



## Naloxone (Narcan®): Frequently Asked Questions

### What is naloxone (Narcan®)?

- A. It is a prescription medicine that reverses an opioid overdose. It cannot be used to get high and is not addictive. Naloxone is safe and effective; emergency medical professionals have used it for decades.

### Is naloxone just a "safety net" that allows users to use even more?

- A. Research studies have investigated this common concern and found that making naloxone available does NOT encourage people to use opiates more. The goal of distributing naloxone and educating people about how to prevent, recognize and intervene in overdoses is to prevent deaths. Other goals, such as decreasing drug use, can only be accomplished if the user is alive.

### Can naloxone harm someone?

- A. No. If you suspect an opioid overdose, it is safe to give naloxone. People who used opioids will then wake up and go into withdrawal. Withdrawal is miserable but better than dying. Naloxone does not prevent deaths caused by other drugs such as benzodiazepines (e.g. Xanax®, Klonopin® and Valium®), bath salts, cocaine, methamphetamine or alcohol. Always call 911 as an overdose victim may need other care.

### Who can carry or administer naloxone?

- A. Minnesota State law allows anyone at risk for having or witnessing a drug overdose to obtain a prescription for naloxone. Users, family members and concerned friends can all carry naloxone in the same way people with allergies are allowed to carry an epinephrine syringe ("epi-pen").

### How do you give naloxone?

- A. Bystanders can safely and legally spray naloxone into the nose or inject it into a muscle.

#### ***Into the nose (intranasal spray):***

Narcan® Nasal Spray is available by prescription from all authorized prescribers. The applicator for Narcan® Nasal Spray is placed gently into the nostril and sprayed via the attached plunger. First responders often give naloxone intranasally.

#### ***Into the muscle (intramuscular injection):***

The naloxone should be injected into the upper arm muscle (the deltoid) or the outer thigh. In an emergency, it is safe to inject through clothing.

### How long does naloxone take to work?

- A. Naloxone acts in 2-5 minutes. If the person doesn't wake up in 5 minutes, bystanders should give a second dose. (Rescue breathing should be done while you wait for the naloxone to take effect to that the person gets oxygen to their brain.)

### Can naloxone wear off before the drugs that cause the overdose?

- A. Yes. Naloxone typically wears off in 30-90 minutes and the person can stop breathing again unless more naloxone is available. For this reason, it is safest to call 911 and have the person taken for medical care.