

## Narcan Training Notes

### Facts about Opioids

- Opioids are a class of drugs used to reduce pain. The term “opioids” is currently used to describe the entire family of these drug (natural, synthetic and semi-synthetic).
- Opioids can be illegal (heroin), by prescription for pain management (e.g., Oxycontin, Percocet), or by prescription for addiction treatment (methadone, Suboxone).
- All opioids act the same way in the brain; they attach to specific proteins, called opioid receptors.
- Opioids can cause euphoria, and users generally report feeling warm, drowsy, and happy. Opioids lessen stress and discomfort by creating a relaxed detachment from pain, desires, and activity.
- Opioids are depressants, which means they slow down the central nervous system. This causes symptoms like drowsiness, a slow heart rate, constipation, and slowed breathing.

### Facts about Narcan

- An overdose occurs when too many opioids bind to opioid receptors in the brain, causing the person to slow then stop breathing. Narcan reverses an opioid overdose by knocking opioids off the opioid receptors and keeping opioids from binding to the receptors.
- Only reverses the effects of opioids. It does not counter the effect of other types of drugs such as benzodiazepines and alcohol. However, if someone has used opioids in combination with other drugs, you should still administer Narcan because the Narcan will still reverse the effects of the opioids.
- Will not cause harm if given to a person who is not experiencing an opioid overdose.
- Has no other effects, can't be used to get high, and is not addictive.
- Wears off after 30-90 minutes after which time the person could overdose again, even if they take no additional opioids.
- Can bring on withdrawal symptoms in a person who is opioid dependent.
- Should be stored at room temperature and kept away from light.

### Risk factors for opioid overdose

- Reduced tolerance after a period of abstinence. For example, people coming out of treatment.
- Not knowing the strength of the drug.
- Using alone.
- Using without having an observer that has Narcan.
- Mixing opioids with other drugs/alcohol.
- Physical health problems.

### Harm Reduction

- Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. It uses a wide range of techniques (e.g., teaching safer use, needle exchange programs, supervised injection sites) to meet drug users “where they're at.” Harm reduction recognizes that drug use exists and is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon, and works to minimize its harmful effects, rather than simply ignore or condemn.

Safer use - Opioid Overdose Prevention Tips:

- Don't use alone. If you do use alone, call or text someone you trust and have them check on you.
- Take turns using – have one person who has Narcan observe and wait at least 10 minutes to use.
- Don't mix opioids with other drugs/alcohol.
- Know your tolerance and use less after any period of abstinence or decreased use (e.g., treatment). Even a few days away can lower your tolerance.
- Test the strength of the drug before you use the whole amount.
- Be careful when changing modes of administration since you may not be able to handle the same amount.
- Use less when you are sick and your immune system may be weakened.

### Good Samaritan law

- The MA Good Samaritan Law (Chapter 94C, Section 34A) protects victims and those who call 911 from charge, prosecution, and conviction for possession or use of controlled substances.
- What the law does:
  - Protects people from prosecution for possession of controlled substances when calling 911
  - Provides legal protection for people who possess and/or administer Narcan to someone appearing to have an opioid overdose
- What the law does not do - the law does not:
  - Interfere with law enforcement securing the scene at an overdose
  - Prevent prosecution for drug trafficking
  - Prevent prosecution for outstanding warrants

## **OVERDOSE PREVENTION**

### **SIGNS OF AN OPIOID OVERDOSE:**

Deep snoring, turning blue (lips, fingernails), unresponsive, no /slow breathing

### **RESPONDING TO AN OVERDOSE:**

1. Call 911. MA Law provides protection from prosecution for drug possession
2. Give Naloxone (Narcan) if you have it.
3. Stay with the person until help arrives

### **NALOXONE/ NARCAN**

Naloxone – known as Narcan - blocks the effects of opioids such as heroin, fentanyl, oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, and methadone in the brain.

In MA, you can get Narcan without a prescription, and it is covered by most insurance. Talk to your pharmacist about getting a Narcan rescue kit.





# AN OVERDOSE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

## SYMPTOMS OF AN OVERDOSE

- Unresponsive
- No Breathing or slow breathing
- Turning Blue or Gray (lips, fingernails)
- Deep Snoring

### 1. CALL 911

Say: "My friend/child is unconscious and I can't wake him/her up" or "My friend/child isn't breathing." In MA you can't be charged with possession of a controlled substance in this case.

### 2. ADMINISTER NARCAN

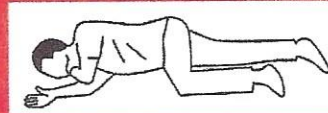
- Make sure the person is in a safe position flat on the ground
- Follow Narcan package directions

### 3. RESCUE BREATHS

- Make sure there is nothing in the mouth
- Tilt head back, lift chin and pinch nose
- Give a rescue breath, watch for chest rise
- Continue every 5 sec until the person can breathe and/or help arrives

### 4. STAY WITH THE PERSON

- Stay with them until help arrives
- If you leave, even briefly, put the person in the recovery position so they won't choke if they vomit

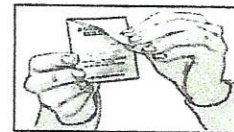


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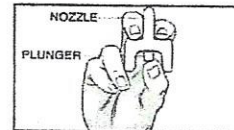
## Nasal Narcan Instructions

**Remove** NARCAN Nasal Spray from the box.

Peel back the tab with the circle to open the NARCAN Nasal Spray.



**Hold** the NARCAN nasal spray with your thumb on the bottom of the plunger and your first and middle fingers on either side of the nozzle.



**Gently insert the tip of the nozzle into either nostril.**

- Tilt the person's head back and provide support under the neck with your hand. Gently insert the tip of the nozzle into **one** nostril, until your fingers on either side of the nozzle are against the bottom of the person's nose.



**Press the plunger firmly** to give the dose of NARCAN Nasal Spray.

- Remove the NARCAN Nasal Spray from the nostril after giving the dose.

