

## How do you know if someone is overdosing?

It may be difficult to tell the difference if someone is overdosing or is high. If someone is experiencing an overdose, he or she will not respond to painful touches or aggressive shaking

**Helpful Hint:** Rub your knuckles along the center of someone's chest, if they do not respond, they most likely are experiencing an overdose. Give the person Narcan and call 911.

## Other signs to look for in a possible overdose situation are:



Courtesy of The College of Pharmacists of British Columbia

## How do I get Naloxone?

Most community pharmacies (CVS, Walgreens, Kroger) have Naloxone available that can be sold without a prescription. There is age restrictions or limits to how many doses of Naloxone can be bought.

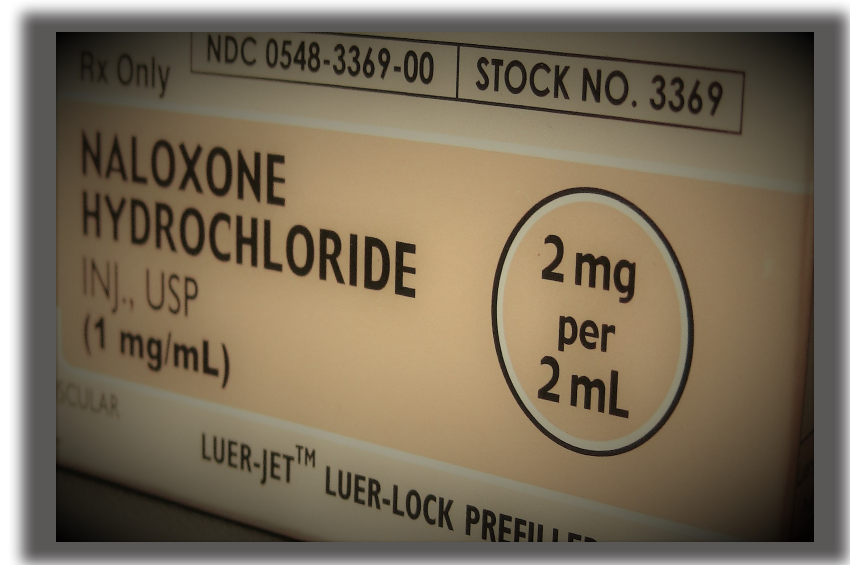
Many other clinics have Naloxone available and can offer counseling about how to use it. No matter where you go, the pharmacist will be able to answer any questions you may have regarding Naloxone.

## Where can I learn more about Naloxone?

To learn more about Naloxone and to find more helpful tools to battle opioids, visit [u.osu.edu/toolkit](http://u.osu.edu/toolkit).

# Narcan

## Q & A



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK  
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

## What is Naloxone used for?

Naloxone (Narcan) is a drug that can reverse an overdose caused by opioids.

## What are Opioids?

Opioids are drugs that interact with a specific place in the brain to relieve pain. Opioids include *illegal* substances such as heroin.

Opioids also include *legal* substances like prescription drugs such as OxyContin (oxycodone), Percocet, Vicodin (hydrocodone), Fentanyl and methadone.

When taken as prescribed, opioids are a safe and effective treatment for pain, but taking any of these medicines without a prescription, or taking them differently than how you should be, is dangerous and can be illegal.

## How does Naloxone work?

Opioids bind to certain receptors in the brain, like putting a buckle into a seat belt. If the opioid is bound to too many receptors, the person can experience an overdose. Too many opioids cause a person's breathing to slow, which can lead to coma or death.

Naloxone acts as an antagonist, or "blocker", and kicks the opioid off of those receptors in the brain, or releases the buckle from the seat belt. When enough of the opioid is kicked off, the person becomes responsive and normal breathing is restored.



## How many doses of Naloxone does it take to reverse an overdose?

*There is no magic number of Naloxone doses that reverse an overdose.* It depends on what kind of opioid the person has overdosed on and how potent or strong it was. Sometimes it may take *multiple doses* to reverse an overdose. When in doubt, it is okay to give a person more Naloxone doses. Nothing bad will happen to them and there are no negative side effects.

## What should I do after I have given Naloxone?

**CALL 911**, or get the person to the hospital. This is not to get the person into trouble, but to keep them from overdosing again. Naloxone only lasts for **30-90 minutes**, but opioids can last up to 6 hours in a person's body. This means they are at risk for overdosing a second time when the naloxone wears off.

Do not let the person use any more opioids. When someone is given Naloxone, the person may become agitated, aggressive or violent. A person may want to use more opioids after naloxone is given.

## Could I get in trouble for calling 911 if there are drugs around?

**NO!** In Ohio there is a law called the **Good Samaritan Law**, which provides legal immunity under certain conditions for substance users or their friends calling police or medical personnel in an emergency, such as a drug overdose.

This law was put in place to encourage people to call for help if they witness an overdose without fearing they will get in trouble.