



OPIOID OVERDOSE SURVIVAL GUIDE

HOW TO RESPOND TO AN OPIOID OVERDOSE
FROM A TOXIC DRUG SUPPLY

Purpose
since 1983
HARM REDUCTION

Training is free or by donation for
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button. Be sure to specify Harm Reduction Program in the message section. ♥

WHAT IS AN OPIOID OVERDOSE?

HOW LONG CAN A BRAIN GO WITHOUT OXYGEN?

- Between 30-180 seconds of oxygen deprivation, a person would lose consciousness
- At the one-minute mark, brain cells begin to die
- At three minutes, neurons suffer more extensive damage, and lasting brain damage is likely
- At five minutes, death becomes imminent
- At 10 minutes, even if the brain remains alive, a coma and lasting damage are almost inevitable
- At 15 minutes, survival becomes nearly impossible

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EFFECTS OF NALOXONE

The person may feel “dopesick”- symptoms include nausea, vomiting, shivering, body aches/weakness, stomach pain, diarrhea, increased blood pressure and more. The long-term health effects of Naloxone are not yet published.

OPIOIDS ARE DEPRESSANTS

They suppress respiratory function by attaching to breathing receptors in the brain. The more breathing receptors that are covered, the worse the overdose is and it's likely more than three ampules of Naloxone will need to be administered. The strength of the opioid taken contributes to the severity of the overdose.

HOW NALOXONE REVERSES AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

Naloxone reverses an opioid overdose by coming between the breathing receptor and the opioid, thereby restoring respiratory function. This only lasts about 20-60 mins, so it is entirely possible for the person to od again, depending on the strength of the opiate in their system.

Remember to pinch the nose every time you administer a rescue breath. Breathing for a person who is overdosing is the most important step to keeping them alive and preventing brain damage. If you aren't comfortable giving breath, yell for someone who will. Technically, you can keep a person alive by breathing for them for the duration of the overdose, without using Naloxone... that's how VITAL providing rescue breathes is!

CONTENTS OF A NALOXONE KIT

pro tip!

If you have longer hair, carry a hair elastic in your kit. You'll be thankful you did!

**ALWAYS DON
GLOVES before
you touch
anyone.**



Naloxone is both heat and light sensitive - that's why the glass is amber in colour. Never store your naloxone kit in your car. Each ampule contains 0.4mg (1cc) of naloxone. DO NOT remove the plastic ampule breaker prior to snapping the ampule.



After you inject someone with Naloxone, the needle is spring-loaded and will disappear into the barrel. Don't worry, the needle did not "break-off" in the person you injected. These needles will go through several layers of clothes.



This breathing mask has a one-way-valve and fully covers the person's face you are providing rescue breaths for. This mask protects you from air or vomit from the person you are rescuing.

EMT's will ask you how much Naloxone you administered and over what period of time. **Be prepared to administer subsequent doses every three mins until the person can breathe on their own again.**

0.4 mg x 1 ampule = 0.4 mg
0.4 mg x 2 ampules = 0.8 mg
0.4 mg x 3 ampules = 1.2 mg
0.4 mg x 4 ampules = 1.6 mg
0.4 mg x 5 ampules = 2 mg
0.4 mg x 6 ampules = 2.4 mg

SIGNS OF OPIOID

OVERDOSE

Naloxone will only reverse the effects of an OPIOID overdose. Opioids are substances such as Heroin, Fentanyl, Oxycodone, Morphine, Codeine, Hydrocodone, Oxymorphone and Demerol.

An illustration of a person lying face down on the ground. A woman stands to the left, leaning forward and speaking. A speech bubble above her says "Excuse me, are you alright?".

Person is not moving and can't be woken up.

An illustration of a pair of lungs with a red circle and a diagonal slash over them. To the right is a diagram of a person's head and neck in profile, with small circles representing sound coming from the mouth.

**Slow breathing, or no breathes at all.
Some people make snoring, gurgling or choking sounds**

An illustration of a pair of blue lips. To the right is a hand with blue arrows pointing to the tips of the fingers.

Lips and fingertips are the first things to go blue/purple. The whole body could be blue/purple and skin can be cold & clammy

An illustration of a person's face with their eyes wide open and their mouth open, showing teeth.

**If a person can respond to you either by words or by opening their eyes (even a sliver), THEY ARE NOT OVERDOSING.
DO NOT ADMINISTER NALOXONE.**

Access FTIR drug checking, mobile harm reduction in New West, Burnaby, Tri-Cities and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows from 6pm-1am, 7 nights a week, overdose bereavement support via G.O.A. every Thursday at 6pm at the old Army and Navy building in New West

RESPONDING TO AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

Opioid OD is caused by suppression of respiratory function. Naloxone kits come with a one-way valve breathing mask. **IF YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE GIVING BREATHERS, CALL FOR SOMEONE WHO WILL.** Do not give chest compressions IF THE PERSON HAS A PULSE. Call us for detailed explanation.

pro tip!

Shout, "I'm going to Naloxone you!" If there's any phrase that will wake someone up, this is the one!

1.



STIMULATE!

Shout at them, rub your gloved-knuckles on their chest, clap your hands in their face. Try to wake them up! Check for a pulse. Unresponsive?

CALL 911

pro tip!

Be sure to say each step you are taking out loud. This helps to keep you calm and remind you of what you need to do. Speak calmly to yourself. You've got this.

2.



CHECK AIRWAY!

Give breathers every five seconds. Don't forget to pinch the nose. Breathers are so important because brain damage from a lack of oxygen can occur within minutes.

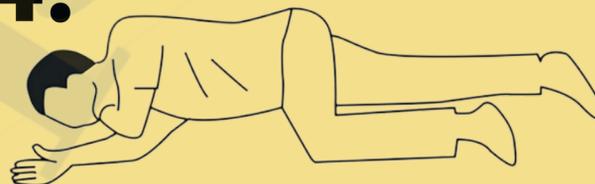
pro tip!

Be sure to tilt the head back when you give breathers - open the airway!



Prepare Naloxone between breathers. Inject in thigh, butt cheek or shoulder muscle. No response? Prepare and administer another shot in 3-4 minutes. **The needle will go through many layers of clothes and retracts (needle disappears).**

4.



Continue breathers every five seconds. Once the person is breathing on their own, move the person on to their side (RECOVERY POSITION). Naloxone wears off in approximately 20 minutes. Stay with the person to make sure they don't need more Naloxone.

You can check a person's pulse by putting 2 fingers on the inside of their wrist or on their neck.

To measure the pulse in someone's wrist:

- hold the person's arm so it's straight, with the palm of their hand facing upwards
- place your index (first finger) and middle fingers on their wrist, at the base of their thumb

To measure the pulse in someone's neck:

- place your index and middle fingers on the side of their neck, in the soft hollow area just beside their windpipe

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOU RESPOND TO AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

pro tip!

When they are "coming to" after the OD, crouch down, smile, make eye-contact while calmly saying hello and introduce yourself. This simple act can be disarming and may prevent a negative reaction from the person.



Don't take it personally if the person is angry with you or even lashes out verbally.



Don't be surprised if the person uses drugs upon "coming to" from the overdose.

Let them know they may be experiencing precipitated withdrawal and that the Naloxone will wear off in 30-90 mins....likely less than 90 mins. Without judgment, remind them that using again could result in a more severe overdose once the Naloxone wears off.



You may feel like crying, or feel upset at what you just experienced. That is OKAY AND COMPLETELY NORMAL. Be sure to debrief with someone you trust. Don't compartmentalize, for the sake of your own mental health. Take care of YOU!



Benzodiazepines are regularly detected in the illicit opioid drug supply. **Benzo's do not respond to Naloxone, because it isn't an opioid.** A person may begin breathing on their own again, but if they aren't waking up, it's likely because there is "Benzo's in their dope"

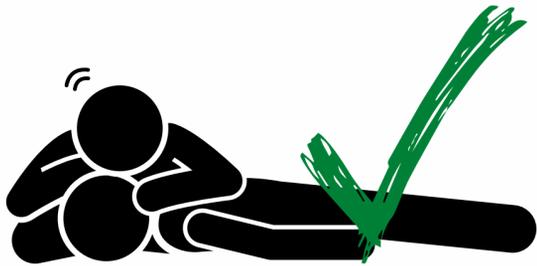
Once emergency services arrive and you answer their questions, leave. It's a good idea to support your mental health by calling someone you trust and allow yourself to debrief. Let the person know you have just experienced a potentially traumatic event and ask if you can tell them about it. Describe the entire experience in detail. Describe the sites, sounds and smells of the entire overdose response. You may ugly-cry and that's okay. This will help you to not compartmentalise the event. It's important to take care of yourself, post-response.

BC Emergency Health Services 911 Practice Update

When you call 911 and the patient has a pulse, say this:

"I am a peer/trained overdose responder and this patient has a pulse, I will not be performing chest compressions, they are in respiratory distress. I won't be able to talk because I'll be giving rescue breaths every five seconds. Please send an ambulance to address/location"

This 911 Emergency Medical Call Taking (EMCT) Practice Update aims to recognize the experience and expertise of trained overdose responders by allowing EMCT's to bypass chest compressions to support airway and breathing management when a patient has a pulse.



EMCT's may still suggest chest compressions at the beginning of the 911 call, prior to callers using the script.

**THIS IS ONLY TO REMAIN COMPLIANT WITH THE
MEDICAL PRIORITY DISPATCH SYSTEM**

Questions? Contact: ClinicalPractice@bcehs.ca



Now that you're trained, be sure to check with your place of employment if there are policies in place that prohibit you from administering Naloxone while on-the-job.

ADDITIONAL PURPOSE SOCIETY RESOURCES



Peer Assisted Crisis Team (PACT), Mental health crisis team, staffed by peer and mental health specialists 604-515-3813

**FTIR Spectrometer Drug Checking
(Text/talk a Drug Checking technician at 604-368-5719)**

Grief On Arrival (G.O.A.) Overdose Bereavement Support Group

**Health Van -mobile harm reduction van
(text/talk 604-351-1885, last call at midnight, seven nights per week)**

**Safe Injection Site (Health Contact Centre)
(3:30pm-10:30 pm, seven nights per week, behind Purpose Society on Alexander St, across from Ki Sushi)**

Burnaby, New West & Maple Ridge Rent Bank

Purpose Independent Secondary School

Naloxone training and free kits

Christmas Hamper Program

ID Replacement Program

Digital Inclusion Program

Family-related programs

Food Hamper Program

Peer Support Network

Shirts With Purpose

50-person shelter

and more....

**HARM REDUCTION
PROGRAM IS ACCEPTING
DONATIONS:
-MONETARY
-USED HOODIES/SWEATSHIRTS
-USED WINTER COATS
-USED SWEATPANTS
-NEW SOCKS/UNDERWEAR
-USED SLEEPING BAGS
TEXT THE HEALTH VAN TO
ARRANGE PICK-UP:
604-526-1885
TAX RECEIPTS ISSUED UPON
REQUEST**

 604-526-2522

 Purpose Society 40 Begbie St., New Westminster

 purposesociety.org

 mail@purposesociety.org