

## Take Home Naloxone Kits – Newfoundland and Labrador

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Who can get a free Kit?**

If you use opioids, or used opioids in the past, you can get a free ‘Take Home’ Naloxone Kit to carry with you or keep where others can find it. Also, friends and family of individuals who use opioids can get a Kit. They might be nearby when drugs are used and can help if someone has an overdose.

#### **What are opioids?**

Opioids can be prescription or illicit drugs. Opioids are central nervous system depressants.

They can reduce pain. They can also cause relaxation or provide a high.

Opioids include fentanyl, oxycodone, oxyNEO, hyrdcodone, morphine, heroin, methadone, Dilaudid and Percocet. Cocaine is not an opioid, but fentanyl can be cut into cocaine and many other kinds of drugs.

#### **Where can I pick up a Take Home Naloxone Kit?**

- Take Home Naloxone Kits are available in over 75 distribution sites throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. To find a location near you, call Healthline at 811 or find the list at [www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/naloxonekits](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/naloxonekits)

#### **What is in the Take Home Naloxone Kit?**

The Take Home Naloxone Kit contains step-by-step instructions, pre-measured doses of naloxone, safety syringes, a breathing mask, alcohol swabs and gloves.

#### **How will I know how to use the Kit?**

When you pick up a Kit, you will be provided with clear instruction on how to use it.

Click here to see an example of the Kit instruction, courtesy of CBC Here and Now:  
<http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/932155459531/>

## **What is Naloxone?**

Naloxone is an over-the-counter medication that can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose. It only works on opioids, but naloxone will not hurt the person if they did not take opioids. It only helps for 30 – 60 minutes, so it is important to also call 911 for emergency help. Naloxone will not give ‘a high’. The naloxone in the Kits is injected into the muscle of the upper arm or thigh.

Naloxone is one part of responding to an opioid overdose. Other important steps are:

- Shake and Shout, to try to wake the person up
- Call 911, if they do not wake up
- Clear the airway and Inject Naloxone
- Do Rescue Breathing to help the person to start breathing again; or do CPR if trained.
- Once breathing again, put the person in the Recovery Position to keep them safe.

## **Can I get a naloxone kit for my group home, workplace, fire department, organization, etc.?**

If you want naloxone on-site at your workplace or program, please contact a local pharmacy or your occupational health and safety committee to discuss your needs. The Take Home Naloxone Kits are not for workplace use. The Take Home Kits are for individuals to “take home”, to carry and use if there is an opioid overdose. However, feel free to call Leigh Thorne at 709-752-3573. She is involved with the Take Home Naloxone Program and may be able to help by providing information about workplace risk assessment.

## **What are the signs of an opioid overdose?**

- Breathing will be slow or gone
- Lips and nails are blue or purple
- Person is not moving – they are unconscious; Can’t be woken up with shake and shout
- Person may be choking; you can hear gurgling sounds or deep snoring
- Skin feels cold and clammy
- Eye pupils are tiny

## **Who can overdose?**

Anyone can overdose.

- An overdose occurs when a person uses more of a drug, or a combination of drugs, than the body can handle.
- With fentanyl hidden in many illicit drugs there is no way to know if the drugs will cause an overdose.
- There is a higher risk of overdose if there has been a period of abstinence from drug use. For example, if you have not used drugs because you have been in a treatment program or in prison, your tolerance is low and you could overdose on smaller amounts.

## **What is fentanyl?**

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid drug which can be 50 - 100 times more powerful than morphine.

- Prescription fentanyl is commonly used as an anesthetic in hospitals or for long-term pain management in the form of prescription fentanyl patches. It is also used in veterinary applications for sedation and general anesthesia. When fentanyl is prescribed by a doctor, it is measured by the 'millionth of a gram'.
- Fentanyl can also be in illicit street drugs as either a cutting agent or used as a direct substitution for heroin. Buyers do not know if or when their drugs are laced with fentanyl or its analogues. Amounts of illicit fentanyl the size of grains of salt can be lethal or cause brain damage.
- It is important not to touch unknown powders or have contact with eyes, nose and mouth.

## **Will I get arrested if I call 911 to get help?**

On May 3, 2017, the Government of Canada took action to encourage and protect people who are witnessing an overdose so they can seek help, and ultimately, save lives. The Good Samaritan Act provides an exemption from charges of simple possession of a controlled substance as well as from charges concerning a pre-trial release, probation order, conditional

sentence or parole violations related to simple possession for people who call 911 for themselves or another person suffering an overdose, as well as anyone who is at the scene when emergency help arrives. Call 911 and stay with the person.

**Where can I find more information about opioids, overdose and naloxone?**

[www.canada.ca/opioids](http://www.canada.ca/opioids)

[www.towardtheheart.com](http://www.towardtheheart.com)

[www.fentanylsafety.com](http://www.fentanylsafety.com)