



A guide on how to recognize and reverse an opioid overdose.





Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance




RPYA is a grassroots California non-profit 501(c)(3) organization (est.2001) providing support services to LGBTQ+ youth, as well as their parents and caregivers, including workshops, online support groups, and linkage to resources.



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Narcan & the fight against Fentanyl overdoses

Fentanyl is a potent synthetic **opioid** drug approved by the Food & Drug Administration for use as an anesthetic (pain relief) beginning in the 1960s.

Fentanyl is approximately 50x more potent than heroin. It can be injected, snorted, smoked, or taken as a pill.

Illegally-produced Fentanyl often comes as a powder or in tablets and is sold alone or in combination with other drugs such as heroin or cocaine, which has resulted in many unintentional, fatal overdoses.

Research out of UCLA found that of the fatal opioid overdoses registered in 2021, over 30% occurred in individuals who believed they were ingesting stimulants (like cocaine or amphetamine). So, it's always a good idea to test substances you acquire from a street dealer and to carry **Narcan** in party settings, just in case.



Narcan & the fight against Fentanyl overdoses



NARCAN® (naloxone nasal spray) is an opioid antagonist medication that is used to reverse an opioid overdose and is administered through the nose. Since opioid overdoses (mostly from Fentanyl) are becoming tragically so commonplace, it is important that we be able to:

1. Recognize what an opioid overdose looks like
2. React appropriately to the situation
3. Administer Narcan in order to save a life.

Recognizing an overdose

Skin color has changed. Lighter skin will turn blue or **gray**.

Darker skin will turn **purple** or **ashen gray**. Overall, lookout for color dropping out of people's skin OR if the skin turns many shades lighter or darker.



Gurgling noises will be audible. This means the lungs are failing to get air and are attempting to get some oxygen. It will sound similar to **snoring**.

What to look out for

- They may be ***unresponsive*** and their body may be ***limp***.
- **You can't wake them up** or they are unable to speak.
- Their ***fingernails or lips*** have a purple or blue color.
- Their ***breathing or heartbeat slows*** or stops.

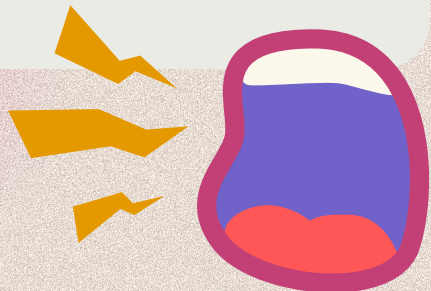


Stimulation

If your person checks the previous boxes, try and get a response from them. You can do this by yelling:

'' Hey Friend, I'm going to Narcan you if you don't wake up!''

If they respond and say they do not need Narcan, *listen to them*. If they can *say "no"*, they do not need Narcan.



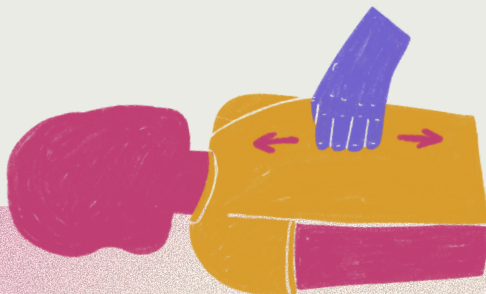
Physical stimulation

If you've assessed that someone is not responsive, your next step is to try and **get them to wake up**.

- You can stimulate someone awake with a sternal rub. You can do this by making a fist and ***rubbing your knuckles up and down their chest***.

If they are still not responsive:

- ***Call 911***; you do not have to mention that there are drugs involved, just let them know ***someone is not breathing***.



Narcan? Narcan.

If they are not responsive and you are carrying Narcan, administer it. Narcan only works for **opioid overdoses**. So, if your person is not overdosing on opioids, Narcan will not help them.



You will have to put the **Narcan far up their nose**. Remember, they are not breathing, so you really have to get it into the respiratory system for it to take effect.



It may take **2-3 minutes** for the Narcan to work. If it doesn't work after 2-3 minutes, you may have to administer another dose.

2-3 Minutes

It may take **2-3 minutes** for the Narcan to work. If it doesn't work after 2-3 minutes you may have to administer another dose. Some people require **up to 4 doses**.



Rescue breathing

If you do not have more than 1 or 2 doses of Narcan, know that ambulances carry Narcan and will administer additional doses.

If they are not there yet, you may have to perform *rescue breathing*.

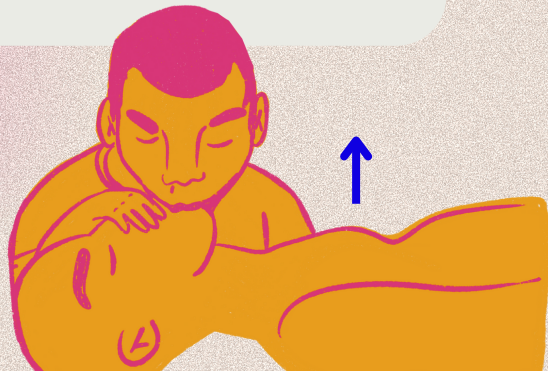
- Lay the person on their back
- Tilt their chin up
- Pinch their nose
- Give them 1 breath every 5 seconds
- Slowly watch their chest rise

This is an important step because there is **no oxygen** in their lungs and rescue breathing will provide that.

**It's a good idea to get CPR certified because you'll want to have the ability to save a life if you ever find yourself in a position to do so. The classes are only a few hours long and often offered at either low or no-cost. Some employers will even cover the cost of CPR certification for their staff.*

**Watch for
rising chest**

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Welcome back

Waking up after an overdose can be *traumatizing and disorienting*. This is why it is important to *be gentle* and welcome someone back into consciousness. You can say things like:

"Hey Friend, my name is _____, we are at _____. I think you may have experienced an overdose and I had to Narcan you. I got you, you are safe."



**I'm so glad
you're alive**

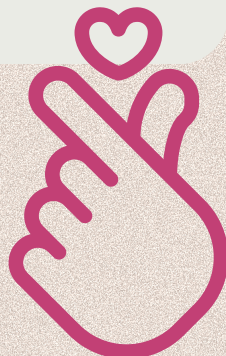
After an overdose

Since regaining consciousness after an overdose can be overwhelming, the 90 minutes that follow unfortunately represent a window of time in which chances of overdosing again are *high*.

Narcan will also begin to lose effect during this time. Therefore, we recommend staying with the person for 90 minutes to make sure they do not overdose again.

After that, remember to take care of yourself and let your friend know you are glad they are alive.

There is a lot of stigma around overdosing and drug use, so there is no need for a person who has just experienced a **medical emergency** to feel ashamed (or be shamed) for why the medical emergency occurred.



What is an opioid?

Opioids refer to a class of drugs that are used to relieve pain, making them addictive and fatal if dosed incorrectly. They come in many forms, including as pharmaceuticals as well as illicitly produced street drugs. Examples include:

- Heroin
- Morphine
- Codeine
- Methadone
- Oxycodone (Percocet, Oxycontin, Roxicodone)
- Hydrocodone (Lortab, Vicodin, Norco)
- Oxymorphone (Opana)
- Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)
- Buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex, Zubsolv)
- Fentanyl and Fentanyl Analogs
- (acryl, furanyl, acetyl, carfentanyl, etc.)

Other classes of drugs include: *Stimulants* (e.g. Cocaine, Methamphetamines), *Depressants* (e.g. alcohol, PCP), *Disassociatives* (e.g. Ketamine), *psychedelics* (e.g. acid), and *benzodiazepines* (e.g. Xanax, Valium, Ativan, Klonopin). Good rule of thumb: *don't mix drugs.*

Sources & resources

How to Use Narcan with the DOPE Project

VIDEO LINK:

youtu.be/bUtYpbdUSus



DEA Fentanyl Facts

dea.gov/factsheets/fentanyl



SAMHSA's National Helpline

A free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

Call: 1-800-662-HELP(4357)

findtreatment.samhsa.gov/

or send your zip code via text message:

435748 (HELP4U) to find help near you.

Sources & resources

IE Harm Reduction

You can request Narcan and Fentanyl test strips (free of charge) through harm reduction organizations such as IE Harm Reduction.

*IG: @InlandEmpireHarmReduction
ieharmreduction.org/*



CAT 911 (Community Alternatives to 911)



*IG: @Riversidecat911
cat-911.org/*

IE Opioid Crisis Coalition

ieocc.org/



DanceSafe

A longstanding nonprofit promoting health and safety within music and nightlife communities.



dancesafe.org

RPYA Programs

RPYA is proud to offer online and in-person groups and hangouts for youth (ages 11-17), young adults (ages 18-26), and parents/caretakers. Check out our website for more information about events, dates, and locations.



rainbowprideyouthalliance.org/programs



Digital Zine Library

Our bilingual Digital Zine Library Catalog is full of information on topics related to LGBTQ+ life, harm reduction, and social justice.



rainbowprideyouthalliance.org/zine-library



RPYA Newsletter

For more harm reduction resources, as well as details about our events and programs, subscribe to our weekly newsletter.



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