

OPIOID SAFETY AND OVERDOSE PREVENTION

WHAT ARE OPIOIDS?

Opioids are a type of drug that include:

Morphine	Percocet ®	Codeine	Fentanyl (legal or illegal)
OxyContin ®	Vicodin ®	Hydrocodone	Heroin (illegal)
Dilaudid ®	Demerol	Hydromorphone	

RISK FACTORS FOR OVERDOSE

- Physical Health: Opioids can slow breathing. If you have asthma or other breathing problems, you are at high risk for overdose. Those with liver and/or kidney problems or who are HIV positive are also at increased risk.
- Previous Overdose: If you have had a nonfatal overdose in the past, you have an increased risk of a fatal overdose in the future.
- Mixing Drugs: Many overdoses occur when opioids are mixed with alcohol, benzodiazepines (sedatives and/or anti-anxiety medicine) or other substances for medical and non-medical reasons.
- Tolerance: If you take a break from using opioids, restarting at the same dose may cause an overdose.

HOW TO PREVENT AN OVERDOSE

- Talk to your loved ones about a care plan in case of an overdose
- Explore ways to manage pain that do not include opioids.
- Use only prescription painkillers prescribed to you by a medical professional.
- Take opioids around other people who can respond if there is a medical emergency.
- Dispose of any unused opioids at a drop box located at many pharmacies and police stations.
- Store opioids in a secure place to prevent access by people not prescribed the medication, e.g., a locked container such as a lock box.
- Consider using a fentanyl test strip before taking or injecting any drugs. Fentanyl is a high potency opioid created in multiple forms for medical and non-medical reasons. It is becoming common for fentanyl to be mixed with other illegal drugs. Use caution when taking illegal drugs.

WHAT IS NALOXONE?

Naloxone (also known as Narcan®) is a drug used to reverse an opioid overdose.

- It stops the effects of opioids on the brain and body.
- It is safe for children, pregnant women and even pets.
- It has no effect on someone who has not taken opioids.

ASSISTANCE



Unified Community Services

Lancaster Office: (608) 723-6357

Dodgeville Office: (608) 935-2776



Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline: Call 211 or text your ZIP code to 898211. Treatment is available. Recovery is possible.



Information condensed from: *Opioid Safety and Overdose Prevention*. P-01571 and *How to Respond to an Overdose and How to Give Naloxone*. P-01576. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2020. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/narcan-direct.htm>

RESPONDING TO AN OVERDOSE

RECOGNIZING AN OVERDOSE

An opioid overdose can take hours to occur. A person who is having an overdose may experience slow breathing (less than one breath every five seconds), shallow breathing, or no breathing.

Other signs and symptoms of an overdose include:

- Nodding out; snoring noises while asleep.
- Vomiting.
- Blue or pale lips, skin or fingernails.
- No response when you rub your knuckles in the middle of their chest.
- Pale or clammy face.

RESPONDING TO AN OVERDOSE

CALL 911

GIVE NARCAN NASAL SPRAY

- Peel back the package to remove the device.
- Place the tip of the nozzle in a nostril until your fingers touch the nose.
- Press the plunger firmly to release the dose into either nostril.
- If there is no reaction in 2-3 minutes, give a second dose.

If the person is not breathing, open the airway. Remove any object(s) from the mouth. If breathing has stopped or is slowed, start rescue breathing:

- Tilt head back and lift chin.
- Cover the person's face with a mask (if available).
- Pinch nose with other hand.
- Give one breath every five seconds.
- Continue this for 30 seconds.
- If the person is still not breathing on their own, give Narcan Nasal Spray.

PLACE IN RECOVERY POSITION

Once the person is breathing again, put the person on their side with the top leg and arm crossed over the body to prevent choking (see below).



Place in recovery position

STAY WITH THE PERSON UNTIL EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ARRIVE

Narcan wears off in 30 to 90 minutes

Watch the Naloxone training video:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/narcan-direct.htm>



Rub your knuckles in the middle of their chest



Place the tip of the nozzle in a nostril until your fingers touch the nose



Tilt head back and lift chin



Cover the person's face with a mask
Pinch nose with other hand