



**Prescription Drug Community Action Kit**

# Preventing Overdose



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*Community-based programs have provided naloxone and training that has reversed more than 10,000 overdoses.*

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## PREVENTING OVERDOSE

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More than 44 people die each day from an opioid painkiller overdose. However, an overdose doesn't need to result in death. Timely first aid and the use of naloxone can counteract the overdose. Naloxone is an antidote to counter the effects of an opioid-based drug overdose.

In an opioid overdose, the individual becomes sedated and gradually loses the urge to breathe. Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs are effective in preventing fatal opioid overdoses.

Opioids include:

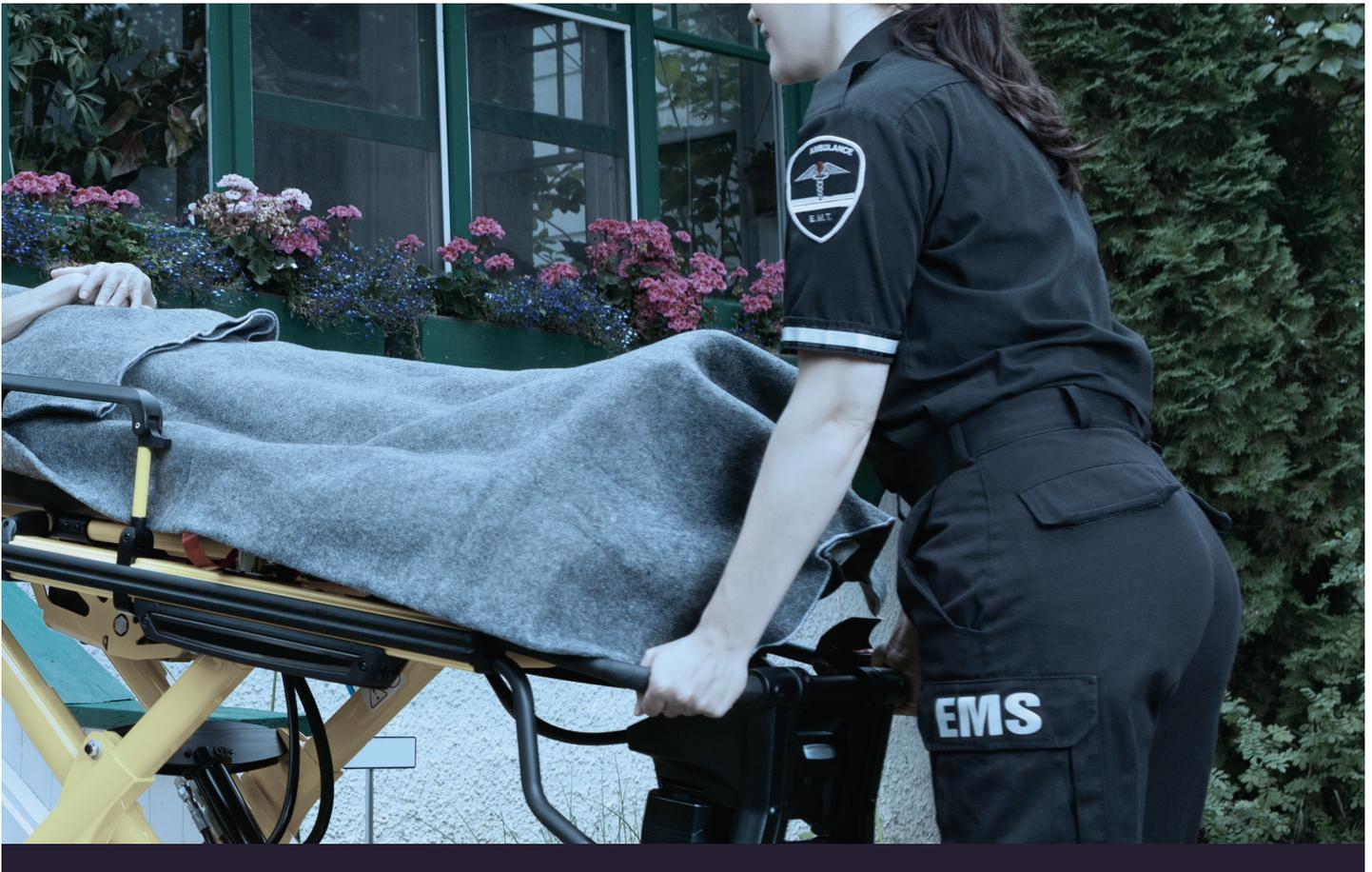
- Heroin
- Morphine
- Codeine
- Methadone
- Oxycodone (Oxycontin, Percodan, Percocet)
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin)
- Fentanyl (Duragesic)
- Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)

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## FATAL OPIOID OVERDOSES CAN BE PREVENTED

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Most overdoses are not instantaneous, and the majority of them are witnessed by others. Many overdose fatalities are preventable, especially if witnesses have had appropriate training and are prepared to respond in a safe and effective manner. Prevention measures include education on risk factors, recognition of the signs and symptoms of an overdose and an appropriate first aid response. Response includes contacting emergency medical services (EMS) and providing first aid - rescue breathing and administration of naloxone to immediately reverse the effects of heroin overdose.



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## OFFERING AN OPIOID OVERDOSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

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Many different organizations in your community could offer an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program:

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Health care practitioners
- Drug treatment programs
- Community-based organizations
- Local health departments

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) [Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit](#) provides resources to prevent opioid overdose.

Opioid overdose prevention programs provide training on how to respond to an opioid overdose. Opioid overdose prevention programs will typically:

- Have a program director who has overall responsibility for the program
- Have a clinical director (i.e., physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner) who provides clinical oversight of the program
- Recruit and train overdose responders
- Dispense naloxone to trained responders in accordance with your state's laws, rules and regulations
- Maintain and provide response supplies (e.g., latex gloves, sharps containers)
- Establish and maintain a record keeping system (e.g., opioid antagonist administration usage reports and forms)
- Report use of naloxone to reverse overdoses to State Department of Health, if required

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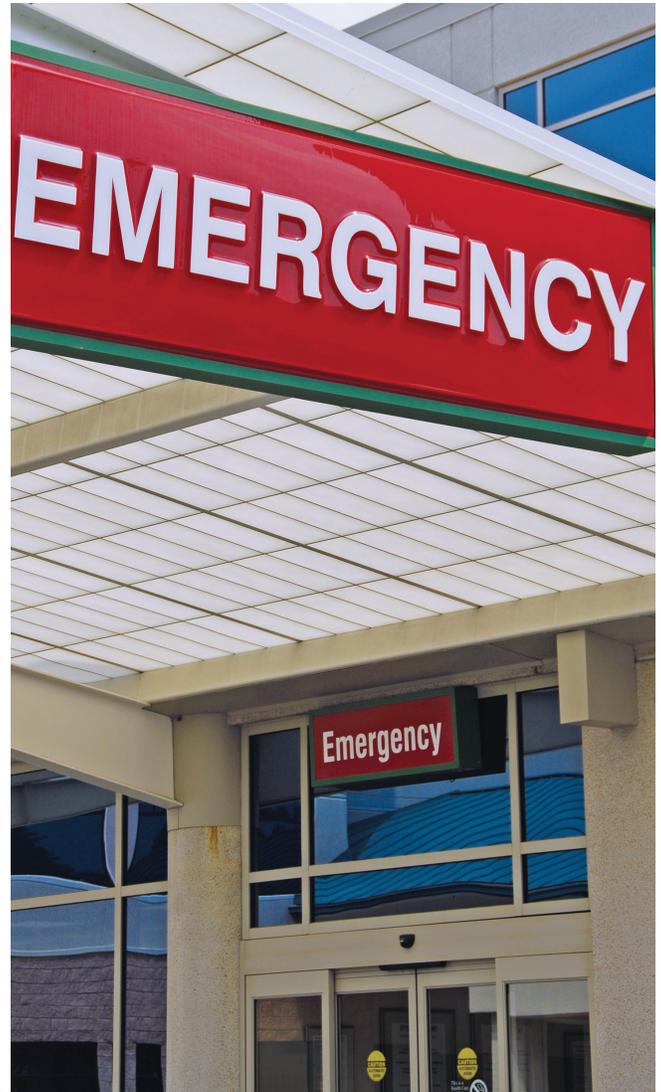
## NALOXONE ACCESS AND GOOD SAMARITAN LAWS

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In some states and communities, access to naloxone and other emergency treatment is limited by laws and regulations that pre-date the overdose epidemic. A number of states have recently changed those laws to increase access to emergency care and treatment for opiate overdose. Typically, these laws will address two areas:

- Allow naloxone to be more widely prescribed by clarifying that prescribers may prescribe naloxone to third-parties and remove possibility of legal action against prescribers, first responders and community members who use naloxone to reverse an overdose
- Good Samaritan laws that encourage witnesses to an overdose to summon help by calling 911 without fear of arrest or other negative legal consequences

You can search your state's law at the [Network for Public Health Law](#) website.



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## HELPFUL RESOURCES

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[SAMHSA Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit](#)

[Harm Reduction Coalition: Overdose Prevention Resources](#)

[Network For Public Health Law Overdose Prevention Legal Interventions to Reduce Overdose Mortality](#)

[CDC Report: Community-Based Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs Providing Naloxone - United States, 2010](#)

[Ohio Project DAWN \(Deaths Avoided with Naloxone\) Background Document and At A Glance Site Development](#)

[Illinois Opioid Overdose Website](#)

[Opiate Overdose App](#)

