

# Naloxone

## How to Use Naloxone to Reverse an Overdose

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### What is naloxone?

Naloxone, also known as its brand name Narcan®, is a medication that rapidly reverses opioid overdose. Overdose occurs when the level of opioids, or a combination of opioids and other drugs or alcohol, in the body causes a person to become unresponsive or slows/stops their breathing. Naloxone has a stronger attraction to opioid receptors in the brain and will kick off opioids that are present. This allows a person to breathe again and reverse the overdose.

Naloxone is a **temporary drug** that wears off in 30-90 minutes. This means that for 90 minutes after someone is given naloxone, they won't be able to get high and they could overdose again once Naloxone wears off. If the person decides to use again it is suggested to use a lower dose than previously used. Go low and slow to avoid another overdose.

### When should you give naloxone?

Naloxone is administered when a person shows signs of an opioid overdose that could cause severe injury or death if not treated. Administer the first dose following instructions on the following page. Wait two minutes, if the person is still not responding give a second dose in the opposite nostril.

#### Typical signs of an overdose:

- Unconsciousness
- Small or pinpoint pupils
- Weak or ineffective breathing
- Gurgling/throat sounds
- Vomiting
- Pale skin including blue lips
- Snoring

#### Less common signs of overdose:

- Muscle spasms
- Locking limbs
- Rigid or wooden chest
- Chest/death rattle

### What happens after you've given naloxone?

If the person experienced an opioid overdose, the naloxone should have restored their breathing and helped them regain consciousness. They may still feel altered, agitated, or feel like they are in withdrawal. If one dose/plunger of naloxone does not work, you may need to use an additional one and call 911 for emergency services, stay with the person until emergency services arrive. Replace any used naloxone with new doses.

### How do I prevent another overdose?

Always take these steps when using drugs to reduce the risk of overdose:

- Have naloxone with you
- Use with a buddy who can call 911 and give naloxone
- Take turns in case someone overdoses
- Start with a much smaller than normal dose to test the strength. Wait before using more.
- If you can't use with a buddy, call Never Use Alone (800) 484-3731. A stigma-free operator will stay on the line and call 911 if you stop responding.

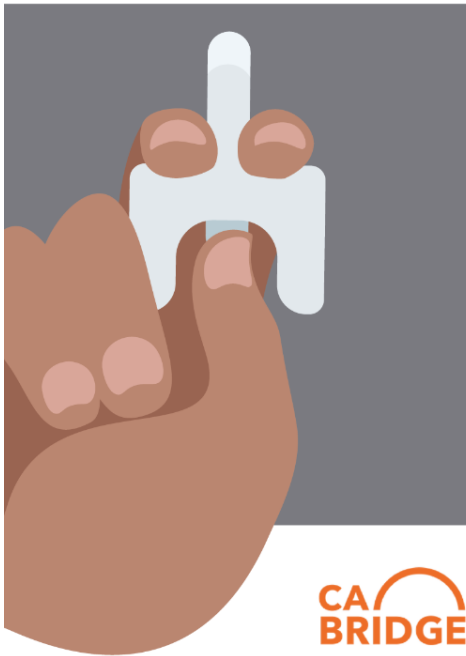
Treatment with buprenorphine or methadone decreases the risk of overdose. Buprenorphine will treat opioid withdrawal and prevent overdose. If you're still feeling the effects of withdrawal, go to the emergency department. Emergency department staff is trained to help you feel better.

### References

1. NIDA. Naloxone DrugFacts. National Institute on Drug Abuse website. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/naloxone>. June 1, 2021 Accessed June 3, 2021.
2. National Harm Reduction Coalition website. Guide to Developing and Managing Overdose Prevention and Take Home Naloxone Projects. <https://harmreduction.org/issues/overdose-prevention/developing-overdose-prevention-and-naloxone-projects/basics/>. August 31, 2020. Accessed June 7, 2021.

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE

FOR OPIOID OVERDOSE WITH NASAL NALOXONE



CA  
BRIDGE



## 1 TRY TO WAKE THE PERSON UP

- Shake them and shout.
- If no response, grind your knuckles into their breast bone for 5 to 10 seconds.
- Tell them you will give them naloxone if they don't respond.

## 2 CALL 911

If you report an overdose, California State Good Samaritan Law protects you and the overdosed person from being charged with drug possession.



## 3 ADMINISTER NASAL NALOXONE

- Remove naloxone nasal spray from the package. Hold with your thumb on the bottom of the plunger and your first and middle fingers on either side of the nozzle.
- Tilt the person's head back and provide support under the neck with your hand. Gently insert the tip of the nozzle into either nostril, until your fingers touch the person's nose.
- Press the plunger firmly to release the dose.
- If still not conscious after 2-3 minutes, repeat in the other nostril with a new device.

## 4 CHECK FOR BREATHING

If they are not breathing, CPR or rescue breathing is optional but encouraged.

Give CPR if you have been trained or do rescue breathing:

- Tilt the head back, open the mouth, and pinch the nose.
- Start with 2 breaths into the mouth. Then 1 breath every 5 seconds.
- Continue until help arrives.

## 5 STAY WITH THE PERSON

- Naloxone wears off in 30 to 90 minutes.
- When the person wakes up, explain what happened.
- If you have to leave, move the person on their side to prevent choking.