathing. If you are using a new product, carefully check the taste, look, and feel. Test a small amount first.
- Be aware of changes in your tolerance level. After not using for a while, your tolerance for a drug can be lower. Do not use the same amount as you did before, and start with smaller amounts. You can always add more if needed.
- Don't use alone. There is no one to help you if you overdose. Use with a buddy. Leave your door unlocked. Let someone know you are going to use so they can check on you.
- Carry a naloxone kit. Naloxone is a fast-acting drug that can temporarily reverse the negative effects of an opioid overdose and save a life.

If you think someone has overdosed on drugs, call 9-1-1 right away. Calling 9-1-1 and administering naloxone is the only way to save their life.