

# Information on Opioid Safety and How to Use Naloxone

## Accidental opioid overdose death is preventable

### What are opioids?

Most opioids are narcotic pain relievers such as:

- **Oxycodone** (PERCOCET®, OXYCONTIN®, ROXICET®, etc.)
  - **Hydrocodone** (VICODIN®, NORCO®, LORTAB®, etc.)
  - **Oxymorphone** (OPANA®, OPANA® ER)
  - **Hydromorphone** (DILAUDID®, EXALGO®, etc.)
  - **Codeine** (TYLENOL® #3)
  - **Morphine** (MS CONTIN®, KADIAN®, AVINZA®, etc.)
  - **Fentanyl** (DURAGESIC®)
  - **Methadone** (METHADOSE®)
  - **Buprenorphine** (SUBOXONE®, BUTRANS®, SUBUTEX®, ZUBSOLV®, etc.)
- \***Heroin** is also an opioid drug.

### What is an opioid overdose?

- Opioids, like all medications, can have adverse reactions. Opioids can cause harmful and severe reactions that slow or even stop breathing. This can happen when a person ingests too much of the opioid medication or when a person mixes an opioid with another substance.
- **Because opioids slow or even stop breathing, opioid overdoses can be fatal.**

### How to prevent accidental overdose:

- Tell the pharmacist about all prescription and non-prescription medications.
- Do not mix opioids with alcohol, benzodiazepines (alprazolam, clonazepam, diazepam, etc.), or other drugs.
- Do not take opioids more often or in higher quantities than prescribed.
- Taking opioids after a period of abstinence may decrease tolerance and increase overdose risk.
- Talk to the pharmacist about naloxone.

### What is naloxone?

- Naloxone is a safe medication that reverses and blocks the effects of opioids and can be used to treat a known or suspected opioid overdose.
- Naloxone is easy to use. Ask the pharmacist how to use naloxone to reverse an opioid overdose.
- Naloxone only reverses the effects of opioids. It will not have an effect on an overdose caused by another substance (e.g. alcohol, benzodiazepines, stimulants, etc.).

### Are there any adverse effects from naloxone?

- Naloxone may cause opioid withdrawal symptoms such as: nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, chills, sweating, anxiety, and combativeness/disorientation. People who take opioids chronically are more likely to experience these effects.
- Opioid overdose complications, such as brain damage or death from lack of oxygen, are more alarming than potential side effects from naloxone administration.
- If naloxone is given to a person who has not taken opioids, it will not have any effect on that person.

### Additional information:

- Naloxone is usually not self-administered. Tell others about the possible need to use naloxone, how to use it, and where it's kept in case of overdose.
- Using expired naloxone will not hurt the individual but it may have lost some of its effectiveness. Keep naloxone in date and protect it from too much heat or cold.
- See your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions or want additional information about opioid safety, alternative pain management options, naloxone, or opioid treatment programs.

## Opioid Overdose and How to Use Naloxone

### How to recognize an opioid overdose:

- Unresponsive or unconscious; will not wake up even when shaken.
- Not breathing or breathing is slow and shallow.
- Lips or fingernails are blue or grey.
- Skin is pale and clammy.

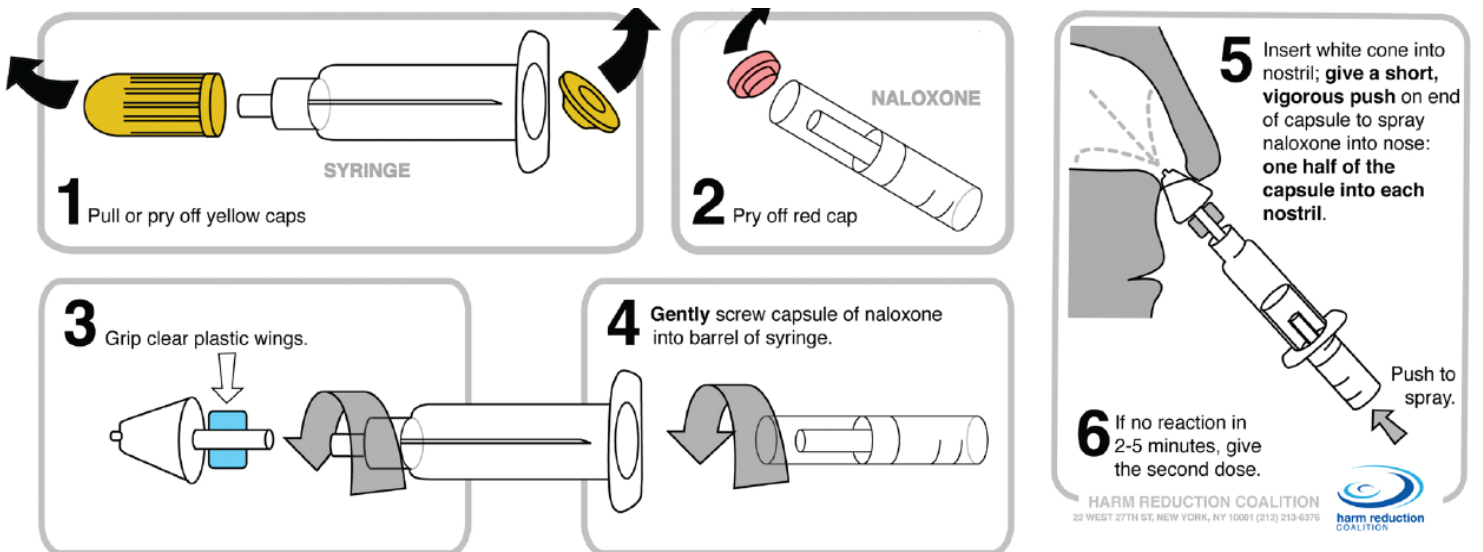
### What to do in case of an overdose:

1. Call 911 immediately and follow dispatcher instructions. Perform rescue breathing.
2. Administer naloxone. If no response in 3 minutes, give a second dose.
3. Follow dispatcher instructions for rescue breathing if appropriate.
4. Stay with the person until help arrives.

### How to administer naloxone (follow instructions for the product you have):

#### Intranasal naloxone:

1. Remove all colored caps.
2. Screw white cone on to syringe.
3. Gently screw naloxone vial into barrel of syringe.
4. Insert white cone into nostril; give a short, strong push on end of naloxone vial. Spray half of naloxone vial in each nostril.
5. If no reaction in 3 minutes, give a second dose.



#### Narcan® Nasal Spray (naloxone):

1. Open NARCAN® Nasal Spray and peel back tab to open.
2. Hold nasal spray with thumb on plunger and first and middle finger on either side of nozzle.
3. Insert nozzle into one nostril and press plunger firmly with thumb to give dose of NARCAN®. If no response after 3 minutes, open second NARCAN® and spray in other nostril.

