

## What if Narcan is Accidentally Given to Someone Who Didn't Consume Opioids?

Narcan works by inhibiting the brain's opioid receptors. If the person hasn't taken any opioids, Narcan will have no impact or consequence.

In extremely rare instances Narcan can cause an adverse reaction in a small percentage of individuals. The effects of an allergic reaction in these uncommon situations are generally harmless, such as a rash, itching, or swelling under the skin near the hands, feet, mouth, tongue, or neck, which can result in respiratory distress.

It's important emphasizing that, in most cases, any allergic reaction produced by Narcan isn't considered life threatening, whereas opioid overdose is.

## Does Narcan Interact With Any Other Drugs or Substances?

Narcan blocks the effects of opioids, and its not known to interact with other drugs. However, some side effects of Narcan may be more probable in people who are using some other substances.

To be clear, even if you're not sure if someone has overdosed, approach the scenario as an overdose because you might save a life. Slow breathing, unresponsiveness, snoring or gasping breaths, clammy skin, and bluish fingers and lips are all indications to look for.

If Narcan is available, give it to the person.

## Narcan May Cause Immediate Acute Withdrawal for Regular Opioid Users

Daily opioid users who are physically dependent are more likely to experience acute withdrawal if administered Narcan. This is due to the fact their bodies require opioids to function normally. Once administered, Narcan reverses the effects of opioids effectively saving their life, but forces them to go through an abrupt & painful opioid withdrawal.

### Common Symptoms of Withdrawal

Withdrawal symptoms may include heart rhythm problems, increased heart rate, heart attack, diarrhea, body aches or cramps, shivering or goosebumps, runny nose or sneezing, fever or sweating, increased blood pressure, irritability,



& aggressive behavior. If you ever fear for your own safety or if the individual becomes violent immediately leave the situation

### Reporting Overdoses or Narcan Uses & Requesting Replacements

Harm Reduction Circle partners with a variety of organizations & programs to acquire Narcan, which we then redistribute to various communities & at-risk populations in surrounding areas. We are required to prepare reports containing any usage of the Narcan we distribute in order to continue receiving Narcan through various state-funded programs. As a result, we've created an **Overdose Incident Reporting Form** that anyone may fill out use to report overdoses. We ask you to save the URL below & use it to report any cases where Narcan was administered, as well as to request replacement doses in needed.

[TinyURL.com/NarcanReportingForm](https://TinyURL.com/NarcanReportingForm)

## Harm Reduction Circle

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# What is Narcan?

Narcan Nasal Spray (also known as *Naloxone*) is an antidote used exclusively to reverse the effects of an opioid-related overdose. When adequately administered to someone experiencing an opioid-related overdose, it blocks the opioid receptors in the brain, which reverses the effects of an opioid overdose — typically showing results in just 2–3 minutes after being administered.

## Narcan Nasal Spray



## COMMON SYMPTOMS OF OPIOID OVERDOSE

Signs of an overdose, which often results in death if not treated, including any the following:

- Unresponsive
- Unconsciousness/inability to awaken.
- Slow or shallow breathing or breathing difficulties such as choking sounds or a gurgling/snoring noise from a person who cannot be awakened
- Fingernails or lips turning blue/purple or ashy/grayish

## How to Properly Administer Narcan

### Step One:

Identify that it's an overdose by looking for signs of overdose. Stimulate them by shouting their name if you know it, asking if they are okay, shaking their shoulders, or rubbing firmly in the center of their chest, known as a “sternum rub”. If they don't respond, check for breathing & pulse. Narcan will not work on individuals without a pulse. Check the immediate surroundings for indicators of substance use to help identify an overdose as well as for safety. You can also check if their pupils are “pinned” or very small, which is a side effect of opioids. If the individual is breathing & responds, even slightly, it is likely not an overdose, but they are intoxicated from an opioid, called “nodding out.”

### Step Two:

Once you have identified that it is an opioid overdose or misuse & called 911 for medical response, you will want to lay the person flat on their back to administer the Narcan Nasal Spray. Remove the device from the packaging by peeling the top-right hand corner of the backside. Place the nasal spray between your pointer & middle finger & place your thumb on the bottom of the plunger in the center. Gently tilt their head back while providing constant support, allowing their airway to open up & nose to face up. Insert the plunger into either nostril until your two fingers are touching against the bottom of their nose. Firmly press the plunger completely.

### Step Three:

You may also perform rescue breathing which is like CPR but without chest compressions. Breathe into their mouth & look for their chest to rise & fall. Rescue breathing alone can revive from an overdose without Narcan. It is highly recommended, as the person may need oxygen from not breathing. Move them into the recovery position (laying on their LEFT side) & watch them closely. If they don't respond within 2–3 minutes by waking up, responding to voice or touch, or they do not begin to breathe normally another dose of Narcan may be administered in the opposite nostril. Administer additional doses every 2–3 minutes if necessary until their breathing stabilizes or until help arrives.

