



# Naloxone: Save a Life

## What is naloxone?

Naloxone (pronounced na-LOX-own) is a fast-acting drug used to temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone can restore breathing within 2 to 5 minutes.

## Why does naloxone work only temporarily?

Naloxone is active in the body for only 20 to 90 minutes, but the effects of most opioids can last longer. This means that the effects of naloxone are likely to wear off before the opioids are gone from the body, which could cause breathing to stop again. Naloxone may need to be used again, depending on the amount, type or method of consumption of the opioids (e.g., oral, injection).

An overdose is always an emergency. Even if naloxone has been administered, always call for help.

**TIP:** If you or someone you know is using opioids, make sure to carry naloxone with you. It's available without a prescription and can be picked up at most pharmacies or local health authorities.

## Is naloxone safe for everyone?

Yes, naloxone is safe for all ages. It works only if you have opioids in your system. It is safe to keep on-hand because it cannot be improperly used and does not create dependence.

## How is naloxone helping to address Canada's opioid crisis?

Naloxone has been used to successfully reverse thousands of opioid overdoses across Canada. It is used by first-responders such as paramedics and firefighters. Take-home naloxone kits are also available to anyone who may be at risk of an overdose or who is likely to encounter one. Take-home naloxone kits are available without a prescription and can be picked up at most pharmacies or local health authorities. Training in the proper use of Naloxone is also provided at most pharmacies, health centres or Aboriginal AIDS service organizations.

## In Canada, two types of take-home naloxone kits are available:



Naloxone Nasal Spray is sprayed directly into the nose where it is absorbed. It starts to take effect in 2 to 3 minutes.



Injectable Naloxone is injected into a muscle in your body: the upper arm, thigh or buttocks are best. It starts to take effect in 3 to 5 minutes.

## Naloxone Saves Lives. Get a Kit.

- ✓ Naloxone temporarily reverses the effects of an opioid overdose to help restore breathing
- ✓ If you think someone is experiencing an opioid overdose, call 9-1-1 or your local emergency help line, then give naloxone by following the directions on the kit
- ✓ Take-home kits are available at most pharmacies or local health authorities; no prescription is needed
- ✓ Kits expire and should be replaced after 18 to 24 months