Opioids include heroin and prescription pain medicines, such as:
- hydrocodone/acetaminophen (brand names Lorcet and Vicodin)
- oxycodone/acetaminophen (brand name Percocet)
- oxycodone (brand name OxyCONTIN)
- morphine (brand name MS Contin)
- methadone
- fentanyl

If someone takes more opioids than their body can handle, they can pass out, stop breathing and die. **An overdose is an emergency!** Review this information, so you know what to do in response to an overdose.

### Signs of opioid overdose
- Slow breathing, less than 1 breath every 5 seconds, or no breathing
- Vomiting
- Face is pale and clammy
- Lips, fingers or toes look gray or blue in color
- Heart beat or pulse is slow or has stopped
- Snoring, gurgling or choking when asleep, or nodding off
- Will not respond to shaking or sternal rub where you rub your knuckles over the bone in the center of the chest

### Take action if you see signs of opioid overdose

1. **Check response.**
   - Shout the person’s name and shake their shoulders.
   - If no response, rub your knuckles on the center bone of their chest for 10 seconds.

2. **If no response, call 911.**
   - You **do not** need to mention drugs when you call.
   - Say, “I have a person who is not responding and has stopped breathing.”
   - Give address and location.
3. **Start rescue breathing.**
   - Make sure there is nothing in the person’s mouth.
   - Tilt the head back by lifting their chin with your hand.
   - Then:
     ‣ **If you have a face shield**, place it over their mouth and nose. Pinch their nose shut with your hand. Place your mouth over the shield at their mouth.
     ‣ **If you do not have a face shield or pocket mask**, pinch their nose shut with your hand. Place your mouth over their mouth.
     ‣ **If you have a pocket mask**, hold the mask to seal around the mouth and nose. Place your mouth on the mask valve.
   - **Give 2 breaths that are slow and deep enough to cause their chest to rise.**
     - If their chest does not rise, tilt the head back more, pinch the nose and give 2 more breaths.

4. **Give naloxone (brand name Narcan) nasal spray.**
   - Open package and peel paper to remove nasal spray. Follow directions below.

5. **Give rescue breathing - 1 breath every 5 seconds.**
   - If the person starts to breathe on their own, roll them onto their side, so they do not choke should they vomit.
   - If not responding or breathing on their own after 2 to 5 minutes, repeat naloxone nasal spray.
   - Stay with the person until emergency services arrive.

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**Giving naloxone nasal spray**

1. Hold the spray. Put your thumb on the bottom of the plunger and your first and middle fingers on either side of the nozzle.
2. Place the tip of the nozzle into one nostril, so your fingers are against the nose.

3. Press the plunger firmly to give the dose of the spray.

4. Remove the nozzle and throw it away, out of the reach of children. The spray only has a single dose.

5. Stay with the person.
   - Continue rescue breathing - 1 breath every 5 seconds.
   - If the person starts to breathe on their own, roll them onto their side.
   - If the person does not begin to breathe on their own after 2 to 5 minutes, give a second dose of the nasal spray if you have another dose.
   - If vomiting occurs, clear the mouth and nose.
   - Stay with the person until help arrives.

About naloxone nasal spray

- Store naloxone at room temperature and away from light.
- This medicine will not reverse overdoses that are caused by drugs that are not opioids.
- This drug is available in other forms.
- Review the package instructions for more information about side effects.
- In the state of Ohio, certain pharmacies, including many chain pharmacies, such as Kroger and Walgreens, can dispense naloxone without a prescription. This includes the Walgreens Pharmacy locations at University Hospital East and University Hospital on the main campus of Wexner Medical Center. Pharmacy staff can provide training to patients and families.

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Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.

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