

Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness

NALOXONE TOOLKITS



Naloxone, also known by the brand name Narcan, is a safe and effective medication that can reverse the effects of opioid overdose. It is most often injected into a person experiencing an overdose. It attaches to the same parts of the brain that receive heroin and other opioids, and it blocks the opioids for 30-90 minutes to reverse the respiratory depression that would otherwise lead to death from overdose.

Overdose Is Most Common When:

- Your tolerance is down due to not using whether you took a break, were in treatment, in jail or had cut down on your use.
- When you mix drugs, like downers, heroin, methadone, benzos/pills, and alcohol, or any combo of those.
- When you get stronger drugs than you are used to, if the supply changes, you go to a new dealer, or you are new in town.
- When you are alone, nobody is around to help if you go out.
- When you've been sick, tired, run down or dehydrated, your body cannot handle the drugs as well if it is not healthy and nourished.

How To Recognize An Overdose

- Blue or grayish lips and fingernails.
- Clammy, sweaty skin.
- Shallow or raspy breathing, snoring or gurgling sounds.
- Won't wake up to yelling their name or to a sternum rub to the chest.
- If your friend is just in a heavy nod, but is still conscious and breathing, make sure to stay with them, walk them around, keep them talking and moving.
- WATCH THEIR BREATHING!
- Someone can slip into an overdose hours after they get high.
- Have your Naloxone kit around because you never know when you will need to administer the medicine.

Preventing Overdose

- Don't mix drugs. Mixing drugs can cause your breathing and heart to stop.
- Have an O.D. rescue plan with those around you.
- Learn rescue breathing and get a Naloxone Kit.
- Do not use alone.
- Keep doors unlocked so help can reach you if you are in trouble.

Take Actions:

Check to see if they can respond

- Give them a light shake, yell their name.
- If you cannot get a response, try a STERNUM RUB (rub your knuckles on their chest bone for about 5-10 seconds).

Call 911

- You do not need to mention drugs on the call. Stick to basics.
- Give address and location.
- Say: "my friend is unconscious and I can't wake him up" or "my friend isn't breathing."

Rescue Breathing

- Make sure nothing is in their mouth.
- Tilt head back, pinch nose.
- Give a breath every 5 seconds.

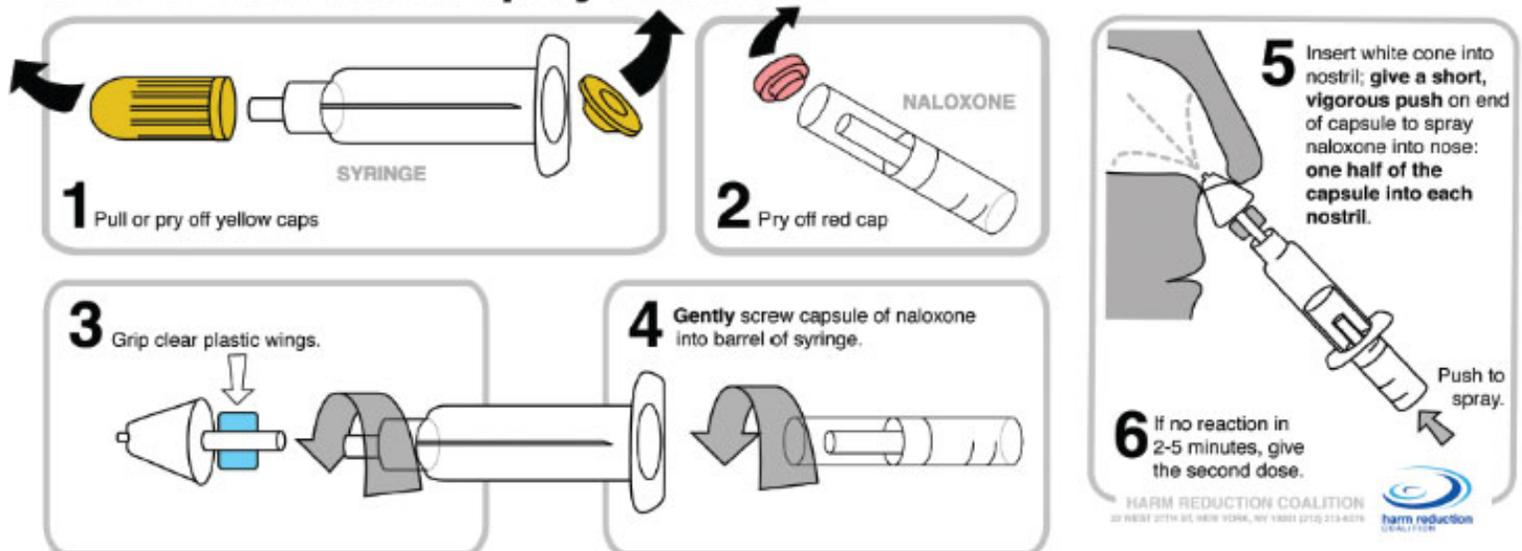
Give Naloxone

- If you have the nasal spray, spray half up one nostril, half up the other.
- If you have the injectable Naloxone, inject 1 cc into the muscle of the upper arm, upper thigh, or upper/outer quarter of the butt.
- Continue rescue breathing if they have not started on their own.
- Give second dose of Naloxone if there is no response after 3 minutes.

After Naloxone

- Remind person Naloxone can wear off in 30-45 minutes.
- Lay them on their side.
- Stay with them until they go to the hospital or until the Naloxone wears off to make sure the overdose does not come back.
- DO NOT LEAVE THEM ALONE.
- Contact a family member to let them know their loved one has O.D'd and EMS is taking them to E.R.

How to Give Nasal Spray Naloxone



Can Naloxone harm someone?

No. If you suspect an opioid overdose, it is safe to give Naloxone. People who used opioids will then wake up and go into withdrawal. Withdrawal is miserable but better than dying.

Naloxone does not prevent deaths caused by other drugs such as benzodiazepines (e.g. Xanax®, Klonopin® and Valium®), bath salts, cocaine, methamphetamine or alcohol. Always call 911 as an overdose victim may need other care.

What about the police?

Kentucky SB 192, Section 11, prevents prosecution for drug or paraphernalia possession for people who have an overdose or who seek medical help for someone else having an overdose. They will not be prosecuted for possession of drugs.

How long does Naloxone take to work?

Naloxone acts in 2-5 minutes. If the person doesn't wake up in 5 minutes, bystanders should give a second dose. (Rescue breathing should be done while you wait for the naloxone to take effect to that the person gets oxygen to their brain.)

Can Naloxone wear off before the drugs that cause the overdose?

Yes. Naloxone typically wears off in 30-90 minutes and the person can stop breathing again unless more naloxone is available. For this reason, it is safest to call 911 and have the person taken for medical care.