Naloxone

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Chronic Pain Clinic

Responding to Opioid Overdose

What is an opioid overdose?

- too much opioid can make people lose the urge to breathe
- slowed breathing can decrease oxygen delivery to the brain
- this can lead to permanent brain damage or death

Anyone can overdose,
including people taking prescription opioids for pain

Overdose risk is complicated
and depends on several factors

Risk is very personal
as each person can have a different response to the same amount of a substance

What does an overdose look like?

Very sleepy/
not responding

Soft/no breath
or snoring

Tiny (pinpoint)
pupils

Cold,
clammy skin

Blue lips,
nails or skin

What is the risk?

Many things can increase the risk of opioid overdose.
More risk factors = higher chance of overdose

History	Increasing age Lung, liver & kidney problems Mental health concerns Sleep apnea
Opioid Use	Any dose, especially as doses ⬆ Taking differently than prescribed Previous opioid overdose Injected forms riskier than oral Non-prescription opioid source
Other Substances	Alcohol Benzodiazepines Sleep aids Certain antidepressants Pregabalin & gabapentin Cannabis Stimulants Illicit drugs/substances

Tolerance is your body's ability to get used to a consistent opioid dose over time.
Sudden loss of tolerance **increases the risk of overdose dramatically**, and can happen when you are sick or if you are weaning down on your opioid dose. **Never take more opioid than prescribed.**

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What is naloxone?

Naloxone is an injectable medication that **temporarily** reverses slowed breathing from too much opioid.

MAKE A PLAN

If you take opioids for chronic pain or are close to someone who uses opioids, it is a good idea to have a naloxone kit on hand.

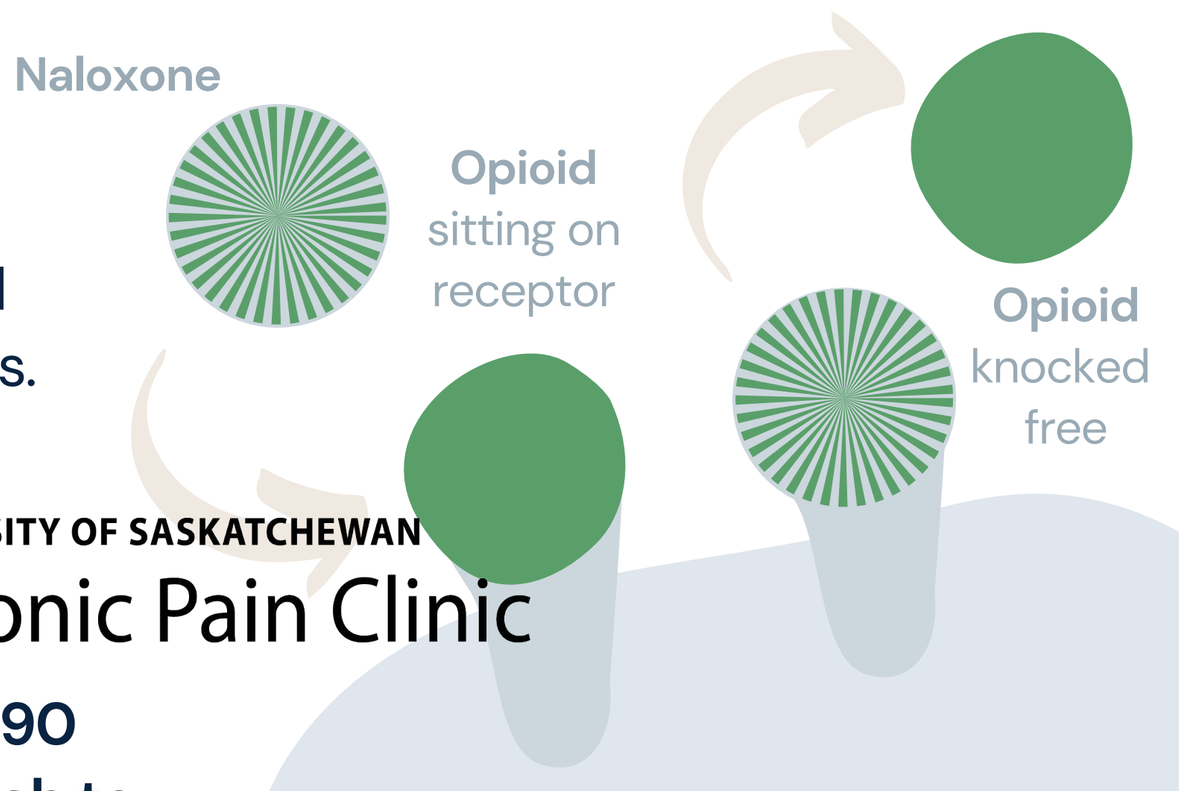
Remember: Someone who overdoses will not be able to use naloxone on their own. Other adults/teenagers in the home should know where to find and how to give naloxone.

How does naloxone work?

With too much opioid in the body, too many brain receptors have opioid attached and breathing slows or stops.

Naloxone binds to receptors very strongly so it can knock opioids from the receptor for a time.

*** When naloxone wears off after 30 – 90 minutes, leftover opioid can re-attach to receptors and overdose can come back.**



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Responding to an overdose – how to use naloxone

S A V E M E

Stimulate

- shout their name
- tell them to breathe
- rub the sternum
- if not responding, **call 911**

Airway

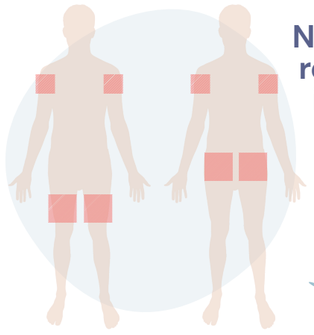
- clear out mouth
- tilt head back

Ventilate

- pinch nose
- give 2 big breaths
- ensure chest rises
- give 1 breath every 5 seconds

Evaluate

- if person starts breathing, wait with them for EMS
- if still not breathing, give naloxone



Muscle Injection

- follow instructions in the kit to prepare the dose of naloxone
- pick the muscle site (thighs, butt, upper arms)
- inject the naloxone (can go through clothing if needed)

Evaluate

- if person starts breathing, wait with them for EMS
- if still not breathing, give 1 breath every 5 seconds
- give naloxone again in **4 - 5 minutes**

SOURCE: HTTPS://TOWARDTHEHEART.COM/NALOXONE-TRAINING