



Opioids and Overdose

2017

This presentation is an introduction to:

1. Opioids, overdose and naloxone
2. How you can help...

A partnership of:



Opioids

- A class of drugs taken for pain relief or euphoria.
- Prescribed or used illicitly.

Opioids Include:

Fentanyl
Oxycodone
OxyNEO
Hydrocodone

Morphine
Heroin
Methadone
Percocet



Illicit Fentanyl

- Fentanyl is 50 - 100 X more toxic than morphine
- Can be hidden in street drugs
- VERY small amounts can be lethal or cause brain damage



What is addiction?

- Addiction is defined as a **chronic, relapsing brain disease** that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences. It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain; they change its structure and how it works. These brain changes can be long lasting and can lead to many harmful, often self-destructive, behaviors.

NIDA, 2016

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/>

4 C's of Addiction

CRAVING

loss of **CONTROL** of amount or frequency of use

COMPULSION to use

use despite **CONSEQUENCES**

In Newfoundland and Labrador

20 drug-related accidental deaths in 2015

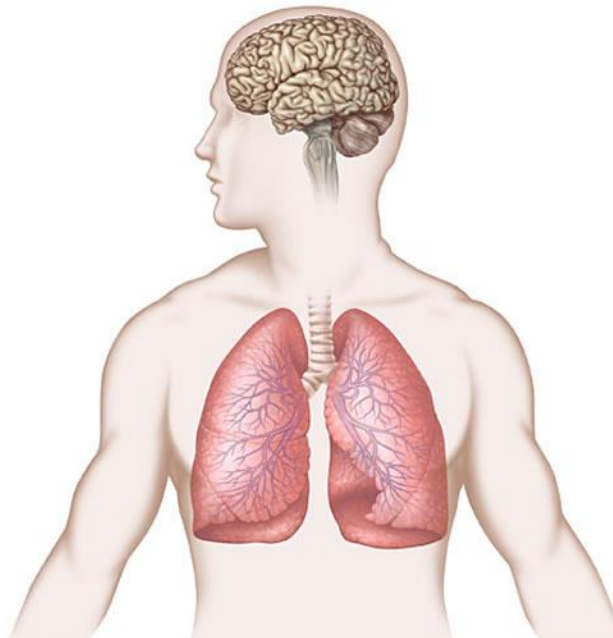
 18 tested positive for opioids

 5 of which contained fentanyl

We know that opioid-related overdose is on the rise and has happened here.

What is an overdose?

An overdose occurs when a person uses more of a drug, or a combination of drugs, than the body can handle. As a consequence, the brain is not able to control basic life functions, such as breathing.



There is no exact formula for determining **HOW MUCH** of a certain drug, or combination of drugs, will lead to an overdose.

ANYONE CAN OVERDOSE:

- first time users
- long time users
 - old people
 - young people
- people being released from prison or treatment

Statistically, there is an **increased risk** of overdose during the first 2 weeks after someone:

- Is released from prison
- Begins withdrawal management
- Is discharged from residential treatment
- Has a period of no opioid use



how you can help



- Share prevention messages
- Know the signs
- Know what to do
- Get a Take Home Naloxone Kit

Overdose Prevention Messages

1. **Know your drugs**
 - you cannot see, taste or smell Fentanyl that may be contained in illicit drugs

2. **Be aware of changes in tolerance:**
 - lost or gained weight
 - have been sick
 - are under stress
 - have HIV or Hep C.
 - had a break from using

3. Do not use alone

- If you overdose, no one will be there to help you if you use alone.

4. Be careful when switching drugs

- They may contain Fentanyl without you knowing.

5. Mixing drugs is dangerous

- Alcohol + benzodiazepines + opioids can cause an overdose.

Know the signs

The CPR triad:

Consciousness

– not moving, can not be woken up, lips and fingernails are blue/purple, skin is cold/clammy

Pinpoint pupils

– pupils are tiny

Respiratory depression

- Breathing will be slow or gone, may hear gurgling sounds or snoring, may be choking,

Know what to do:



SHAKE at the shoulders
SHOUT their name



CALL 911

If the person is not waking up



RESCUE BREATHING

Clear airway, tilt chin up, pinch their nose,
1 breath every 5 seconds for two minutes

OR

CPR, if you are trained.



RECOVERY POSITION

If they are breathing and you are waiting
for an ambulance or police to arrive.

Get a 'Take Home' Naloxone Kit

- In June 2016, Naloxone (or Narcan) became listed as a non-prescription, over-the-counter medication in Canada.
- *Free*, to individuals who use opioids and their family/friends.
- To find a distribution site, call 811 or go online at www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/naloxonekits

Take Home Naloxone Kit

- Pre-measured ampoules of naloxone
- Safety syringes
- Instruction Insert
- Rescue breathing mask
- Alcohol swabs
- Gloves



Naloxone

- A muscular injection (Take Home Kit)
- Once administered, Naloxone starts to work in 1-5 minutes.
- Second dose may be needed.
- Is active in the body for about 30-90 minutes.
- It is important to call 911 before administering naloxone to ensure that help is on the way.



**Suspect an
Overdose?
Stay and**

Call 911

**Canada's new
Good Samaritan law
can protect you.**

Learn more at **Canada.ca/Opioids**

Together we can **#StopOverdoses**

What about my workplace?

Some employers are:

- Assessing overdose risk
- Developing policies and procedures
- Training staff to recognize and respond

References and Resources

www.canada.ca/opioids

www.towardtheheart.com

www.fentanyl-safety.com

SWAP and satellite organizations

Local Mental Health and Addictions teams

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THANK YOU

For your interest in this important
health issue.