

Naloxone: Save a Life

What is naloxone?

Naloxone (pronounced na-LOX-own) is a fast-acting medication used to **temporarily reverse the effects of opioid overdoses, also called an opioid poisoning. Naloxone can begin to take effect within 2 minutes. If a response to an initial dose is not seen within 2-3 minutes, subsequent doses can safely be given.**

Why does naloxone only work temporarily?

While naloxone is only active in the body for **30 to 120 minutes**, the effects of most opioids last longer. This means that the **effects of naloxone are likely to wear off before the opioids are gone from the body**, which causes breathing to stop again. Naloxone may need to be used again, depending on the amount, type, or how the opioids were taken (for example: oral, injection, etc.).

An **overdose is always an emergency**. Even if someone has taken naloxone, **always call for help**.

TIP: If you or someone you know is using opioids make sure to carry naloxone with you. It's available without a prescription and can be picked up at most pharmacies or local health authorities.

Is naloxone safe for everyone?

Yes, naloxone is **safe for all ages**. Naloxone only works if you have opioids in your system. Naloxone is safe to keep on hand because it cannot be improperly used and does not create dependence.

How is naloxone helping to address Canada's overdose crisis?

Naloxone has successfully reversed thousands of opioid overdoses across Canada. It is used by first-responders, such as paramedics and firefighters. Take-home kits are also available to anyone who is at risk of an overdose or who is likely to encounter one. Take home kits are **available without a prescription** and can be picked up at **most pharmacies or local health authorities**.

In Canada, two types of take-home naloxone kits are available:



Naloxone nasal spray – is sprayed directly into the nose where it is absorbed.



Injectable Naloxone – is injected into a muscle in your body – upper arm, thigh or butt are best.

Naloxone Saves Lives. Get a Kit.

- ✓ Naloxone temporarily reverses the effects of an opioid overdose to help restore breathing
- ✓ If you think someone is experiencing an opioid overdose, call 9-1-1, or your local emergency help line, then give naloxone. Follow the directions on the kit
- ✓ Take-home kits are available at most pharmacies, no prescription is needed
- ✓ Kits expire and should be replaced before the expiration date

**KNOW
MORE**

DRUGS: GET THE FACTS.
KNOW THE RISKS.

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Health, 2024 | Cat.: H14-297/2-2024E-PDF | ISBN: 978-0-660-73143-8 | Pub.: 240427

Get the facts at Canada.ca/Opioids



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada