

Opioid Overdose

Opioids include

heroin and prescription pain medications:

Vicodin (hydrocodone)	Fentanyl
OxyContin (oxycodone)	Percocet
Dilaudid (hydromorphone)	Methadone
MS Contin (morphine)	...and others

- **If someone takes more opioids than their body can handle, they can pass out, stop breathing and die.**
- **Overdose can take minutes or even hours to occur.**
- **Anyone who uses opioids can overdose.**

Opioid overdose risks

- **Restarting opioids after a break.** Tolerance drops within a few days.
- **Using opioids at the same with alcohol or sedating drugs** like sleep aids and benzodiazepines (“benzos” like Valium and Xanax). Mixed together, they can slow breathing even more.
- Taking **prescription pain medicine more often** or in **higher doses** than prescribed.
- **Any heroin use** due to its wide range of purity.
- **Taking someone else’s pain medication.**
- **Using long-acting opioids** (like methadone) or powerful opioids (like fentanyl).
- **Heart or lung disease.**

If someone has overdosed before, they are more likely to overdose again.

How can I get naloxone?

Naloxone (Narcan®) is a prescription medicine that can temporarily stop the effect of opioids and help a person start breathing again. It can be given as an injection into a muscle or as an intranasal spray. It is easy and very safe to use.

In WA State, you can get a prescription for naloxone if you think you could:

- overdose on opioids yourself.
- help someone else who has overdosed.

Go to stopoverdose.org to see if naloxone is available from a pharmacy, doctor or health department near you.



Safer use of pain medication:

- Washington Department of Health
tinyurl.com/wa-doh-tad

Addiction treatment:

- Washington Recovery Help Line
24 hour crisis help and referral
warecoveryhelpline.org
1-866-789-1511
- Suboxone/buprenorphine providers
tinyurl.com/locate-bup
- Treatment services in the US
findtreatment.samhsa.gov

This brochure is not a substitute for more complete overdose response training from a medical provider or health educator. For more info go to:

stopoverdose.org

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If someone you know is taking prescription pain medication or using heroin...

would you know what to do if they accidentally overdosed?

This information could help you save a life.

TAKING ACTION IN AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

1

Check:
Could this be an
opioid overdose?



Look and listen for:

- slow or no breathing
- gurgling, gasping or snoring
- clammy, cool skin
- blue lips or nails
- pill bottles, needles or alcohol

Try to wake them up.

- Shake them.
Call their name.
- Rub your knuckles
hard over their chest
bone.



If they don't wake up,
you need to act fast!

2

Call 911



- You don't need to say anything about drugs or medications.
- Just say where you are and that the person isn't breathing.

3

Give naloxone and start rescue breathing



- **Give the naloxone** (injection or intranasal spray). Follow the instructions on the package or in the overdose rescue kit.
- **Start rescue breathing.**
- If they don't respond in 3-5 minutes, give a **second dose of naloxone**. **Keep rescue breathing!**

If you don't have naloxone, do rescue breathing. Oxygen is critical!

4

Stay with them



- If they start to wake up and breathe, stay with them.
- Naloxone wears off in 30-90 minutes. When it does, the person can stop breathing again. **Watch them until medical help arrives.**
- If you must leave, put the person into the recovery position and in a place where they can be found.

Learn more at stopoverdose.org



Under the Good Samaritan Law:

You cannot be prosecuted for having a small amount of medication or drugs when you seek help in an overdose. The overdose victim is also protected. But the law does not protect you or them from other crimes or warrants.

Rescue breathing

- Tilt head back. Lift chin. Pinch nose.
- Give **2 quick breaths**. Chest should rise.
- Then **1 slow breath every 5 seconds**.
- **Keep going** until they start breathing or help arrives.



Recovery position

