

STEPS TO RESPOND TO AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

Learn what to do before an emergency • Share with family and friends

STEP

1

LOOK FOR SIGNS OF OPIOID OVERDOSE

Signs of Overdose:

- Slow or shallow breathing
- Very sleepy and cannot talk
- Pale skin, bluish lips and/or fingertips
- Gurgling or deep snoring sounds
- Won't wake up or respond to you

If you see signs of overdose:
Shout the person's name and rub your knuckles hard up and down the middle of their chest where the ribs meet (the breastbone).
If no response, follow steps 2-5.

STEP

2

CALL 9-1-1

Say, "Someone is not breathing and cannot respond."

Give a clear address or tell the person where you are.

STEP

3

GIVE NALOXONE

Naloxone comes in different forms such as nasal spray and auto-injector. To use, do what your pharmacist says. Go to <https://opiorescue.com/rescue> and click on 'Step 4 – Administer Naloxone' to read and see pictures on how to use each form.

STEP

4

BEGIN RESCUE BREATHING (If you know the person)

Put person on their back • Make sure there is nothing in the mouth • Pinch the nose closed, put hand on chin, and tilt head back • Make a mouth-to-mouth seal and breathe 2 breaths (chest should rise) • Give 1 breath every 5 seconds

STEP

5

WAIT & EVALUATE

Stay with person until help comes • If little or no breathing, keep rescue breathing and give second dose of naloxone in 2–3 minutes • If breathing, place person on their side with top leg and arm crossed over body to prevent choking

How to Prevent Accidental Opioid Overdose

Take meds as instructed • Only take meds prescribed to you • Don't take street drugs or borrow meds from anyone • Don't stop taking or change dose of opioids without talking to your doctor • Don't mix opioids with alcohol, benzodiazepines (meds such as Xanax® or Ativan®), or meds that make you sleepy • Store meds in safe place • Safely get rid of meds you don't want or are not going to use • Don't sell or give away opioids

References:

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NaloxoneSavesSC.org [Internet]. [place unknown]: NaloxoneSavesSC.org; c2017 [cited 2019 Jun 26]. Available from: <http://naloxonesavessc.org/>
Veterans Health Administration (US). Opioid safety [Internet]. [Washington]: Department of Veterans Affairs (US); [revised 2016 Jun; cited 2019 Jun 26]. [2 p]. Available from: https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/AcademicDetailingService/Documents/Opioid_Safety_for_Patients_on_Opioids_Brochure.pdf